

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 159TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION
(2006-2011) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, 21ST JULY, 2011
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 (Absent – on leave)

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (41)

People's Progressive Party/Civic (40)

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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2.

The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni),
Minister of Public Service

*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) (Absent – on leave)

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 Islands/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/Supenaam)

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

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

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/Supenaam)

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. Dr. Kwame Gilbert, M.P.

Mr. Lloyd J. Pereira, J.P., 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

Mrs. Clarissa S. Riehl, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

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***Non-elected Parliamentary Secretary

4.

Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P., Chief Whip

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Ms Amna Ally, M.P. (Absent)

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)

Mrs. Mabel Baveghems, M.P.

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

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

Ms Dawn Hastings, M.P.

5.

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

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

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.

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

Ms Lilawtie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The sitting commenced at 3.07 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(1) **Death of Father of Hon. Dr. Jennifer Westford, M.P.**

The Deputy Speaker informed the Members of the Assembly that the father of Hon. Dr. Jennifer Westford, M.P., Minister of the Public Service died on Wednesday, 20th July, 2011 at the St. Joseph Mercy Hospital after a brief illness.

On behalf of Members of the Assembly and herself, the Deputy Speaker extended deepest sympathy to Dr. Westford, her mother and the other children of the late Mr. Reginald Westford.

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(2) **Resignation of Hon. Kellawan Lall, M.P., Minister of Local Government and Regional Development**

The Deputy Speaker informed Members that she had received from Mr. Kellawan Lall a letter dated 15th July, 2011 resigning his seat as a Member of Parliament with effect from 20th July, 2011.

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

The vacancy was, 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. Lall's name was extracted.

As Mr. Lall's name was extracted from the People's Progressive Party/Civic List of Candidates, I 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.

(3) **Attendance at the 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in London**

The Deputy Speaker informed Members that the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Bibi Shadick, M.P., Rev. Dr. Kwame Gilbert, M.P., Mr. Sherlock Isaacs and herself will be attending the 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference which will be held in London, from the 21st July to 28th July, 2011.

The Deputy Speaker also stated that the Speaker had left that morning and the rest of the delegation will leave on Saturday, 23rd July, 2011.

7.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Oral Reply

1. **DREDGING OF THE DEMERARA, ESSEQUIBO AND BERBICE RIVERS**

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

*Are there any plans to dredge the Demerara, Essequibo and/or the Berbice Rivers? If so, will the Hon. Minister say which Rivers will be dredged, when and the likely cost?

(Notice Paper No. 529 (Q 356 Opp 390) published on 2011-06-29)

Thereafter the Minister of Public Works and Communications replied.

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Minister of Public Works and Communication supplementary questions.

Thereafter the Minister of Public Works and Communications replied.

For Written Replies

2. **POLICY WITH RESPECT TO THE ISSUING OF SHOT GUN LICENSES TO AMERINDIANS**

Member Asking: Ms Sheila Holder, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

1. What is the policy with regards to the issuing individual shot gun licenses to Amerindian residents who rely on game hunting as a source of protein, an essential nutrient in their diet?

8.

2. Several residents in the village of Paramakatoi have applied for shot gun licenses from as far back as 1996. They have received letters of acknowledgment and reference numbers of their applications from the Commissioner of Police but no further indication about the status of their applications. Will the Hon. Minister state what has caused the long delay?

(Notice Paper No. 530 (Q 357 Opp 391) published on 2011-06-29)

Answers:

1. The Honourable Minister of Home Affairs wishes to inform the National Assembly that the policy in relation to Amerindians is to give them priority processing and assist where necessary. Sometimes farms are nearby and they can assist each other.
2. The Honourable Minister of Home Affairs wishes to inform the National Assembly that it would be difficult to process in 2011 a 1996 application. Current applications are being attended to. Nevertheless, if copies of the letters of acknowledgement with reference numbers are available these should be sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs in order to facilitate any further action in this matter.

3. PROMISE MADE BY THE PRESIDENT

Member Asking: Ms Sheila Holder, M.P.

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

Some years ago President Jagdeo had promised applicants for shot gun licences from the village of Paramakatoi in Region 8, that he would have intervened to expedite the processing of their applications. Would the Prime Minister say if this will still be done?

(Notice Paper No. 531 (Q 358 Opp 392) published on 2011-06-29)

9.

Answer:

The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications wishes to inform the National Assembly that:

First of all, the issue of firearm licences for a number of interior areas including Paramakatoi were pending some years ago and the President in response to requests from Amerindian communities offered to ensure that the processing of those applications be expedited.

