

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

ORDER PAPER

FOR THE 22ND SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION

(2006 - 2007) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA TO BE HELD

AT 2.00 P.M.

ON THURSDAY, 15TH MARCH, 2007

IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN

BUSINESS FOR SITTING

PRAYERS

OATH OF A NEW MEMBER-

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT-

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS-

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES-

ORAL QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE-

2.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Oral Replies

1. FILLING OF VACANT POSITION OF SOLICITOR GENERAL

Member Asking: Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Legal Affairs

* Could the Hon. Minister of Legal Affairs inform this National Assembly what plans his Government has to fill the Constitutional position of Solicitor General which has been vacant since 1994?

(Notice Paper No. 93 (Q69 Opp69) published on 2007-01-31)

2. HEAVILY CONGESTED AND NARROW STREETS IN GEORGETOWN

Member Asking: Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

*Could the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs tell this National Assembly whether he is prepared to operationalised the recommendation, made by the PNCR-1G during the 2006 Budget Debate that heavily congested and narrow streets in Georgetown be converted to one way streets?

(Notice Paper No. 95 (Q71 Opp71) published on 2007-01-31)

3. EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS TO MINERALS FOUND IN RORAIMA AREA

Member Asking: Mr. Everall Franklin, M.P.

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

*Has the Government of Guyana given exclusive rights to any company to all minerals found in a sixteen thousand square kilometer area of Roraima, which may also include Amerindian Lands?

(Notice Paper No. 114 (Q89 Opp 89) published on 2007-02-09)

4. **LATERITIC BAUXITE DEPOSIT IN THE KOPINANG BASIN**

Member Asking: Mr. Everall Franklin, M.P.

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

*Will the Honourable Prime Minister state if a lateritic Bauxite deposit exceeding 1,100 million metric tons was confirmed in the Kopinang Basin?

(Notice Paper No. 115 (Q90 Opp90) published on 2007-02-09)

*5. **CARICOM CHARTER OF CIVIL RIGHTS**

Member Asking: Mr. Aubrey Norton, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs

- (i) *Can the Hon. Minister say whether his Government has established “the mechanism at the national level to monitor the recommendations of the Caricom Charter of Civil Rights?
- (ii) *If such a mechanism has been established can the Hon. Minister inform this National Assembly what results have been obtained to date?
- (iii) *If the mechanism has not been established can the Hon. Minister say when this mechanism will be established?

(Notice Paper No. 67 (Q49 Opp49) published on 2007-01-23)

***6. CONFERENCE/RETREAT OF HEADS OF OVERSEAS DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS**

Member Asking: Mr. Aubrey Norton, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs

- (i) *Can the Hon. Minister inform this National Assembly when last a Conference/Retreat of Heads of Overseas Diplomatic Mission was convened?
- (ii) *Could the Hon. Minister say what is the date and venue for the next Heads of Overseas Diplomatic Missions Conference/Retreat?

(Notice Paper No. 68 (Q50 Opp50) published on 2007-01-23)

***7. HEAD OF A DIPLOMATIC MISSION**

Member Asking: Mr. Aubrey Norton, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs

- (i) *Could the Hon. Minister indicate if the disadvantages of having the Head of a Diplomatic Mission for more than five (5) years in one post outweighs the advantages?
- (ii) *Is such an approach useful in the present international situation?

(Notice Paper No. 69 (Q51 Opp51) published on 2007-01-23)

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*Not to be proceeded with at this sitting

For Written Replies

8. RECONSTRUCTION OF SUSSEX STREET

Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

Could the Hon. Minister of Transport and Hydraulics inform this National Assembly whether there are any current plans for the reconstruction of Sussex Street?

(Notice Paper No. 96 (Q72 Opp72) published on 2007-01-31)

9. REPAIRS TO BRIDGES LINKING UPPER SUSSEX STREET TO SURROUNDING AREAS

Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

Could the Hon. Minister of Transport and Hydraulics inform this National Assembly, when will the three main bridges linking Upper Sussex Street with Callender Street, Castello Housing Scheme and West La Penitence (the Island) be repaired to provide normal ingress and egress?

(Notice Paper No. 97 (Q73 Opp 73) published on 2007-01-31)

10. MEDICAL FACILITIES FOR RESIDENTS OF NORTH AND PLUM PARK SOPHIA

Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Health

Could the Hon. Minister of Health inform this National Assembly:-

- (i) When the residents of North Sophia and Plum Park Sophia will benefit from medical facilities?

