

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 59TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (1998-2000) OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON MONDAY, 11TH DECEMBER, 2000
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN
MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (75)

Members of the Government - People's Progressive Party/Civic (46)

Speaker (1)

The Hon. Winslow M. Zephyr, M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

Other Members (45)

The Hon. Samuel A. A. Hinds, M.P., Prime Minister (Absent - Performing the functions of the Office of the President)

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

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs

*The Hon. Charles R. Ramson, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

*The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P., Minister of Education

The Hon. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Minister of Human Services and Social Security

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

The Hon. F. Vibert DeSouza, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

*The Hon. George E. Fung-On, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

*The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Health and Labour

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

*The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P., Minister of Livestock and Fisheries

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

*The Hon. C. Anthony Xavier, M.P., Minister of Transport and Hydraulics (Absent - on leave)

*The Hon. Shaik K. Z. Baksh, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water (Absent)

*The Hon. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

*The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P., Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance

*The Hon. Geoffrey DaSilva, M.P., Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry (Absent-on leave)

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

Mr. Cyril C. Belgrave, C.C.H., M.P.

Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Husman Alli, M.P.

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

Mr. Navindranauth O. Chandarpal, M.P.

Mr. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P.

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

Mr. Alston A. Kissoon, M.P.

Dr. Moti Lall, C.C.H., M.P.

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

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

Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P.

Mr. Lawrence E. Rodney, M.P.

Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Local Government

Mrs. Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P.

Dr. Bheri Ramsaran, M.P.

Mrs. Bijulee Moti, M.P.

Mr. B.H. Robeson Benn, M.P.

Mr. Joseph M. DeSouza, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)

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

Mr. Ramratan, M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Mr. Geoffrey A. Fraser, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)

Mr. Ramsundar Sankat, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)

Mr. Eustace S. Rodrigues, M.S., M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)

Mr. Kumkaran Ramdas, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)

Members of the Opposition (29)

(i) People's National Congress (25)

Mr. H. Desmond Hoyte, S.C., M.P. Leader of the Opposition

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

Mr. Dunstan Barrow, M.P., Chief Whip (Absent)

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

Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P.

Dr. Faith A. Harding, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P.

Mr. Kadim A. Khan, M.P.

Miss Jean M.G. Persico, A.A., M.P.

Mrs. Cyrilda A. DeJesus, M.P.

Mr. Andy Gouveia, M.P.

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. John S. DeFreitas, M.P.

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

Dr. Dagleish Joseph, M.D., M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

Mr. Joseph L. Hamilton, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Sherwood A. J. Lowe, M.P. (Absent-on leave)

Mr. Andrew Hicks, M.P.

Mr. Neaz Subhan, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Colin Bynoe, M.P.

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

Mr. Kelley Andres, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr. Thakechand Ramnauth, M.P.

Mr. Aubrey C. Norton, M.P. (Absent)

(ii) The United Force (2)

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.

Mr. Matthew R. Charlie, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

(iii) Alliance for Guyana (2)

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine, M.P.

Mr. Albertino Peters, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni) (Absent)

OFFICERS

Mr. Frank A. Narain, C.C.H., Clerk of the National Assembly

Mr. Sherlock E. Isaacs, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 2.00 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(i) Leave

The Speaker announced that leave had been granted to:-

The Hon. Prime Minister, as he was performing the functions
of the Office of the President,

the Hon. Anthony Xavier,

the Hon. Geoffrey DaSilva, and

Mr. Sherwood Lowe, for that day's sitting, and

Mr. Winston Murray up to 14th December, 2000.

(ii) Functions of Prime Minister

The Speaker announced that the Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud was performing the
functions of Prime Minister.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.-

By the Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance:

- (i) Constitutional Offices (Remuneration of Holders) (No. 3) Order 2000 (No. 33 of 2000).

(Circulated)

- (ii) Financial Paper No. 5/2000 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$915,064,485, for the period ended 24th November, 2000 - Advances made from the Contingencies Fund.

