

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 10TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2006) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON TUESDAY, 23RD JANUARY, 2007
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (71)

Speaker (1)

The Hon. Hari. N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly (Absent – on leave)

Members of the Government (42)

(i) People’s Progressive Party/Civic (41)

(ii) The United Force (1)

The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P., (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice),
Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications

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

The Hon. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P., Minister of Education

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Foreign Trade and International
Cooperation

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne),
Minister of Health

The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, M.P., (Region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo),
Minister of Amerindian Affairs

*The Hon. Dr. Ashni K. Singh, M.P., Minister of Finance (Absent)

*The Hon. S. Rudolph Insanally, O.R., C.C.H., M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs (Absent – on leave)

The Hon. Harry Narine Nawbatt, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

***Non-elected Minister**

2.

The Hon. Robert M. Persaud, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne),
Minister of Agriculture

The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P., (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni),
Minister of Public Service

The Hon. Kellawan Lall, M.P., Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

*The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

The Hon. Dr. Frank C.S. Anthony, M.P., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

The Hon. Brindley H.R. Benn, M.P., Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

**The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P., Minister of Labour

The Hon. Priya D. Manickchand, M.P., (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice),
Minister of Human Services and Social Security

The Hon. Dr. Desrey Fox, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Education

The Hon. Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Health

The Hon. Jennifer I. Webster, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Finance

The Hon. Manniram Prashad, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P.

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P.

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Chief Whip

Ms Bibi S. Shadick, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Island/West Demerara)

Mr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, M.P.

Mr. Albert Atkinson, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)

***Non-Elected Minister**

****Elected Member from the United Force**

3.

Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P., (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Island/West Demerara)

Mr. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Shirley V. Edwards, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Mohamed F. Khan, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam)

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

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

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P.

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

***Mr. Steve P. Ninvalle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary

Mr. Parmanand P. Persaud, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam)

Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary

***Mrs. Pauline Sukhai, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

Mr. Norman A. Whittaker, M.P., (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini) (Absent)

Members of the Opposition (28)

(i) Members of People's National Congress Reform-One Guyana (22)

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Winston Murray, C.C.H., M.P.

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

Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P., Chief Whip (Absent – on leave)

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P.

/...4

***Non-elected Member

4.

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Amna Ally, M.P.

Mr. James McAllister, M.P.

Mr. Dave D. Danny, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Aubrey C. Norton, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Ernest B. Elliot, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Judith David-Blair, M.P., (Region No.7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P., (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Island/West Demerara)

Ms Africo Selman, M.P.

Dr. John Austin, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Ms Jennifer Wade, M.P., (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)

Ms Vanessa Kissoon, M.P., (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P., (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

(ii) Alliance For Change (5)

Mr. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Mrs. Sheila V.A. Holder, M.P.

5.

Ms Chantalle L. Smith, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. David Patterson, M.P.

(iii) Guyana Action Party/Rise Organize and Rebuild (1)

Mr. Everall N. Franklin, M.P.

OFFICERS

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

Mrs. Lilawattie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The sitting commenced at 2.00 p.m.

**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 & Communications moved 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, 19th January, 2007 to be moved on Tuesday, 23rd January, 2007, for the suspension of Standing Order No. 54 (1) to enable the Assembly to proceed with the second and third readings of the Value-Added Tax (Amendment) Bill 2007 – Bill No. 3 of 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. 59 (M17 Govt13) published on 2007-01-19)

2. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 54 (1)(a)**

The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works & Communications moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Standing Order No. 54(1)(a) be suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed at its sitting on Tuesday, 23rd January, 2007, with the second reading and the remaining stages of the Value-Added Tax (Amendment) Bill 2007 – Bill No. 3 of 2007.

(Notice Paper No. 58 (M16 Govt12) published on 2007-01-19)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-

PUBLIC BUSINESS-

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS – Second Reading

ITEM 1 - VALUE –ADDED TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL 2007- Bill No. 3/2007 published on 2007-01-17

The Minister in the Ministry of Finance, on behalf of the Minister of Finance, moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Value-Added Tax Act 2005.

