

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

ORDER PAPER

FOR THE 40TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION

(2006 - 2008) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA TO BE HELD

AT 2.00 P.M.

ON THURSDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY, 2008

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-

(1) By the Minister of Finance:

- (i) The Ministers, Members of the National Assembly and Special Offices
(Emoluments) Order No. 3 of 2008.

(To be Circulated)

2.

(ii) The Constitutional Offices (Remuneration of Holders) Order No. 4 of 2008.

(To be Circulated)

(2) By the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other related materials.

(To be Circulated)

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES-

(3) By the Speaker of the National Assembly (Chairman of the Committee of Selection):

Minutes of Proceedings of the 7th Meeting of the Committee of Selection held on Thursday, 27th December, 2007.

(To be Circulated)

(4) By Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P. (Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee):

The Report of the Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly on the Public Accounts of Guyana for the years 2002 and 2003.

(To be Circulated)

ORAL QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE-

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Replies

1. GUYANA'S TOTAL NATIONAL DEBT AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2007

Member Asking: Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Finance

- (i) What is the total national debt of Guyana as of November 1, 2007?
- (ii) What is the itemized amount owed, to whom, and the scheduled dates of repayment?
(Notice Paper No. 190 (Q139 Opp136) published on 2007-11-26)

2. VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT)

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Finance

- (i) What principles are employed by the Government in arriving at the list of companies granted exemption from VAT?
- (ii) Which Companies are receiving VAT exemptions?
- (iii) List all the tax exemptions GT&T, BARAMA, OMAI, Digicel and other companies are receiving apart from VAT?
- (iv) By which legal authority does the Finance Minister get the authority to grant VAT concessions?
(Notice Paper No. 191 (Q140 Opp137) published on 2007-11-26)

3. **COST OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLIED BY GUYANA POWER AND LIGHT CO.
(GPL)**

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

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

With the world market price for fuel trading at over US\$95.00 a barrel (ninety five dollars) and expected to rise to US\$100.00 (one hundred dollars) a barrel shortly, what action, if any, is the Government taking to ease the impact on the cost of electricity supplied by GPL?

(Notice Paper No. 193 (Q142 Opp139) published on 2007-11-26)

For Oral Replies

4. **RISING OIL PRICE**

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Finance

*Given that the world price for a barrel of oil is now trading at over US\$95.00 (ninety five dollars) and projected to rise to US\$100.00 (one hundred dollars), is the Finance Minister prepared to consider abolishing the tax on fuels to ease the effect on the cost of living?

(Notice Paper No. 192 (Q141 Opp138) published on 2007-11-26)

5. **NIS PENSIONERS**

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Finance

1. *Will the Honourable Minister reveal how many NIS pensioners have appeals pending which challenge the institution's decision on their NIS pension benefits?
2. *Will the Hon. Minister say what percentage of appeals, over the last five years, has been approved and payments granted to pensioners?
3. *Will the Hon. Minister state how long it takes, on average, for the NIS to make pension payments:
 - After a candidate reaches the pensionable age of 60?
 - After appeals have been investigated and approved?
4. *Will the Hon. Minister say what percentage of the total NIS income is based on contributors who have migrated before making the required number of pensionable contributions?

(Notice Paper No. 198 (Q144 Opp 141) published on 2007-12-07)

6. **CRITCHLOW LABOUR COLLEGE**

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

Could the Minister say:-

*For what reason or reasons have portions of the subvention approved in the 2007 Estimates to the Critchlow Labour College been withheld?

(Notice Paper No. 210 (Q150 Opp147) published on 2008-01-03)

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-**

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and First Readings

1. **INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill No. 1/2008**

The Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Government, to present the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Income Tax Act.

2. **GUYANA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ACT 1974 (AMENDMENT) BILL 2007 –
Bill No. 30/2007 published on 2008-01-12**

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P. to present the following Private Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Guyana Presbyterian Church Act
1974.

PUBLIC BUSINESS-

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTION

***1. THE PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA MANUAL OF RULES AND PROCEDURE, PRACTICES AND CONVENTIONS OF THE BUSINESS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

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

WHEREAS on the 14th December, 2007 the Parliament of Guyana Manual of Rules of Procedure, Practices and Conventions of the business of the National Assembly was laid in the National Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the said Manual contains the rules, procedure, practices and conventions used by Parliamentarians in the conduct of the business of the National Assembly,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the National Assembly accepts in general the rules, procedure, practices and conventions of the said Manual;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Manual of Rules, Procedure, Practices and Conventions of the business of the National Assembly be committed to the Special Select Committee on the Manual of Rules and Procedures and Operations of Committees to make recommendations to the National Assembly on the adoption of the said rules, procedure, practices and conventions.

(Notice Paper No. 206 (M54 Govt 34) published on 2007-12-24)

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*Not to be proceeded with at this sitting

BILLS – Second Readings, Committee and Third Readings

*2. **ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING AND COUNTERING THE FINANCING OF TERRORISM BILL 2007 – Bill No. 18/2007 published on 2007-06-04**

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 establishment and management of a Financial Intelligence Unit; to provide for unlawful proceeds of all serious offences to be identified, traced, frozen, seized and eventually forfeited; to provide for comprehensive powers for the prosecution of money laundering, terrorist financing and other financial crimes; and the forfeiture of the proceeds of crime and terrorist property; to require reporting entities to take preventive measures to help combat money laundering and terrorist financing; to provide for civil forfeiture of assets and for matters connected therewith.