(Circulated)

The Minister named Friday, 15th December, 2000, as the day for the consideration of the Financial Paper.

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND MOVED BY A MINISTER-

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 46(2) AND (3)

The Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs moved the following motion which was put and carried:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Standing Order No. 46(2) and (3) be suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed at its sitting on Monday, 11th December, 2000, with the second reading and the remaining stages of the Ethnic Relations Commission Tribunal Bill 2000 - Bill No. 15 of 2000.

(Notice Paper No. 99 (M54 Govt48) published 2000-12-05)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and First Reading

- (1) **CONSTITUTION(AMENDMENT)(No.4) BILL 2000 - Bill No. 14/2000**
published 2000-12-05

The Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL Intituled AN ACT to alter
the Constitution in accordance
with articles 66 and 164.

- (2) **ETHNIC RELATIONS COMMISSION TRIBUNAL BILL 2000 - Bill No. 15/2000**
published 2000-12-05

The Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL Intituled AN ACT to provide for
the establishment of the Ethnic Relations
Commission Tribunal and for matters
connected therewith and incidental
thereto.

- (3) **LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ELECTIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2000-**
Bill No. 16/2000 published 2000-12-05

The Minister of Local Government presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL Intituled AN ACT to amend the Local
Authorities (Elections) Act to provide for the
postponement of elections of councillors of
local democratic organs.

PUBLIC BUSINESS**MOTION****ITEM 1 - NOMINATIONS BY ENTITIES OF MEMBERS TO ETHNIC RELATIONS COMMISSION**

The Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs moved the following motion:

WHEREAS article 212A of the Constitution has established an Ethnic Relations Commission;

AND WHEREAS in accordance with article 212B (1) of the Constitution, the Ethnic Relations Commission shall consist of -

- (a) not less than five nor more than fifteen members nominated by entities, by a consensual mechanism determined by the National Assembly, including entities, representative of religious bodies, the labour movement, the private business sector, youth and women, after the entities are determined by the votes of not less than two-thirds of all elected members of the National Assembly;
- (b) a member who shall be a nominee, without the right to vote, chosen by and from each of the following commissions to be established under this Constitution, Indigenous People's Commission, Women and Gender Equality Commission, Commission for the Rights of the Child and Human Rights Commission;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly determines the entities to nominate members of the Ethnic Relations Commission, in accordance with article 212B (1) (a) of the Constitution, to be as set out in the First Schedule attached;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the number of nominees for each group of entities be as follows:-

<u>Group of Entities</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>
Christian Religion	One Member
Hindu Religion	One Member
Muslim Religion	One Member
Trade Unions	One Member
Private Sector Organisations	One Member
Youth Organisations	One Member
Women Organisations	One Member

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the consensual mechanism for the nomination of the members by the entities be as set out in the Second Schedule attached.

FIRST SCHEDULE

Groups and Entities within each Group to Nominate Members of the Ethnic Relations Commission :

Religious Bodies:

Islamic Bodies

The Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana

Guyana Islamic Trust

Guyana United Sadr Islamic Anjuman

Anjuman Hifazatul Islam

Hijatul Ulamaa

Hindu Bodies

Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha

Guyana Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha

Guyana Pandits Council

Guyana Maha Kali

Guyana Central Arya Samaj

Guyana Arya Pratinidhi Sabha

Christian Bodies

Members of The Guyana Council Of Churches

The Alleluia Church

African Methodist Episcopalian

African Methodist Episcopalian (Zion)