(Read a first time on 2007-01-19)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Winston Murray

The Minister of Labour

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan

The Minister of Health

The Minister of Education

While Mr. Robert Corbin was speaking to the motion the time for the suspension of the sitting was reached.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 4.00 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 4.38 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

Mr. Robert Corbin continued and concluded his speech.

Thereafter Minister in the Ministry of Finance replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

The Assembly resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

In Committee

Clause 1 was passed as printed.

Clause 2

The following amendments moved by Mr. Winston Murray, C.C.H., M.P., and seconded by Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P., were put and negatived:

Clause 2(1): immediately after the words “amend Schedules I and II” add the following words “to expand the list of supplies to be zero rated and exempted respectively”.

Clause 2(2): after the words “amend Schedules III, IV and V at (b) delete the “and add the following under (b)
“(c) amend Schedules I and II for any purpose other than that set out in section 2(1) herein”.

Clause 2 was then passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Minister in the Ministry of Finance, the Value-Added Tax (Amendment) Bill 2007, was read the third time and passed as printed.

(ii) PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

ITEM 2 - CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE ACROSS THE BERBICE RIVER

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

WHEREAS 12 Presidents of South American countries met in September, 2000 and agreed on the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA) which, has a portfolio of 335 infrastructural projects organized in ten Integration and Development Hubs and a Consensus Agenda comprising of 31 integration projects which are to be executed between 2005 and 2010;

AND WHEREAS the Guiana Shield Hub, of which Guyana is a part, has a number of projects including bridging the Takutu River; the Boa Vista-Bonfim-Lethem-Linden-Georgetown Highway; Venezuela (Cuidad Guayana) – Guyana (Georgetown)-Suriname(Paramaribo) Highway; and a deep water port in Guyana; which projects will allow for the full integration of the Guiana Shield Hub Territories and result in the creation of massive volumes of transnational high payload containerized road traffic that would require bridges designed for live loads in excess of AASHTO HS25;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ballast Nedam International for the construction of a fixed prestressed concrete bridge across the Berbice River to carry design live loads in excess of AASHTO HS25, which Memorandum was abandoned and subsequently signed another Memorandum of Understanding with Berbice River Bridge Consortium for the construction of a similar bridge;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana contends that it opted for a steel floating bridge designed for AASHTO HS25 live load between D'Edward and Crab Island as a result of a feasibility study done by the Louis Berger Group that suggested that such a bridge at this location was most economical;

AND WHEREAS Patricio Millan Development Consultants Inc. conducted a review of the feasibility analysis done by the Louis Berger Group and provided the IDB and the Government of Guyana with independent estimates of cost that established that the Louis Berger Group grossly underestimated the cost of construction and maintenance of the steel floating bridge and that a fixed concrete prestressed bridge between Providence and Augsburg is the only possible economically viable alternative,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly calls on the Government to review its' decision to build a steel floating bridge between D'Edward and Crab Island;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly directs its' Economic Services Committee to investigate and identify all factors that influenced the Government's decision to proceed with the construction of a steel floating bridge between D'Edward and Crab Island as against a fixed prestressed concrete bridge at other locations and report to the National Assembly within three months;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly directs the Honourable Minister of Public Works and Communications to instruct the Berbice Bridge Company Inc. to suspend all works pending the outcome of the investigation by the Economic Services Committee.

(Notice Paper No. 42 (M12 Opp5) published on 2007-01-03)

The Minister of Transport and Hydraulics spoke to the motion.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 7.00 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 7.31 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Mr. David Patterson

The Minister of Health

Dr. John Austin

The Minister of Agriculture

The Minister of Labour

Thereafter Mr. James McAllister, M.P., replied.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 10(1)

At 10.05 p.m., the Prime Minister moved a motion for the suspension of Standing Order No. 10(1) for the Assembly to continue the debate on the motion uninterrupted until its conclusion.

RIGHT OF REPLY

An attempt by the Prime Minister to conclude the debate on the motion, in accordance with Standing Order No. 39(2), was disallowed by the Speaker.

The motion was then put and negatived.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.15 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.

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MRS. CLARISSA RIEHL, M.P.,
Acting Speaker of the National Assembly

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam.

23rd January, 2007.