- (ii) Whether these medical facilities, when made available, will have medical staff available on a 24 hour basis?

(Notice Paper No. 98 (Q74 Opp 74) published on 2007-01-31)

11. **AMBULANCE FOR SUB-REGION 2 OF REGION NO. 8**

Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Health

Could the Hon. Minister of Health inform this National Assembly when sub-Region 2 of Region No. 8 will be provided with an ambulance?

(Notice Paper No. 99 (Q75 Opp75) published on 2007-01-31)

12. **TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE**

Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

Could the Hon. Minister of Education inform this National Assembly of the total number of students of primary school age presently NOT enrolled in the Primary School system throughout Guyana?

(Notice Paper No. 100 (Q76 Opp 76) published on 2007-01-31)

13. **POLICY TO DEAL WITH SCHOOL DROPOUTS**

Member Asking: Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

Could the Hon. Minister of Education inform this National Assembly what is the policy of his Ministry to deal with school dropouts?

(Notice Paper No. 104 (Q80 Opp80) published on 2007-01-31)

14. **HIGH LEVEL OF TRUANCY IN REGION NO. 3**

Member Asking: Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

Could the Hon. Minister of Education inform this National Assembly when the Schools Welfare Officers in Region No. 3 will begin a systematic program to combat the high level of truancy in Region No. 3?

(Notice Paper No. 105 (Q81 Opp 81) published on 2007-01-31)

15. **ALLOCATION OF TIME AND PUBLICISING OF DEBATES IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Member Asking: Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

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

- (i) Will the Honourable Prime Minister say what system is employed by the state's radio and television stations in allocating time to speakers from the various parliamentary parties in publicising debates in the National Assembly?
- (ii) Will the Honourable Prime Minister say how much time was allocated on state's radio and television to the various parliamentary parties during the debates that took place since the opening of the Ninth Parliament?
- (iii) Will the Honourable Prime Minister list the names of the Parliamentarians whose presentations were aired on state's radio and television during the debates in the National Assembly for the period commencing the opening of the Ninth Parliament to January 31, 2007?

(Notice Paper No. 107 (Q82 Opp82) published on 2007-02-09)

16. **OVERSEAS TREATMENT OF CITIZENS**

Member Asking: Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Health

- (i) Will the Honourable Minister say what is the system being utilised by the Ministry of Health in allocating financial assistance for overseas treatment of citizens in circumstances where local health facilities are not available and citizens cannot afford to pay for their life-saving medical treatment prescribed?
- (ii) With the Ministry of Health's ongoing programme of improvements in the public hospital system when does the Minister envisage a reduction or cessation in the overseas treatment being financially sponsored by the government?
- (iii) Will the Minister please list the names of the persons who benefited from overseas paid treatment by the State over the last fourteen (14) years?
(Notice Paper No. 108 (Q 83 Opp83) published on 2007-02-09)

17. **ELECTRICITY FOR FOUR MILE HOUSING SCHEME AND WEST SIDE OF BARTICA SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Member Asking: Mrs. Judith David-Blair, M.P.

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

Could the Honourable Prime Minister inform this National Assembly when the residents of Four Mile Housing Scheme and West Side of the Secondary School at Bartica, Region No. 7 will receive electricity?

(Notice Paper No. 109 (Q84 Opp84) published on 2007-02-09)

18. **ROYALTIES PAID TO THE GUYANA GEOLOGY AND MINES COMMISSION (GGMC) THROUGH THE MINERS ASSOCIATION**

Member Asking: Mrs. Judith David-Blair, M.P.

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

Could the Honourable Prime Minister tell this National Assembly when the funds, of approximately GY\$200 million, obtained from Royalties paid to the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC) through the Miners Association will be made available for repairs to the One to Five Miles Potaro Road?

(Notice Paper No. 110 (Q85 Opp 85) published on 2007-02-09)

19. **HINTERLANDS AREAS TO BENEFIT FROM ENERGY-EFFICIENT BULBS**

Member Asking: Mrs. Judith David-Blair, M.P.

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

Could the Honourable Prime Minister say which hinterland areas will benefit from the donation of energy-efficient bulbs given to the Guyana Government by the Cuban Government?