The Anglican Church of Guyana

The Church Of God

Ethiopian Orthodox Church

Guyana Congregation Union

Guyana Presbyterian Church

The Lutheran Church of Guyana

The Methodist Church in Guyana

Moravians

Outreach Ministry

Roman Catholics

The Salvation Army

Guyana Missionary Baptists

Non-Members Of The Guyana Council Of Churches

The Wesleyan Church

New Testament Church Of God

Assemblies Of God In Guyana

Christian Brethren Mission

Guyana Conference Of Seven Day Adventists

District Centre Church Of the Nazarene

Full Gospel Ministries

National Spiritual Assembly Of The Babais Of Guyana

The Labour Movement Bodies

Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union (AT&GWU)
 Guyana Teachers Union (GTU)
 Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU)
 Guyana Labour Union (GLU)
 Printing Industry Allied Workers Union (PIAWU)
 National Association Of Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Employees (NAACIE)
 General Workers Union (GWU)
 Guyana Local Government Officers' Union (GLGOU)
 Guyana Mining, Metal and General Workers Union (GMMGWU)
 Guyana Postal and Telecommunications Workers Union (GP&TWU)
 Association of Masters and Mistresses (AMM)
 National Union Of Public Service Employees (NUPSE)
 Clerical and Commercial Workers Union (CCWU)
 University of Guyana Workers Union (UGWU)
 Guyana Bauxite and General Workers Union (GBSU)
 Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU)
 Union Of Agricultural and Allied Workers (UAAW)
 National Mining and General Workers Union (NM&GWU)
 University OF Guyana Senior Staff Association (UGSSA)

Private Business Sector Bodies

Guyana Private Sector Commission
 Guyana Manufacturers Association
 Guyana Forest Products Association
 Guyana Gold And Diamond Miners Association
 Association Of Non-Traditional Exporters
 Guyana Rice Millers and Exporters Development Association
 Aircraft Owners Association Of Guyana
 Shipping Association Of Guyana
 The Tourism And Hospitality Association Of Guyana
 Georgetown Chamber Of Commerce and Industry
 Berbice Chamber Of Commerce And Development Association
 Linden Chamber Of Industry And Commerce
 Consultative Association Of Guyanese Industry

Youth Bodies

Dharmic Naujawan (Dharmic Youth)
 National Youth Commission
 Georgetown Youth Leaders Council
 Progressive Youth Organisation
 Guyana Youth And Student Movement
 The United Force Youth Arm
 Working People's Alliance Youth Organisation
 Volunteer Youth Corps
 Guyana Scouts Association
 Young Men's Christian Association
 Trades Union Council Youth Movement
 University Of Guyana Student Society
 Seventh Day Adventist Pathfinders
 Muslim Youth Organisation

Guyana Congregational Young People's Union
 Full Gospel Youth Fellowship
 Girl Guides Association
 Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association Under 20's Club
 Moravian Youth Club
 Young Women's Christian Association
 Church Of Christ Youth Group
 Roman Catholic Youth Office
 Youth Ambassadors First Assembly of God
 Ghandi Organisation
 Central Baptist Youth Fellowship
 Youth Achievers
 Guyana Junior Chamber
 Methodist Youth Club

Women Bodies

National Commission On Women
 Red Thread Women's Development Project
 Young Women's Christian Association Of Guyana
 Women's Progressive Organisation
 National Congress Of Women
 Church Women United
 Methodist Women League
 TUC Women's Advisory Council
 Anglican Mother's Union
 Women Across Differences
 Central Islamic Organisation Of Guyana (Women)
 The United Force Women's Auxiliary
 Salvation Army Home League
 Congregational Women's Union
 Lutheran Church Women
 Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha's Mahila Mandale
 Federation Of AME Women
 Police Wives Association
 Guyana Federation Of Women's Institutes

SECOND SCHEDULE

Consensual Mechanism for the Nomination by Entities of Members of the Ethnic Relations Commission

All the Entities in each Group should be written to by the Clerk of the National Assembly inviting them to meet, on a day/date, time and place to be agreed by them, to determine their Nominee (and one Substitute who would replace the Nominee on the Ethnic Relations Commission in the event that the Nominee is no longer able to function) for Membership of the Ethnic Relations Commission. Where there is a recognised "umbrella organisation" for the Group, the Clerk should write to that organisation and copy his letter to each of the "constituent entities" within the Group.