Honourable Members are well aware that there is a process that must be gone through in accordance with the Firearms Act, Cap. 16:05 in order for persons to be granted firearm licences. Member Ms. Holder may also remember that the firearms (Licensing) Regulations 2010, Regulation No. 1 of 2010 were laid in this House which made provision for the establishment of a Firearms Licensing Approval Board whose purpose is to review all applications for firearm licences received from the Commissioner of Police and submit their own recommendations to the Minister of Home Affairs as to whether the firearm licence should be granted or refused.

I am advised that a number of applications for firearm licences from persons at Paramakatoi have been issued having gone through the procedures and some are still pending.

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND

MOVED BY A MINISTER-

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 54

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

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Standing Order No. 54 be suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed at its sitting on Thursday, 21st July, 2011, with the second reading and the remaining stages of the National Registration (Amendment) Bill 2011 – Bill No. 14/2011.

(Notice Paper No. 535 (M179 Govt 111) published on 2011-07-20)

The motion was put and carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-

Presentation and First Readings

1. BROADCASTING BILL 2011 – Bill No. 13/2011

The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications, 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 establishment of the Guyana National Broadcasting Authority responsible for the regulation, supervision and development of the National Broadcasting System, to provide for its functions, and to provide for the licensing of broadcasting agencies and the encouragement of production and broadcasting of television and radio programmes having relevance generally to life and culture of the people and for consequential and related matters.

2. NATIONAL REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 2011 – Bill No. 14/2011 published on 2011-07-18

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 National Registration Act.

PUBLIC BUSINESS -

(iii) COMMITTEES BUSINESS

MOTION

ITEM 1 - ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE REPORT OF THE DRAFT STANDING ORDERS

The Minister of Health (Chairman of the Special Select Committee on the Report of the Draft Standing Orders) moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly adopts the Report of the Special Select Committee on the Report of the Draft Standing Orders.

(Notice Paper No. 534 (M178 Govt 110) published on 2011-07-15)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. E. Lance Carberry

The Minister of Labour

Ms Gail Teixeira

Thereafter the Minister of Health replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 5.12 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS – SECOND READING

ITEM 2 - NATIONAL REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 2011 – Bill No. 14/2011 **published on 2011-07-19**

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the National Registration Act.

(Read a first time on 2011-07-21)

12.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Robert Corbin

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan

Mr. Donald Ramotar

Mr. Basil Williams

Thereafter the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

The Bill was read a second time on the following division:

AGAINST

Mr. Patterson

Mrs. Budhan

Mrs. Holder

Mr. Ramjattan

Mr. Trotman

DECLINED TO VOTE

Ms Hastings

Ms Kissoon

Ms Baveghems

Ms Wade

Dr. Austin

Ms Selman

Mrs. David-Blair

Mr. Elliot

Mr. Danny

Ms Sampson

Dr. Norton

Mr. Basil Williams

Mr. Carberry

Mr. Corbin

FOR

Mr. Pereira

Rev. Dr. Gilbert

Dr. Mahadeo

Mr. Whittaker

Mr. Seeraj

Mrs. Sahoye-Shury

Mr. Paramand Persaud

Mr. Neendkumar

Mr. Lumumba

Mr. Khan

Mrs. Edwards

Mr. Chand

Mr. Atkinson

Mr. Nokta

Mrs. Chandarpal

Miss Teixeira

Mr. Ramotar

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13.

Mr. Ali
Mr. Prashad
Ms Webster
Dr. Ramsaran
Ms Manickchand
Mr. Nadir
Mr. Benn
Dr. Anthony
Dr. Westford
Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Dr. Ramsammy
Mr. Rohee
Mr. Hinds

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

In Committee

Clause1 was passed as printed on the following division:

AGAINST

Mr. Patterson
Mrs. Budhan
Mrs. Holder
Mr. Ramjattan
Mr. Trotman

DECLINED TO VOTE

Ms Hastings
Ms Kissoon
Ms Baveghems
Ms Wade
Dr. Austin

FOR

Mr. Pereira
Rev. Dr. Gilbert
Dr. Mahadeo
Mr. Whittaker
Mr. Seeraj
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14.

Ms Selman	Mrs. Sahoye-Shury
Mrs. David-Blair	Mr. Paramand Persaud
Mr. Elliot	Mr. Neendkumar
Mr. Danny	Mr. Lumumba
Ms Sampson	Mr. Khan
Dr. Norton	Mrs. Edwards
Mr. Basil Williams	Mr. Chand
Mr. Carberry	Mr. Atkinson
Mr. Corbin	Mr. Nokta
	Mrs. Chandarpal
	Miss Teixeira
	Mr. Ramotar
	Mr. Ali
	Mr. Prashad
	Ms Webster
	Dr. Ramsaran
	Ms Manickchand
	Mr. Nadir
	Mr. Benn
	Dr. Anthony
	Dr. Westford
	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Dr. Ramsammy
	Mr. Rohee
	Mr. Hinds

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Clause 2

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., Leader of the Opposition moved the following amendments which were put and carried on the following division:

“Section 14A will now become 14A(i)

In line 2 after the words ‘written law’ insert the words ‘for the specific preparation of the 2011 Official List of Electors for the 2011 General and Regional Elections’.

