

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND**  
**SESSION (2002-2003) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 2.00 P.M.**  
**ON MONDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2003**  
**IN THE CONVENTION CENTRE, OCEAN VIEW INTERNATIONAL HOTEL,**  
**LILIENDAAL, GREATER GEORGETOWN**

**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 (37)**

**(i) People's Progressive Party/Civic (34)**

**(ii) Non-elected Ministers (2)**

**(iii) The United Force (1)**

The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works  
and Communications

The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, O.R., J.P., M.P., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P., Minister of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation

The Hon. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P., Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Education

The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P., Minister of Finance

The Hon. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

The Hon. Navindranauth O. Chandarpal, M.P., Minister of Agriculture  
(Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

The Hon. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs  
(Region No. 3 -Essequibo Islands/West Demerara) (Absent)

The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P., Minister of Labour, Human Services and  
Social Security

The Hon. Clinton C. Collymore, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and  
Regional Development

The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P., Minister of Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock  
(Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)

\* The Hon. S. Rudolph Insanally, O.R., C.C.H., M.P., Minister in the Office of the  
President with responsibility for Foreign Affairs

\* The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

The Hon. C. Anthony Xavier, M.P., Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

The Hon. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and  
Social Security (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

\*\* The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P., Minister of Health

Mr. S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P., Chief Whip

Mr. Cyril C.L. Belgrave, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.

Mr. Husman Alli, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P.

Mr. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Shirley V. Edwards, J.P., M.P.

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

Mr. Heeralall Mohan, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)

Mr. Ramesh C. Rajkumar, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne) (Absent)

Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.D., M.P.

Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Water

Mrs. Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)

Mr. Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P.

\*Non-Elected Minister

\*\*Elected Member from The United Force

**Members of the Opposition (30)****(i) People's National Congress/Reform (27)**

Mr. Robert H.O. Corbin, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Winston S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P. (Absent)

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

Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P., Chief Whip (Absent)

Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam) (Absent)

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Deryck M.A. Bernard, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M.P. (Absent)

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

Mr. Vincent L. Alexander, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. Andy Goveia, M.P. (Absent)

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

Dr. Dalglish Joseph, M.D., M.P. (Absent)

Miss Anna Ally, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice) (Absent)

Miss Sandra M. Adams, M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice) (Absent)

Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P. (Absent)

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P. (Absent)

Miss Myrna E.N. Peterkin, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. James K. McAllister, M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara) (Absent)

Miss Lurlene A. Nestor, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. Abdul Kadir, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice) (Absent)

Mr. Ricky Khan, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini) (Absent)

Mrs. Rajcoomarie Bancroft, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni) (Absent)

Mr. Nasir Ally, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne) (Absent)

Miss Judith David, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent)

Miss Genevieve Allen, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

4.

(ii) **Guyana Action Party/Working People's Alliance (2)**

Mrs. Sheila V.A. Holder, M.P.

Mrs. Shirley J. Melville, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

(iii) **Rise, Organise and Rebuild Party (1)**

Mr. Ravindra Dev, M.P. (Absent)

**OFFICERS**

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 2.12 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk read Prayers.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.**

(1) By the **Speaker (Chairman of the Committee of Selection):**

Minutes of the Proceedings of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Selection of the Second Session held on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2003.

(Circulated)

(2) By the **Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security:**

State Paper on the following Convention and Recommendation which were adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 89<sup>th</sup> Session held in June, 2001:

- (i) Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001, No. 184.
- (ii) Safety and Health in Agriculture Recommendation, 2001, No. 192.

(Circulated)

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS-****Letter Published in Stabroek News and Kaitour News of April 10, 2003, by Mr. Vincent Alexander, M.P.**

The Minister of Health, made the following statement:-

“Mr. Speaker,

I regretfully ask your leave, once again to draw your attention and that of this House to another breach of privilege by the Honourable Member of Parliament from the People’s National Congress, Mr. Vincent Alexander. I refer, Mr. Speaker, to a letter published in the Stabroek News and the Kaitour News of April 10, 2003 written by Mr. Vincent Alexander.

In the letter, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Alexander stated that in the face of what he described as the country’s downward path, you and some “erstwhile” members of the National Assembly engaged in a calculated distraction in focusing on the events of March 28<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Alexander was referring to our criticism and your criticism of their actions on March 28, 2003 within the National Assembly and within the precincts of the National Assembly, actions that this House on April 7<sup>th</sup> referred to a Committee of Privilege. None of us here, Mr. Speaker are “erstwhile” since the word refers to former. I am certain that Mr. Alexander was referring to the members sitting in this House at this time. I know that Mr. Alexander would like to render us all as former, but the people elected us and only the people could make that decision at the appropriate time.

