

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 68TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND
SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, 21ST JULY, 2005
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
BRICKDAM, 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 (Absent - on leave)

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 (Absent)

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

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 (Absent - on leave)

* 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 (Absent - on leave)

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. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P.,

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

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) (Absent - on leave)

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

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

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

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

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.

Mr. Neendkumar, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

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

*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. , Leader of the Opposition (Absent - on leave)
 Mr. Winston S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P. (Absent - on leave)
 Mrs. Clarissa S. Riehl, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly
 Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P., Chief Whip
 Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam) (Absent - on leave)
 Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.
 Mr. Deryck M.A. Bernard, M.P.
 Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
 Mr. Vincent L. Alexander, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)
 Mr. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
 Mr. Basil Williams, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
 Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.
 Dr. Dagleish Joseph, M.D., M.P. (Absent - on leave)
 Miss Amna Ally, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice) (Absent- on leave)
 Miss Sandra M. Adams, M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice)
 Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
 Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.
 Miss Myrna E.N. Peterkin, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent - on leave)
 Mr. James K. McAllister, M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
 Dr. Carl Max Hanoman, M.P.
 Miss Lurlene A. Nestor, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent - on leave)
 Mr. Abdul Kadir, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice)
 Mr. Ricky Khan, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)
 Mrs. Rajcoomarie Bancroft, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni)
 Mr. Nasir Ally, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)
 Miss Judith David, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)
 Miss Genevieve Allen, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

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.

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 2.05p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read prayers.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport on behalf of the Minister of Finance, presented the following documents:

- (a) Treasury Memorandum pursuant to Resolution No. 73/2005 dated 14th July, 2005 of the National Assembly adopting the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Public Accounts of Guyana for 1999.

(Circulated)

- (b) **Technical Co-operation Loan Agreement No. 1103/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on September 3, 2002 for US\$27,400,00 for the Unserved Areas Electrification Project.

(Circulated)

- (c) **Technical Co-operation Loan Agreement No. 1107/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on July 25, 2002 for US\$30,000,000 for the Basic Education, Access, Management Support Project (Phase 1).

(Circulated)

- (d) **Loan Contract No. 1120/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on May 19, 2003 for US\$5,000,000 for the Basic Nutrition Project.

(Circulated)

- (e) **Technical Cooperation Loan Agreement No. 1487/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on January 6, 2004 for US\$1,500,000 for the Line of Credit of the Project Preparation and Execution Facility (PPF) of the Georgetown Solid Waste Management Program (GY-L1001).

(Circulated)

- (f) **Loan Contract No. 1516/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on March 24, 2004 for US\$3,450,000 for the Social Statistics and Policy Analysis Program.

(Circulated)

- (g) Technical Cooperation Loan Agreement No. **1541/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on May 28, 2004 for US\$350,000 for the Line of Credit of the Project Preparation and Execution Facility (PPF) of the Health Sector Program (GY-L1004).

(Circulated)

- (h) Technical Cooperation Loan Agreement No. **1544/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on May 28, 2004 for US\$1,150,000 for the Line of Credit of the Project Preparation and Execution Facility (PPF) of the Health Sector Program (GY-L1005).

(Circulated)

- (i) Loan Contract No. **1550/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on July 30, 2004 for US\$15,000,000 for the Fiscal and Financial Management Program (Policy-Based Component).

(Circulated)

- (j) Loan Contract No. **1551/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on July 30, 2004 for US\$13,000,000 for the Fiscal and Financial Management Program (Investment Component).

(Circulated)

- (k) Loan Contract No. **1558/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on September 24, 2004 for US\$22,500,000 for the Agricultural Support Services Programme.

(Circulated)

- (l) Development Credit Agreement No. **3725-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the International Development Association dated January 21, 2003 for SDR 9,100,000 for the Poverty Reduction Support Project.

(Circulated)

- (m) Development Credit Agreement No. **3726-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the International Development Association dated January 21, 2003 for SDR 3,600,000 for the Public Sector Technical Assistance Project.

