

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 88<sup>TH</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND**  
**SESSION (2002-2006) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 2.00 P.M.**  
**ON THURSDAY, 16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2006**  
**IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,**  
**BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN**

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (69)**

**Speaker (1)**

The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

**Members of the Government (38)**

**(i) People's Progressive Party/Civic (34)**

**(ii) Non-elected Ministers (3)**

**(iii) The United Force (1)**

The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works  
and Communications

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

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P., Minister of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation (Absent – on leave)

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

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Education

The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P., Minister of Finance

The Hon. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P., Minister of Labour, Human Services and  
Social Security (Absent)

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

The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P., Minister of Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock  
(Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)

\* The Hon. S. Rudolph Insanally, O.R., C.C.H., M.P., Minister in the Office of the  
President with responsibility for Foreign Affairs (Absent)

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

The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P., Minister of the Public Service (Absent)

The Hon. C. Anthony Xavier, M.P., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

The Hon. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and  
Social Security (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

\*\* The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

\* The Hon. Harry Narine Nawbatt, M.P., Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P., Minister of Health

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

Mr. Cyril C.L. Belgrave, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.

Mr. Husman Alli, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

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

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P.

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

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

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

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

Mr. Ramesh C. Rajkumar, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)

Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.D., M.P.

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

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Water

Mrs. Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)

Dr. Moti Lall, C.C.H., M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Mr. Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P.

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

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne) (Absent)

\*Non-Elected Minister

\*\*Elected Member from The United Force

**Members of the Opposition (30)****() People's National Congress/Reform (27)**

Mr. Robert H.O. Corbin, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

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

Mrs. Clarissa S. Riehl, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (Absent - on leave)

Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P., Chief Whip

Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroun/Supenaam)

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. Deryck M.A. Bernard, M.P.

Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Vincent L. Alexander, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

Dr. Dalgleish Joseph, M.D., M.P.

Miss Anna Ally, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)

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

Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

Miss Myrna E.N. Peterkin, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent - on leave)

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

Dr. Carl Max Hanoman, M.P.

Mr. Joseph Hamilton, M.P.

Mr. Abdul Kadir, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice)

Mr. Ricky Khan, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)

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

Mrs. Rajcoomarie Bancroft, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni)

Mr. Nasir Ally, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)

Miss Judith David, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Miss Genevieve Allen, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

(ii) **Guyana Action Party/Working People's Alliance (2)**

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

Mrs. Shirley J. Melville, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

(iii) **Rise, Organise and Rebuild Party (1)**

Mr. Ravindra Dev, M.P. (Absent)

**OFFICERS**

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

Mrs. Lilawtie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

**COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING**

The sitting commenced at 2.16p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk read prayers.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.**

(1) By the Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce:

Guyana National Bureau of Standards Annual Reports for the years 2001,  
2002, 2003 and 2004.

(Circulated)

- (2) By the Minister of Health (Chairman of the Special Select Committee on the Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly):

Third Interim Report of the Special Select Committee on the Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly.

(Circulated)

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

#### **Presentation and First Reading**

#### **INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL 2006 - Bill No. 5/2006 published on 2006-01-24**

The Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

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

### **PUBLIC BUSINESS**

#### **BILL - Report from Select Committee and Third Reading**

#### **ITEM 1 - AMERINDIAN BILL 2005- Bill No. 13/2005 published on 2005-08-03**

The Minister of Amerindian Affairs, moved that the Report of the Special Select Committee on the Amerindian Bill 2005, be adopted.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Vincent Alexander,

Mrs. Sheila Holder,

Mrs. Shirley Melville

and

The Minister of Health.

Thereafter, the Minister of Amerindian Affairs replied.

The Amerindian Bill 2005 was then read a third time and passed as amended.