The Nominee and Substitute chosen by the Group must be persons who are competent to contribute positively to the work of the Commission and who are committed to ensuring that it discharges all of its functions. They should have earned public respect and be of unquestioned and unblemished honesty and integrity.

The "process/procedure" used must be demonstrated to be unbiased and transparent. It is important that the Nominee and Substitute obtain the unquestioned support and acceptance of the Entity nominating them as well as the Entities within the Group.

A deadline should be set by which time the Clerk of the National Assembly would be formally notified of: the names and other requested particulars of the Nominee; the “process/procedure” used for the selection of the Nominee; the number of Entities within the Group which were “properly” represented when the Nominee was selected; and a “statement” to the effect that the Nominee is supported and accepted by the majority of Entities within the Group.

(Notice Paper No. 98 (M53 Govt37) published 2000-11-23)

Mr. E. Lance Carberry spoke to the motion.

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine spoke to the motion and moved the following amendments to the Second Schedule:

Insertion of the words “, immediately on the passage of this motion,” between the words “Group” and “should” in the first line of the first paragraph.

Deletion of the words “which time” between the words “by” and “the” and insertion of the words “by which time he” between the words “Assembly” and “would” in the first line of the last paragraph.

Mr. Manzoor Nadir seconded the amendment and spoke.

Dr. Dagleish Joseph moved and Mr. Raphael Trotman seconded the following amendment to the First Schedule:

Insertion of the following in the list of Christian Bodies:

The Jewish Orthodox Church (Apostolic Faith)

The Guyana United Apostolic Mystical Council.

Mr. Robeson Benn spoke.

The Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs replied.

The amendments by Dr. Roopnaraine and by Dr. Joseph were agreed to.

The amended motion was then put and was supported by the votes of the following fifty-five (55) of the sixty-five (65) elected Members of the Assembly:

Dr. Roopnaraine

Mr. Charlie

Mr. Nadir

Mr. Ramnauth

Mr. Andres

Ms Adams

Mr. Bynoe

Mr. Hicks

Mr. Hamilton

Mrs. Lawrence

Dr. Joseph

Mr. Trotman

Mr. DeFreitas

Mrs. Backer

Mr. Goveia

Mrs. DeJesus

Miss Persico

Mr. Khan

Mr. Allen

Mr. Carberry

Mrs. Riehl

Mr. Hoyte

Mr. Ramdas

Mr. Rodrigues

Mr. Sankat

Mr. Fraser

Mr. Ramratan

Mr. Mohan

Mr. DeSouza

Mr. Benn

Mrs. Moti

Dr. Ramsaran

Mrs. Sukhai

Mrs. Sahoye-Shury

Mr. Rodney

Dr. Ramsammy

Mr. Ramjattan

Mr. Nagamootoo

Mr. Lumumba

Dr. Lall

Mr. Kissoon

Mrs. Edwards

Mr. DeSantos

Mr. Chandarpal

Mr. Chand

Mr. Alli

Mr. Belgrave

Mr. Mohamed

Miss Teixeira

Mr. Nokta

Mr. DeSouza

Mr. Collymore

Mrs. Chandarpal

Mr. Rohee

Mr. Persaud

Total 55

BILL - Second Reading

ITEM 2 - ETHNIC RELATIONS COMMISSION TRIBUNAL BILL 2000 -
Bill No. 15/2000

The Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL Intituled AN ACT to provide for the establishment of the Ethnic Relations Commission Tribunal and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Raphael Trotman
Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine
Mr. Manzoor Nadir
Mr. Lance Carberry.

Thereafter, the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

The Bill was read a second time.

On a proposal by the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs, further consideration of the Bill was deferred to the next Sitting on Friday, 15th December, 2000.

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.31 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m. on Friday, 15th December, 2000.


W.M. ZEPHYR

Speaker of the National Assembly

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Georgetown.

11th December, 2000.