In line 6 after the words ‘laid before it’ insert the words ‘duly observing the procedures for the registration of those eligible Electors’. Delete the words ‘where it is reasonable’.

Insert a new sub clause 14A(ii) as follows:

‘The Commissioner shall make available to all registered Political Parties the names of all eligible Electors registered subsequent to the enactment of this amendment.’”

AGAINST

Mr. Patterson
Mrs. Budhan
Mrs. Holder
Mr. Ramjattan
Mr. Trotman

FOR

Ms Hastings
Ms Kissoon
Ms Baveghems
Ms Wade
Dr. Austin
Ms Selman
Mrs. David-Blair
Mr. Elliot
Mr. Danny
Ms Sampson
Dr. Norton
Mr. Pereira
Rev. Dr. Gilbert
Dr. Mahadeo
Mr. Whittaker
Mr. Seeraj
Mrs. Sahoye-Shury
Mr. Paramand Persaud
Mr. Neendkumar
Mr. Lumumba
Mr. Khan
Mrs. Edwards

16.

Mr. Basil Williams	Mr. Chand
Mr. Carberry	Mr. Atkinson
Mr. Corbin	Mr. Nokta
	Mrs. Chandarpal
	Miss Teixeira
	Mr. Ali
	Mr. Prashad
	Ms Webster
	Dr. Ramsaran
	Ms Manickchand
	Mr. Nadir
	Mr. Benn
	Dr. Anthony
	Dr. Westford
	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Dr. Ramsammy
	Mr. Rohee
	Mr. Hinds

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Clause 2 was then passed as amended.

Clause 3 was passed as printed on the following division:

AGAINST

Mr. Patterson
Mrs. Budhan

FOR

Ms Hastings	Mr. Pereira
Ms Kissoon	Rev. Dr. Gilbert
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17.

Mrs. Holder
Mr. Ramjattan
Mr. Trotman

Ms Baveghems
Ms Wade
Dr. Austin
Ms Selman
Mrs. David-Blair
Mr. Elliot
Mr. Danny
Ms Sampson
Dr. Norton
Mr. Basil Williams
Mr. Carberry
Mr. Corbin
Dr. Mahadeo
Mr. Whittaker
Mr. Seeraj
Mrs. Sahoye-Shury
Mr. Paramand Persaud
Mr. Neendkumar
Mr. Lumumba
Mr. Khan
Mrs. Edwards
Mr. Chand
Mr. Atkinson
Mr. Nokta
Mrs. Chandarpal
Miss Teixeira
Mr. Ali
Mr. Prashad
Ms Webster
Dr. Ramsaran
Ms Manickchand
Mr. Nadir
Mr. Benn
Dr. Anthony
Dr. Westford
Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Dr. Ramsammy
Mr. Rohee
Mr. Hinds

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Home Affairs, the National Registration (Amendment) Bill 2011 was read a third time and passed as amended on the following division:

AGAINST

Mrs. Budhan
Mrs. Holder
Mr. Ramjattan
Mr. Trotman

FOR

Ms Hastings	Mr. Pereira
Ms Kissoon	Rev. Dr. Gilbert
Ms Baveghems	Dr. Mahadeo
Ms Wade	Mr. Whittaker
Dr. Austin	Mr. Seeraj
Ms Selman	Mrs. Sahoye-Shury
Mrs. David-Blair	Mr. Paramand Persaud
Mr. Elliot	Mr. Neendkumar
Mr. Danny	Mr. Lumumba
Ms Sampson	Mr. Khan
Dr. Norton	Mrs. Edwards
Mr. Basil Williams	Mr. Chand
Mr. Carberry	Mr. Atkinson
Mr. Corbin	Mr. Nokta
	Mrs. Chandarpal
	Miss Teixeira
	Mr. Ali
	Mr. Prashad
	Ms Webster
	Dr. Ramsaran
	Ms Manickchand
	Mr. Nadir

19.

Mr. Benn
Dr. Anthony
Dr. Westford
Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Dr. Ramsammy
Mr. Rohee
Mr. Hinds

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ADJOURNMENT

At 8.28 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, 21st July, 2011.

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

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.

21st July, 2011.