(Notice Paper No. 111 (Q86 Opp 86) published on 2007-02-09)

20. **ROADS ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE BARTICA SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Member Asking: Mrs. Judith David-Blair, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

Could the Honourable Minister say when the roads on the West Side of the Secondary School in Bartica, Region No. 7 will be completed?

(Notice Paper No. 112 (Q87 Opp87) published on 2007-02-09)

21. **COMPLETION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL AT THREE MILES POTARO ROAD**

Member Asking: Mrs. Judith David-Blair, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

Could the Honourable Minister tell this National Assembly when the Secondary School at Three Miles Potaro Road will be completed?

(Notice Paper No. 113 (Q88 Opp 88) published on 2007-02-09)

22. **PROCUREMENT OF IT EQUIPMENT TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VALUE-ADDED TAX (VAT)**

Member Asking: Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Finance

- (i) Is it true that the procurement of IT equipment to support the implementation of VAT was delayed?
- (ii) Was the said delay due to the Procurement Manager advising on 28th August, 2006 that the contract for IT equipment be split by GRA locations so as to keep each under \$100,000.00 U.S. so as to avoid an international tender?
- (iii) What was the approximate sum intended to be spent on the procurement of IT equipment to support the implementation of VAT?
- (iv) Was this sum to be provided by the IDB?
- (v) How soon will the IT equipment be procured for this said purpose?

- (vi) Who were awarded the contract(s) to provide the said IT equipment?
 - (vii) Will there be any sanctions attached to any officer(s) who may have caused or contributed to the delay in the procurement of the said IT equipment?
- (Notice Paper 116 (Q91 Opp 91) published on 2007-02-09)**

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS, INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS-

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS-

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

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

1. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 28(1)**

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

WHEREAS it is provided by Standing Order No. 28(1) that a Government motion shall not be placed upon the Order Paper for a day earlier than seven (7) days from the day on which the notice was given to the Clerk;

AND WHEREAS a notice of a motion has been given this day, Monday, 12th March, 2007 to be moved on Thursday, 15th March, 2007, for the suspension of Standing Order No. 54 (1) to enable the Assembly to proceed with the second and third readings of the Security Assistance (Caricom Member States) Bill 2007 – Bill No. 11/2007, the Visiting Forces Bill 2007 – Bill No. 12/2007 and Status of Visiting Police Officers Bill 2007 – Bill No. 13/2007.

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Standing Order No. 28 (1) be suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed with the motion to suspend Standing Order No. 54(1).

(Notice Paper No. 133 (M28 Govt 20) published on 2007-03-12)

2. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 54**

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

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Standing Order No. 54 be suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed at its sitting on Thursday, 15th March, 2007, with the second reading and the remaining stages of the Security Assistance (Caricom Member States) Bill 2007 – Bill No. 11/2007, the Visiting Forces Bill 2007 – Bill No. 12/2007 and Status of Visiting Police Officers Bill 2007 – Bill No. 13/2007.

(Notice Paper No.134 (M29 Govt21) published on 2007-03-12)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-

PUBLIC BUSINESS-

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS - Second Readings

1. **SECURITY ASSISTANCE (CARICOM MEMBER STATES) BILL 2007 – Bill No. 11/2007 published on 2007-03-09**

The Minister of Home Affairs to move the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the implementation of the Treaty on Security Assistance among CARICOM Member States and for matters connected therewith.

(Read a first time on 2007-03-13)

2. **VISITING FORCES BILL 2007 – Bill No. 12/2007 published on 2007-03-09**

The Minister of Home Affairs to move the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to make provision for the armed forces of certain states visiting Guyana and for related purposes.

(Read a first time on 2007-03-13)

3. **STATUS OF VISITING POLICE OFFICERS BILL 2007 – Bill No. 13/2007 published on 2007-03-09**

The Minister of Home Affairs to move the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the presence, activities, privileges and immunities of members of foreign police forces and civilian personnel during the period of CWC 2007 and for matters connected therewith.

(Read a first time on 2007-03-13)

BILL – Second Reading, Committee and Third Reading

***4. HEALTH FACILITIES LICENSING BILL 2006 – Bill No. 29/2006 published on 2006-12-21**

The Assembly to proceed upon the further stages of the following Bill, after the Special Select Committee has reported thereon:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the licensing of Health Facilities and for related matters.