In the next paragraph, Mr. Alexander accuses the PPP/C in the persons of you, Mr. Speaker, and some Members of the National Assembly of engaging in a propaganda blitz in lieu of good governance. In his letter, he dismisses the March 28<sup>th</sup> action as just a short interruption, thus seeing nothing wrong in interfering with the work of this House.

Classifying you as one of "these people", Mr. Speaker, Mr. Alexander cites a litany of alleged wrongdoings and accuses all of us of "grand standing". Mr. Speaker, Mr. Alexander sought to implicate us, the Members of this House and yourself in the killing of protestors in the compound of the Presidential Secretariat and sought to defend those protestors who invaded the compounds of the Presidential Secretariat.

In the same letter, he accuses Minister Teixeira of lying. I was one that was critical of the attempt of the PNC/R Members to disrupt Parliament on March 28<sup>th</sup>. I was one who named certain Members of Parliament of being part of the illegal activities within the halls of Parliament and within the precincts of Parliament. Mr. Alexander was one of those Members who not only participated in the illegal action within the precinct of Parliament, but also entered this House during the suspension. I again reiterate that Mr. Alexander was part of the exercise. Mr. Alexander was not at work during the disgraceful attack on Parliament. Mr. Alexander was part of that exercise.

He concludes by referring to us, you, Mr. Speaker and Members of the House as "demons". As an elected Member trying to do my job, I object to being called a "demon". I object to any Member being called a "demon". I request an apology from Mr. Alexander and I suggest this House demand an apology. Using my privilege as an elected Member of this House, I ask again that this matter be referred to a Committee of Privilege".

At the request of the Hon. Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, M.P., Minister of Health, and with the leave of the Assembly, the abovementioned matter was referred to the Committee of Privileges for consideration, and to report thereon to the Assembly.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Presentation and First Reading****FISCAL ENACTMENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2003 - Bill No. 3/2003**

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 amend the Tax Act and the Income Tax Act.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS****MOTIONS****ITEM 1 - CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 1/2003**

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:**

That this Assembly approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 1/2003 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$4,917,393,445, for the period ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2002.

**(Paper presented on 2003-02-19)**

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 Assembly agree with the Committee of Supply in the following Resolution:

“RESOLVED:

That this Assembly approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 1/2003 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$4,917,393,445, for the period ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2002”.

**ITEM 2 - CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 2/2003**

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:

That this Assembly approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 2/2003 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$1,293,396,680, for the period 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2002 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2002 - Advances made from the Contingencies Fund.

**(Paper presented on 2003-02-19)**

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 Assembly agree with the Committee of Supply in the following Resolution:

“RESOLVED:

That this Assembly approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 2/2003 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$1,293,396,680, for the period 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2002 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2002 - Advances made from the Contingencies Fund”.

**ITEM 3 - CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 3/2003**

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:

That this Assembly approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 3/2003 - Supplementary Estimates (Capital) totalling \$3,827,000, for the period ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2002.

(Paper presented on 2003-02-19)

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 Assembly agree with the Committee of Supply in the following Resolution:

“RESOLVED:

That this Assembly approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 3/2003 - Supplementary Estimates (Capital) totalling \$3,827,000, for the period ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2002”.

**ITEM 4 - ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE TO REVIEW PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves of the establishment of a Special Select Committee to review the public holidays appointed by the Public Holidays Act, Chapter 19:07, with a view to including as public holidays, the following days, namely:

Independence Day, that is to say, the 26<sup>th</sup> May, or, if that day is a Sunday, the following day, and

Arrival Day, that is to say, the 5<sup>th</sup> May, or, if that day is a Sunday, the following day.

*(Notice Paper No. 7(M7 Govt7) published 2003-02-17)*

The motion was put and carried.

**ITEM 5 - THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONCERNING COOPERATION TO SUPPRESS ILLICIT TRAFFIC BY SEA AND AIR 2001**

The Minister of Foreign Affairs moved the following motion:

WHEREAS the Agreement between the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Government of the United States of America concerning cooperation to Suppress Illicit Traffic by Sea and Air 2001 was concluded in April, 2001;

AS WHEREAS the Agreement has as its principal objective the suppression and eradication of the illicit trafficking in narcotics by sea;

AND WHEREAS the Agreement seeks to reduce the ability of illicit narcotics traffickers to elude maritime law enforcement agencies within and outside the territorial waters of Guyana as well as to strengthen Guyana's maritime law enforcement capabilities in this area;

AND WHEREAS the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotics Drugs and its 1972 Protocol, the 1971 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea recognise that effective measures against abuse of narcotic drugs require co-ordinated and universal action through international co-operation;

AND WHEREAS the Agreement seeks to further international co-operation in the fight against the illegal narcotics trade as well as to strengthen and enhance legal measures for international co-operation in criminal matters for suppressing illicit traffic by sea:

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly approve of the decision of the Government of Guyana to become party to the aforementioned Agreement.