(Circulated)

- (n) Loan Agreement No. **15/SFR-GU** between the Caribbean Development Bank and the Government of Guyana signed April 19, 2002 for US\$112,500 for the Regional Tourism Emergency Programme.

(Circulated)

- (o) Loan Agreement No. **16/SFR-GU** between the Caribbean Development Bank and the Government of Guyana signed on February 11, 2004 for US\$683,000 for the Secondary Towns Development Programme.

(Circulated)

- (p) Loan Agreement No. **1/SFR-OR-GUY** between the Caribbean Development Bank and the Government of Guyana signed June 6, 2003 for US\$8,800,000 for Caribbean Court of Justice (Regional).

(Circulated)

8.

- (q) Loan Agreement No. **2/SFR-OR-GUY** between the Caribbean Development Bank and the Government of Guyana signed June 25, 2003 for US\$19,102,000 for the Third Road Project.

(Circulated)

- (r) Loan Agreement No. **3/SFR-OR-GUY** between the Caribbean Development Bank and the Government of Guyana signed October 7, 2003 for US\$28,230,000 for the Skeldon Modernisation Project.

(Circulated)

- (s) Loan Agreement No. **4/SFR-OR-GUY** between the Caribbean Development Bank and the Government of Guyana signed March 30, 2004 for US\$7,350,000 for the Reconstruction of Sea Defences (Second Loan).

(Circulated)

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

For Oral Replies

1. ST. ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Minister of Home Affairs (a.g.) the following question:

* Will the Minister say what steps the Guyana Police Force can put in place during sittings of the National Assembly to ensure that the rights of the Pastor and parishioners of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, situated opposite the

Parliament Buildings at the corners of Avenue of the Republic and Brickdam, to allow for weddings, funerals and other church services to be conducted unhindered by the Police Force's security arrangements for the National Assembly?

(Notice Paper No. 187 (Q106 Opp101) published on 2005-05-27)

Oral reply given by the Minister of Home Affairs (a.g.):

Special arrangements put in place during the sittings of the National Assembly. This arrangement, which is aimed at providing security for Members of Parliament, sees the restriction of traffic in the streets immediately around Parliament Buildings. The restrictions applies to vehicular traffic only. However, it is the policy to allow vehicles going to St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, which is within the restricted area, to gain access upon request by the divers.

2. 'SILENT ZONE' AROUND THE HIGH COURTS, HOSPITALS, ETC.

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Minister of Home Affairs (a.g.) the following question:

*Will the Minister indicate what steps could be taken by the Guyana Police Force to bring into effect the prevailing 'Silent Zone' statute in and around the High Courts, hospitals, etc.?

(Notice Paper No. 188 (Q107 Opp102) published on 2005-05-27)

Oral reply given by the Minister of Home Affairs (a.g.):

Every effort is made by the Police to enforce silent zone regulations. With specific reference to the High Court, it has been noted that the movement of heavy duty vehicles contribute significantly to the noise levels. It is proposed to restrict the movement of heavy duty vehicles around the court during the hours of its operations. It should however be noted, that the close proximity of the mini bus parks to the Courts and the large number of persons in the area makes it extremely difficult for the Silent Zone status to be maintained around the High Court.

3. **NOISE NUISANCE**

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Minister of Home Affairs (a.g) the following question:

*Will the Minister say why the Guyana Police Force has not put a stop to the noise nuisance emanating from the illegal establishment of large music boxes on the pavements and roadways in the vicinity of Demico House on Croal Street that adversely affect service events at the St. Andrews Presbyterian Church?

(Notice Paper No. 189 (Q108 Opp103) published on 2005-05-27)

Oral reply given by the Minister of Home Affairs (a.g.):

The police have been prosecuting persons who are found playing music in the city without the necessary permission. The police have also been refusing to give permission for the playing of music where it is felt that such activity will create a nuisance to persons in the area. It would be extremely helpful if persons who are affected by noise nuisance in the vicinity of Demico House on Croal Street would make a report to the Police at Brickdam so that the appropriate action could be taken.