(Read a first time on 2006-12-21)

(Committed to the Special Select Committee on 2007-01-11)

(ii) PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and first Reading

***FREEDOM OF INFORMATION BILL 2006 – Bill No. 26/2006**

Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P., is to seek leave to present the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to give access to information to members of the public.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTIONS

***5. INTRODUCTION OF THE VALUE-ADDED TAX (VAT)**

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., to move the following motion:

WHEREAS the PNCR-1G had always supported in principle the introduction of (VAT) to replace a number of existing taxes with the objective of widening the tax base and bringing within the tax net persons and supplies which hitherto escaped payment of taxes;

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*Not to be proceeded with at this sitting

AND WHEREAS the introduction of the tax was expected to reduce the burden of taxation on those categories of workers, such as teachers, policemen, nurses and public servants, who were captive targets of the tax system;

AND WHEREAS throughout all stages of the passage of the relevant Legislation the PNCR-1G suggested a reduction of the proposed rate, the zero rating of essential commodities, a phased implementation of the tax and a deferral of the date of implementation beyond January 1, 2007;

AND WHEREAS the Government is in possession of information which demonstrates that to achieve their stated objective of revenue neutrality the rate of the tax could be lowered;

AND WHEREAS the implementation of the (VAT) on January 1, 2007 has led to a dramatic rise in the cost of living that is decimating the working poor and their families, with the harshest effects being felt by the unemployed, pensioners, unwaged housewives and low waged workers, resulting in a deepening sense of desperation among citizens,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- (1) A special all-Party Parliamentary Committee be established immediately to make recommendations for the reduction on the rate of the tax, for widening the range of zero rated and exempt supplies and a phased implementation of the Value-Added Tax;
- (2) The Government immediately implement significant levels of salary increases for those categories of workers most adversely affected by the implementation of (VAT);

- (3) The Government promptly, but no later than six weeks of the passage of this Resolution, establish a National Commission on Tax Reform to review of the tax system and make recommendations for, inter alia, the raising of the income tax threshold and reduction of income and corporation taxes;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

The membership of the aforesaid Commission includes various stakeholders, including, the Guyana Trades Union Congress, the Private Sector Organisations, the Religious community, and other social sector organizations.

(Notice Paper No. 87 (M18 Opp 6) published on 2007-01-23)

***6. AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDER NO. 10**

Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P., to move the following motion:

WHEREAS the hours of Parliament are prescribed by Standing Order No. 10 of the Standing Orders of the National Assembly to be 2.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. with suspensions at 4.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. respectively;

AND WHEREAS Members of the National Assembly have expressed varying views on the times for sittings of the Assembly with some Members favouring the commencement of sessions at an earlier time whilst others appear to prefer the strict observance of the prescribed times;

AND WHEREAS it would be desirable for a compromise to be found so as to allow for the hours of sittings to be varied from time to time by the Parliamentary Management Committee depending on the business to be disposed of,

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*Not to be proceeded with at this sitting

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Standing Orders Committee examines the issue of the times at which the Assembly shall meet including, the right of the Speaker to suspend the Standing Orders to allow the time to be abridged or varied and to report to the National Assembly its finding and recommendations within three months.

(Notice Paper No.92 (M23 Opp 7) published on 2007-01-30)

***7. THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

Ms Chantelle Smith, M.P., to move the following motion:

WHEREAS in 1991 Guyana signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

AND WHEREAS Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that "Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child";

AND WHEREAS the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child has consistently proposed the abolition of corporal punishment when the reporting process under the convention has revealed the continued existence of school corporal punishment;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana's report to the Committee of the Convention of the Rights of the Child of July 29, 2002 states: "Enhanced legislation is an integral element in this country's efforts to give tangible effect to the provisions of the Constitution Reform Commission.";

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*Not to be proceeded with at this sitting

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana's report to the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child of July 29, 2002 further states "The Constitutional Reform Commission acknowledged that the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child should inform constitutional provisions to protect children's rights. The Oversight Select Committee of the Revised Guyana Constitution subsequently accepted the above recommendations and in 2001 these rights were accorded the status of fundamental and human rights in the amended Constitution",

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly declares the continued use of corporal punishment in schools in Guyana a violation of Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly declares the continued use of corporal punishment in schools in Guyana a violation of the Constitution;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly recommends the abolition of corporal punishment under the new Education Act.

(Notice Paper No. 22 (M3 Opp2) published on 2006-11-22)

(iii) **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**


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S.E. ISAACS
Clerk of the National Assembly

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam.**

13th March, 2007.