

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE 19TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (1986) OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD

AT 14:00 HRS

ON WEDNESDAY 1986-07-23

IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (73)

Speaker (1)

*Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., S.C., J.P., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

Members of the Government - People's National Congress (61)

Ministers in the Cabinet (10)

Prime Minister (1)

Cde. H. Green, M.P., Prime Minister (Absent - on leave)

Other Vice-President and First Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Cde. Dr. M. Shahabuddeen, O.R., S.C., M.P., Vice-President, First Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General (Absent - on leave)

Other Vice-Presidents and Deputy Prime Ministers (2)

Cde. R. Chandisingh, M.F., Vice-President, National Mobilisation, and Deputy Prime Minister (Absent - on leave)

Cde. Viola V. Burnham, O.R., M.P., Vice-President, Education and Social Development, and Deputy Prime Minister

Other Deputy Prime Ministers (2)

Cde. W.A.L.H. Parris, C.C.H., M.P., Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development

Cde. R.H.O. Corbin, M.P., Deputy Prime Minister, Agriculture (Absent - on leave)

Senior Ministers (4)

Cde. R.E. Jackson, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs (Absent)

*Cde. C.B. Greenidge, M.F., Minister of Finance (Absent)

Cde. S. Frashad, M.F., Minister of Transport

*Cde. W.S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P., Minister of Trade (Absent - on leave)

Other Ministers (11)

Senior Ministers (3)

Cde. J.R. Thomas, M.P., Minister of Manpower, Housing and Environment (Absent - on leave)

Cde. Dr. R.A. Van West-Charles, M.P., Minister of Health

Cde. Yvonne V. Harewood-Benn, M.P., Minister of Information and the Public Service

Ministers (4)

Cde. Urmia E.H. Johnson, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of National Mobilisation

*Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P., Minister of Youth and Sport within the Ministry of Education

Cde. C.G. Sharma, A.A., J.P., M.P., Minister within the Office of the President (Absent - on leave)

*Cde. D.M.A. Bernard, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Education

*Non-elected Member

Ministers of State (4)

- *Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Manpower, Housing and Environment (Absent)
- Cde. J.T. Kisson, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Agriculture (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. D. Sawh, M.I., Minister of State within the Ministry of Forestry
- *Cde. Dr. Faith A. Harding, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Planning and Development (Absent - on leave)

Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

- Cde. A.K. Habibulla, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the President
- Cde. Stella Odie-Ali, M.F., Parliamentary Secretary, Home Affairs
- *Cde. Jean M.G. Persico, A.A., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Education

Government Chief Whip (1)

- Cde. Jennifer A. Ferreira, M.F., Government Chief Whip

Other Members (24)

- Cde. R.E. Williams, M.P.
- Cde. Agnes W. Bend-Kirton, M.P.
- Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.
- Cde. Joyce Gill-Mingo, M.P.
- Cde. M. Ally, M.P.
- Cde. Bissoondai Beniprashad-Rayman, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. Elaine B. Davidson, M.P.
- Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
- Cde. Joyce M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. Edwina Melville, M.F. (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. Anna Ally, M.P.
- Cde. L.R. Arthur, M.P.
- Cde. J.R.L. Bovell-Drakes, M.P.
- Cde. N. Calistro, M.P.
- Cde. G.W. Chin, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. F.M. Cumberbatch, M.P.
- Cde. M.I. Deen, M.P.
- Cde. Cyrilda A. DeJesus, M.P.
- Cde. Edith Deygoo, M.F.
- Cde. Clarice A. Edwards, M.P.
- Cde. C.L. Geddes, M.P.
- Cde. G. Marshall, M.P.
- Cde. B. Persaud, M.P.
- Cde. E.W. Trotman, M.P.

Members from the National Congress of Local Democratic Organs (2)

- Cde. E. Mohamed, M.P.
- Cde. Rose I. Semple, M.P.

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

- Cde. Nellie R. Charles, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)
- Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)
- Cde. Bhagmatee Latchminarayan, M.F. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)
- Cde. Y. Khan, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)
- Cde. Enid E. Abrahams, M.S., J.P., M.F. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
- Cde. I. Ally, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)
- Cde. Patricia A. Daniel, M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice)
- Cde. B.L. Domingo, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)
- Cde. S.I. McGarrell, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potara/Siparuni)
- Cde. M. Stephens, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo) (Absent)

*Non-elected Member

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Members of the Minority (11)

(i) People's Progressive Party (8)

Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P., Minority Leader (Absent - on leave)

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.F., M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Other Members (6)

Cde. Janet Jagan, M.P.
Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P., Minority Chief Whip
Cde. H. Nokta, M.P.
Cde. I. Basir, M.P.
Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P.

(ii) United Force (2)

Mr. M.F. Singh, C.C.H., J.F., M.P.
Mr. M.A. Abraham, M.P.

(iii) Working People's Alliance (1)

Mr. E. Kwayana, M.P.

OFFICERS

Cde. F.A. Nerain, A.A., Clerk of the National Assembly
Cde. M.B. Henry, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(i) Leave

The Speaker announced that leave had been granted to -

- (a) Cdes. Green, Chandisingh, Corbin, Kissoon, and Beniprashad-Rayman for that day's sitting,
- (b) Cde. Dr. Shahabuddeen up to 10th August, and
- (c) Cde. C. Jagan up to 23rd August.

(ii) Acting Minority Leader

The Speaker announced that he had been informed that during the absence of Dr. Jagan, Cde. Janet Jagan would be performing his parliamentary duties.