It must be noted that in an effort to deal with the problem of noise nuisance, in Georgetown especially, a special team of ranks headed by an Officer has been identified to respond to complaints of noise nuisance.

4. **ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation the following question:

***Will the Minister say what is the status with respect to negotiations between the European Union and the Guyana government on an Economic Partnership Agreement?
(Notice Paper No. 192 (Q111 Opp106) published on 2005-05-27)**

Oral reply given by the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation:

The European Union and the Government of Guyana is not directly involved in the negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

The CARIFORUM region has agreed that the negotiations with the EU on EPA will be done at the regional level as a CARIFORUM Group. This Group includes the members of CARICOM including Haiti, and the Dominican Republic.

The Honourable Member of Parliament would recall my previous submissions to Parliament which provided full details on the EPA negotiations with the EU. The negotiation with the European Union was launched in September, 2002. Phase 1 of the negotiations was completed in September, 2003. Phase 1 addressed matters of common interest and concerns to all ACP states and is referred to as the "All ACP" Phase of the negotiations. These include the principles and objectives of EPAs, the conduct and

substance, market access issues, sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures and trade related development support.

Phase II was launched in October, 2003. During this phase the EU is engaging the different geographical regions and countries in negotiations. The CARIFORUM region launched its regional negotiations in April, 2004 in Jamaica and has been engaging its EU counterparts at the Technical, Ambassadorial and Principal Negotiators levels.

In Phase II the CARIFORUM region is seeking to establish its priorities for support to the CARIFORUM regional integration process and the targets to be achieved by the time of the commencement of the implementation of the new arrangements in January 1, 2008.

Specifically, discussions are focusing on how Caribbean regional integration could be strengthened and supported within the context of EPA taking into consideration the levels of developments between CARIFORUM and the EC and the need for special and differential treatment within the context of the development perspective at the national and regional levels.

The negotiations are taking into account the status and ambition as set out in the CARICOM /DR FTA, and the circumstances of Haiti and the Bahamas in relation to the CSME process.

Currently, consultations are being held with the private sector agencies and exporters for the discussions on market access relating to the review of the current rules of origin requirements with a view to identifying areas where there are difficulties in meeting the rules and or where representation could be made to the EU for a review.

The completion of the 2nd Phase should provide an insight of what may or may not be possible under Phase III of the Negotiations.

The Third Phase of the negotiations will be launched in September, 2005 and should conclude in September, 2006 to pave the way for the final phase from September, 2006 to December, 2007.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

ITEM 1 - EUROPEAN UNION GUARANTEED PREFERENTIAL PRICES FOR SUGAR

Mr. James McAllister, M.P., moved the following motion:

WHEREAS for over thirty years the European Union has guaranteed preferential prices for sugar it imported from African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, of which Guyana is a part;

AND WHEREAS the European Commission recently proposed steep cuts in the preferential price it pays for sugar imported from ACP countries;

AND WHEREAS Guyana stands to lose approximately US\$40M annually in revenue for sugar exported to the European Union when the final price cut is made;

AND WHEREAS this amount would represent a lost of some 30% of sugar receipts annually;

AND WHEREAS this loss of income will severely further affect the financial viability of the sugar industry;

AND WHEREAS this loss of income will also have a significant negative impact on Guyana's economy;

AND WHEREAS Guyana needs to restructure and diversify its economy to compensate for the loss of income and to bring about significant economic growth;

AND WHEREAS the government needs to be more aggressive and dynamic in wooing private sector investment in the economy,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly calls on the European Union to accept the ACP countries' proposal to phase in the price cuts over a period of eight years commencing in 2008 and to cap the cuts at between 16 - 20% of the current prices;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly urges the government to institute a comprehensive programme of diversification of the economy both within the traditional sectors and into non-traditional sectors;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly calls upon the government to genuinely embrace private sector investments - foreign and local and create an environment conducive to same.