**MOTION**

**ITEM 2 - THE EQUITABLE ACCESS OF PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL PARTIES TO THE STATE-OWNED MEDIA**

Mr. Deryck Bernard, M.P., moved the following motion:

WHEREAS the Report of the Joint Committee on Radio Monopoly, Non-Partisan Boards and Broadcasting Legislation, which was established by agreement between the late Mr. H. Desmond Hoyte and President Jagdeo in May, 2001, recommends that the State-Owned media should, “in line with their public-service function, provide news and current affairs coverage of the views, statements, activities and policies of political parties in a manner that is partial, balanced and accurate, thereby allowing the public to make informed political choices”, and “facilitate political parties and candidates in their right of reply”;

AND WHEREAS the Memorandum of Understanding For The Support Of The Next General Elections In Guyana, signed on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2005, between the Government of Guyana, GECOM and Donors, stipulates that GECOM must “facilitate agreement on appropriate arrangements for equitable access to the state media by political parties during the campaign”;

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly calls upon the Government to direct that by the 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2006 all State-Owned Media, should be obligated to provide adequate coverage of the views and activities of all Parliamentary Parties and facilitate equitable access of these Parties to their facilities for the direct publication of their views and activities, in addition to their obligation to report Government statements and activities;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly requests the Government:

1. To direct that these arrangements should apply both during and outside of the campaign periods for National and Regional Elections;
  
2. To implement their obligations in accordance with the principles which are contained in the Schedule to this Motion.

**(Notice Paper No.238(M101 Opp9) published on 2006-01-04)**

Mr. Deryck Bernard was speaking to the motion, when 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 4.31 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

Mr. Deryck Bernard continued and concluded his speech.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

The Minister of Home Affairs,  
The Minister of Education,  
Mr. James McAllister

**Suspension of Standing Order No. 9(2)**

On a motion by the Prime Minister, Standing Order No. 9(2) was suspended to enable the Assembly to complete uninterrupted with, the debate on the motion on the Equitable Access of Parliamentary Political Parties to the State-Owned Media.

8.

Mr. James McAllister continued and concluded his speech.

Dr. Donald Ramotar also spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, Mr. Deryck Bernard replied.

The following amendments moved by the Minister of Home Affairs were put and carried:

Delete all of the Clauses after the first Whereas Clause and insert the following:

“AND WHEREAS both private and state media houses have signed a GECOM Code of Conduct for the Media on January 7, 2005, in fulfillment of the Memorandum of Understanding For The Support Of The Next General Elections In Guyana signed on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2005, between the Government of Guyana, GECOM and Donors, providing for appropriate arrangements for equitable access to the state media by political parties during the campaign;

AND WHEREAS the COMMUNIQUE signed on May 6, 2003 between His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo and Opposition PNC/R Leader Mr. Robert Corbin states “equitable access (based on Parliamentary representation) to the state-owned media by all Parliamentary parties (as distinct from government) would be instituted without delay”;

AND WHEREAS the constructive engagement process was interrupted by the PNC/R leading to a failure to conclude a formula for the equitable allocation of time and space to Parliamentary parties based on representation;

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the issue of Equitable Access to State Media by Parliamentary Political Parties, as distinct from Government, be submitted to a Parliamentary Select Committee at which the views,



opinions and proposals of the Parliamentary Political Parties and those of relevant media officials would be solicited, considered and recommendations made to the House. The Select Committee will be tasked with providing its first report to Parliament within six (6) weeks of the commencement of hearings;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That the said Parliamentary Select Committee be also tasked with:

1. a similar process of soliciting and considering the views, opinions and proposals of Parliamentary Political Parties and stake-holders involved with all of the other outstanding matters which resulted from the abandonment of the Constructive Engagement Process; and
2. the submission of the recommendations to the House.”

**BILLS - Second Reading**

**ITEM 3 - TRADE UNION RECOGNITION (AMENDMENT) BILL 2006 - Bill**

**No. 1/2006 published on 2006-01-13**

At the request of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the second reading of the following Bill was deferred:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Trade Union Recognition Act 1997.

**(Read a first time on 2006-01-19)**

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7.40 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.



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**HON. HARI N. RAMKARRAN, S.C., M.P.,**

**Speaker of the National Assembly**

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,  
Public Buildings,  
Georgetown.**

**16<sup>th</sup> February, 2006.**