**(Notice Paper No.4(M4 Govt4) published 2002-11-28)**

The motion was put and carried.

**ITEM 6 - THE CONVENTION ON THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION**

The Minister of Foreign Affairs moved the following motion:

WHEREAS the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and their Destruction was concluded at Oslo on September 18, 1997 and opened for signature in Ottawa, Canada on December 2, 1997;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana signed the Convention on December 4, 1997;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana supports the international effort to put an end to the use of landmines, a practice which not only contradicts the provisions of international humanitarian law, but also causes serious and unnecessary suffering to non-combatants, particularly children:

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly hereby agrees to the Secretary General of the United Nations being informed of Guyana's intention to ratify the agreement on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and their Destruction by the deposit of an appropriate Instrument of Ratification.

**(Notice Paper No. 5(M5 Govt5) published 2002-11-28)**

The motion was put and carried.

**ITEM 7 - THE KYOTO PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Minister of Foreign Affairs moved the following motion:

WHEREAS Guyana ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on 29<sup>th</sup> August, 1994;

AND WHEREAS the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was adopted at the Third Conference of the Parties (COP3) in 1997;

AND WHEREAS the said Protocol has its primary objective the reduction of combined green house gas emissions of industrialized countries by at least 5 percent (5%) of 1990 levels, by the period 2008-2012;

AND WHEREAS the said Protocol allows for developing countries to participate in the process of achieving sustainable development, through joint projects with developed countries under the Clean Development Mechanism;

AND WHEREAS Guyana endorses the view that existing levels of green house gas (GHG) emissions if left unabated, will continue to render vulnerable, small island and low lying coastal states:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly hereby agrees to the Secretary General of the United Nations being advised of Guyana's intention to sign, and ratify the Kyoto Protocol by depositing an appropriate Instrument of Ratification.

(Notice Paper No. 6(M6 Govt6) published 2002-11-28)

The motion was put and carried.

**ITEM 8 - ESTABLISHMENT OF A PARLIAMENTARY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

At the request of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, and with the leave of the Assembly, consideration of the following motion was deferred:-

WHEREAS after discussions it has been agreed by the Political Parties represented in the National Assembly that a Parliamentary Management Committee shall be established by the National Assembly on certain terms and conditions.

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. That this National Assembly of the Parliament of Guyana approves of the establishment of a Parliamentary Management Committee, (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee") which shall comprise representatives from the Parties represented in the National Assembly, to consider and decide on matters relating to:
  - The business of the National Assembly;
  - Such other matters which the Committee may wish to consider; and
  - Such other matters referred to it by the National Assembly.
  
2. That the Committee shall report to the National Assembly from time to time on such matters which it considers necessary to bring to the attention of the National Assembly or as the National Assembly may require.
  
3. In the event that the Committee is unable to arrive at a decision on an issue, the Chairman of the Committee shall so inform all Members of the Committee and the Committee shall seek direction from the National Assembly on the resolution of that issue.
  
4. That the composition of the Committee shall be five (5) Members from the PPP/C, three (3) from the PNC/R, one (1) from the GAP/WPA and one (1) from ROAR.

5. That the Committee shall be chaired by the Speaker of the National Assembly and, in his or her absence, the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly. The Chair of the Committee shall not have an original or a casting vote.
6. That the nomination of Members to the Parliamentary Management Committee and the subsequent filling of vacancies shall be made by the Committee of Selection.
7. That the National Assembly adopts and approves the decisions of the Committee of Selection at its meetings held on Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2003 and Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2003 relating to the composition, membership and other matters relating to the Committee.
8. A quorum shall be four (4) Members, two (2) Members representing the PPP/C and two (2) Members representing the PNC/R together with the Speaker or Deputy Speaker in the absence of the Speaker.
9. Except where the terms of this Motion provide otherwise the procedure relating to Select Committees, as provided for by Standing Order 70A, shall apply to the Committee. The terms herein shall apply where there is conflict with the Standing Orders.

**(Notice Paper No. 40(M13 Govt12) published on 2003-04-10)**



**BILL - Second Reading and Third Reading**

**ITEM 9 - DEMERARA HARBOUR BRIDGE CORPORATION BILL 2003 - Bill No. 2/2003**  
**published on 2003-04-05**

The Minister of Transport and Hydraulics moved the second reading of the following  
Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to establish the Demerara Harbour Bridge  
Corporation.

(Read a first time on 2003-04-09)

Mrs. Sheila Holder spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics replied.

The motion was put and carried.

The Bill was read a second time and was thereafter taken through its remaining stages and  
was passed as printed.

18.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 3.40 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2003.



**HARI N. RAMKARRAN**

**Speaker of the National Assembly**

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,**

**Public Buildings,**

**Georgetown.**

**14<sup>th</sup> April, 2003.**