(Notice Paper No. 202 (M86 Opp5) published on 2005-06-30)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Donald Ramotar,
Mr. Ravindra Dev,
Mr. Zulfikar Mustapha
and
Mrs. Clarissa Riehl.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 4.05 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 4.44 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Mr. Komal Chand,
Mrs. Sheila Holder,
The Minister of Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock,
Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan,
Mr. E. Lance Carberry
and
The Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation.

Thereafter, Mr. James McAllister replied.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 6.52 p.m., the sitting was suspended to allow the government and the opposition to formulate mutually accepted amendments to the motion.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 7.29 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

The Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation moved the following amendments which were put and carried.

Name of Motion - For the word "PREFERENTIAL" substitute the word "NEGOTIATED"

Paragraph 1

First Whereas - For the word "preferential" substitute the word "negotiated"; insert after the words "it imported" the words "under the Sugar Protocol" and for the word "part" substitute the word "member".

Paragraph 2

Second Whereas - After the word "steep" insert the words "and rapid", for the word "preferential" substitute the word "negotiated" and after the word "countries" insert the words "under the Sugar Protocol".

Paragraph 3

Third Whereas - For the words "when the final price cut is made" substitute the words "if the proposed price cut is implemented".

Paragraph 4

- Fourth Whereas - For the word “lost” substitute the word “loss “ and for the words “of sugar receipts annually” substitute the words “of revenue from sugar annually”.

Paragraph 5

- Fifth Whereas - Delete the word “further”.

Paragraph 6

- Sixth Whereas - Delete the word “also”.

Paragraph 7

Seventh Whereas

- Substitute - “AND WHEREAS Guyana needs an adequate transitional period to absorb the impact of loss of income from its main agricultural export and to pursue the restructuring and diversification of its economy to compensate for loss of income and bring about significant economic growth”.

Paragraph 8

- Eighth Whereas - “AND WHEREAS Guyana needs the solid base of a successful sugar industry in wooing private sector investment in the sugar industry”.

The Resolution

Substitute - “That this National Assembly calls on the European Union to accept the ACP countries’ proposals to phase in the price cuts over a period of eight years commencing in 2008 and to cap the cut in the current price at between 16 - 20%.”

Further Resolution - “That this National Assembly calls upon the Government to embrace private sector investments”.

“That this National Assembly calls on the European Union to provide necessary funding in anticipation of any cuts in price to assist in the adaptation of the sugar industry to the impact of the anticipated loss of revenue.”

The amended motion was then put and carried.

BILL - Second Reading

ITEM 2 - GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION BILL 2005 - Bill No. 12/2005 published on 2005-07-06

The Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the protection of geographical indication in order to fulfill the obligations of Guyana under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights of the World Trade Organisation and related matters.

(Read a First time on 2005-07-07)

Mrs. Deborah Backer spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation replied.

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 26 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, the Geographical Indication Bill 2005 - Bill No. 12/2005, was read the third time and passed as printed.

MOTION

ITEM 3 - CONFIRMATION OF THE AUDIT REGULATIONS 2005

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., on behalf of Mr. Winston Murray, M.P., (Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee), moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly, in accordance with section 11(4) of the Audit Act, No. 5 of 2004, confirm the Audit Regulations 2005 (Regulations No. 4 of 2005), which was made on 30th May, 2005, under section 11(1) of the Audit Act, No. 5 of 2004, and published in the Official Gazette dated 30th May, 2005.

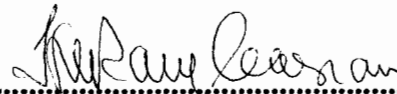
(Notice Paper No. 197 (M81 Govt75) published on 2005-06-21)

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal spoke to the motion.

The motion was then put and carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8.29 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.



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

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Georgetown.

21st July, 2005.