(Read a first time on 2007-06-07)

(Committed to the Special Select Committee on 2007-06-07)

*3. **THE FORESTS BILL 2007 – Bill No. 21 of 2007 published on 2007-07-24**

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 consolidate and amend the law relating to forests.

(Read a first time on 2007-08-02)

(Committed to the Special Select Committee on 2007-11-08)

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*Not to be proceeded with at this sitting

(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

4. **GUYANA POWER AND LIGHT CO. INC.**

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

WHEREAS citizens continue to register dissatisfaction with the Guyana Power and Light Co.'s inefficient service and constant blackouts; the practice of estimating electricity bills at rates far above normal monthly billing amounts; back billing for suspected meter tampering and imposing pay-back arrangements that are burdensome to the consumer;

AND WHEREAS the Public Utilities Commission has had cause to enquire into the Guyana Power and Light's service, billing practices, disconnection practices and motives and procedures with respect to making arrangements for customers to repay amounts charged for back billing, but such enquiries have not led to a reduction of complaints and concerns pertaining to GPL's service;

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*Not to be proceeded with at this sitting

BE IT RESOLVED:

That a Special Select Committee be established to enquire into and to investigate the services being provided by the Guyana Power and Light Co. and to make recommendations for its improvement;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Special Select Committee be permitted to received evidence from Members of the public and organizations, including consumers, the Public Utilities Commission, Consumer Associations, the Private Sector and civil society organizations working with affected groups;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Special Select Committee report to this National Assembly within three months and the National Assembly communicates the findings and recommendations to the Guyana Power and Light Co. for their adoption.

(Notice Paper No. 196 (M50 Opp 13) published on 2007-12-06)

5. **THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LAW REFORM COMMISSION**

Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P., to move the following motion:

WHEREAS the British Guiana Legislature enacted hundreds of Acts of Parliament and subsidiary legislation many of which remain in force more than 100 years after there enactment;

AND WHEREAS, since Guyana attained its independence on the 26th day of May, 1966, the Parliament of Guyana also enacted hundreds of Acts of Parliament and subsidiary legislation;

AND WHEREAS an ongoing and systematic review of all of these Acts of Parliament, together with their subsidiary legislation, is required to ensure that they are updated, amended and, where necessary, repealed;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to have an ongoing and continuing process for the review, updating and modernization of the laws of Guyana, including the enactment of new legislation, which respond to and reflect the present and future needs and aspiration of the people of Guyana;

AND WHEREAS it is accepted, in many Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries, that the most efficient and institutional mechanism to systematically review and modernize the laws of their respective countries and plan for future legislation is a permanent Law Reform Commission;

AND WHEREAS many Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries have established permanent Law Reform Commissions,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly urges the Government to establish an independent permanent Law Reform Commission with the mandate, which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. To keep under continuous review, all of the Laws of Guyana, with the view to their systematic development and reform, including: the modification of any branch of the law; the elimination of anomalies; the repeal of obsolete and unnecessary enactments; the reduction of the number of separate enactments; and generally, the modernization of the law;

12.

2. To receive and consider suggestions for the reform of the law which may be forwarded to it by Ministers of the Government; public officials; associations of lawyers and members of the public;
3. To obtain such information, in regard to the laws and legal systems of other countries, as in the opinion of the Commission, is likely to facilitate the effective performance of any of its functions;
4. To make recommendations to the Ministry of Legal Affairs for the modification, repeal and generally, for the modernization of the Law of Guyana.

(Notice Paper No. 207 (M55 Opp 15) published on 2007-12-24)

6. **LIMIT ON THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT OF DEBT OBLIGATIONS**

Mr. Winston Murray, C.C.H., M.P., to move the following motion:

WHEREAS the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act was assented to by His Excellency the President of Guyana on the 16th December, 2003;

AND WHEREAS the said Act is intended, *inter alia*, to improve accountability in fiscal management;

AND WHEREAS Section 81 of the said Act makes provision for the forgiveness, postponement or reduction of debts by the Minister of Finance;

AND WHEREAS Section 81(3) of the said Act provides that the National Assembly may set a limit on the aggregate amount of debt obligations that may be forgiven, postponed or reduced by the Minister of Finance without the approval of the National Assembly in any fiscal year;

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly hereby sets a limit of \$10 million (ten million dollars) as the aggregate amount of debt obligations that may be forgiven, postponed or reduced without the approval of the National Assembly;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this limit takes effect from fiscal year 2007.

(Notice Paper No. 213 (M 58 Opp 16) published on 2008-01-18)

(iii) **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

MOTION

*7. **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS OF GUYANA FOR THE YEARS 2002 AND 2003**

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., (Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee) to move the following motion:

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*Not to be proceeded with at this sitting

14.

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on its examination of the Public Accounts of Guyana for the years 2002 and 2003, respectively be adopted and refer the Report to the Government for consideration.

(Notice Paper No. 222 (M 60 Opp 18) published on 2008-02-05)


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S.E. ISAACS
Clerk of the National Assembly

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

7th February, 2008.