(iii) Postponement of consideration of items 1, 2 and 3 on the Order Paper

The Speaker informed the Assembly that on account of the absence of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, consideration of items 1, 2 and 3 on the Order Paper were being postponed.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

By the Minister of Information and the Public Service, on behalf of the Prime Minister:

Review of the Operations of the Sugar Industry
Labour Welfare Fund for the year 1985.

(OP: 6/5)(Circulated)

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS -

No. 6 - Value of Seizures at Timehri Airport and Gains by Sijan Plaza - Notice Paper No. 27 published 1986-04-10

Mr. Kwayana asked the Minister of Finance the following questions:

- QUESTION: (i) Will the Minister tell the Assembly the annual value, for the years 1979 to 1985 inclusive, of the seizures at the Timehri Airport of the following items:
- (a) gold
 - (b) gold jewellery
 - (c) foreign currency
- (ii) Will the Minister say what are the Government's net gains from the operation of the Sijan Plaza:
- (a) in foreign exchange
 - (b) in benefits not quantifiable?

The Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development, on behalf of the Minister of Finance, gave the following reply:-

ANSWER: There was a fire which destroyed Customs House during the period for which figures are being required. Accordingly no figures are available for 1979 and the numbers for the early years of the sequence may be underestimated. Nevertheless, on the basis of the available records, the information is given.

- (i) Over the years 1979 to 1985 the value of seizures at Timehri Airport were as follows:
- (a) Gold
 - 1979 Not available
 - 1980 G\$1,900.00
 - 1981 Nil
 - 1982 Nil
 - 1983 G\$31,343.92
 - 1984 G\$529,168.68
 - 1985 G\$264,270.00

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- (b) Gold jewellery
- 1979 Not available
 - 1980 and 1981 Nil
 - 1982 G\$1,466.45
 - 1983 G\$72,569.00
 - 1984 G\$48,119.15
 - 1985 G\$12,131.72

- (c) Foreign Currency
- 1979 Not available
 - 1980 G\$5,086.00
 - 1981 G\$3,105.00
 - 1982 G\$39,000.00
 - 1983 G\$257,000.00
 - 1984 G\$777,000.00
 - 1985 G\$141,765.00

- (ii) (a) The net gains from the operation of the Sijan Plaza amount to roughly US\$112,970.00 for the year 1985.
- (b) The second half of the question, as I understand it, reads:
- "Will the Minister say what are the Government's net gains from the operation of the Sijan Plaza in benefits not quantifiable"? If the benefits are not quantifiable it is by definition not possible to arrive at a net position.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Grant of Mining Concessions to Mr. Robert Chappell

In a statement to the Assembly, the Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development, denied that the Government of Guyana had granted any mining concessions to Mr. Robert Chappell.

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REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON DEFINITE
MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Mr. Robert Chappell's claim to drilling rights to 3.5 acres
of property in Guyana

Mr. Kwayana sought leave to move the adjournment of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing a matter which dealt with operations of Mr. Robert Chappell, signatory on behalf of Nassau Life of a Memorandum of Understanding, between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Nassau Life Insurance Company Limited.

The Speaker did not allow the claim as it did not qualify as one which could properly be raised on a motion for the adjournment, as it was not urgent and was not raised at the earliest parliamentary opportunity.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTIONS

ITEM 1 - SYMPATHY ON DEATH OF CDE. FRED BOWMAN, FORMER MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
Notice Paper No. 98 published 1986-07-18

Cde. Bend-Kirton moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly records its deep regret at the death of Cde. Fred Bowman, and pays tribute to the distinguished service which he rendered to Guyana and to its Parliament and directs that an expression of its sympathy be conveyed to his sorrowing widow, children and relatives.

The Deputy Speaker seconded and spoke to the motion.

Mr. M.F. Singh and Mr. Kwayana spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the motion was put and carried with Members standing.

ITEM 2 - CONVERSION OF GUYANA NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS LTD. INTO PUBLIC COMPANY
Notice Paper No. 30 published 1986-04-17

Mr. Kwayana moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Guyana National Newspapers Ltd. be converted into a public company;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Company be governed by special legislation which protects the interests of the labour force, in shareholding, industrial relations and management;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That participation be open to all citizens of Guyana and the citizens of the Caribbean Community with the Government and citizens of Guyana holding not less than a certain share of the equity to be determined by the Government;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the new Company be required by law to function in such a way as to promote a pluralist democracy and ideological pluralism, in which the Government of the day has the right, along with others, to communicate information and express opinion.

Cde. Basir seconded the motion.

The Minister of Information and the Public Service and the Deputy Speaker spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, Mr. Kwayana replied.

The Minister of Information and the Public Service concluded the debate.

The Motion was put and negatived.

BILL - Second and Third Readings

ITEM 3 - CINEMATOGRAPH (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 Bill No. 9/1986 published
1986-07-05

The Minister of Information and the Public Service moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A Bill intituled An Act to amend the Cinematograph Act to provide for the regulation of video exhibition and to make consequential amendment to the Tax Act.

Cde. S.F. Mohamed, Mr. M.F. Singh and Mr. Kwayana spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the Minister of Information and the Public Service replied.

The motion was put and carried.

The Bill was read a second time and was, thereafter, taken through its remaining stages and passed as printed with the following correction:

Substitution of "Subsection (1)" for "Subsection (1) and (3)" in clause 6(2).

ADJOURNMENT

At 16:20 hrs, on a motion by the Minister of Information and the Public Service, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.

S. Narain
S. NARAIN
Speaker
86.07.29