

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 93rd SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION
(2006-2009) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, 25TH JUNE, 2009
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (70)

Speaker (1)

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

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (41)

- (i) **People's Progressive Party/Civic (40)**
- (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 (Absent – on leave)

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

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 Foreign Affairs

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

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

*Non-elected Minister

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. Charles R. Ramson, 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. B. H. Robeson 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.D., 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

*The Hon. Pauline Sukhai, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

The Hon. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P.

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

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

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

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

/...3

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

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P.

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

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

***Mr. Steve P. Ninvalle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport

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 in the Ministry of Housing and Water

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

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

Dr. Vishwa Deva Budhram Mahadeo, M.P.

Rev. Kwame Gilbert, M.P.

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 of the National Assembly

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

/...4

*****Non-elected Parliamentary Secretary**

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P. (Absent)

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.

Ms Cheryl Sampson, M.P.

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

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

Mr. Ernest Barnabas 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.

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

Mrs. Latchmin Punalall, 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 (2)

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 2.05 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Death of Mr. Ranji Chandisingh, former Senior Minister of the Government

The Speaker informed Members of the National Assembly that Mr. Ranji Chandisingh, a former Senior Minister of the Government of the People's National Congress, died on Monday, 15th June, 2009, after a brief illness.

Mr. Chandisingh was a Senior Member of the Executive Committee of the People's Progressive Party, who had crossed the floor and joined the People's National Congress in 1975.

After the General Election on 15th December, 1980, Mr. Chandisingh was first appointed Senior Minister of Higher Education, with effect from 1st January, 1981. On 1st May, 1982, he was designated Senior Minister of Education, Social Development and Culture. On the 1st May, 1983, Mr. Chandisingh was re-designated Senior Minister of Education and Social Development.

On 16th August, 1984, Mr. Chandisingh who was a Senior Minister, was appointed Vice-President and Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for the Ministry of National Mobilisation. From 1st January, 1989, he served as Vice-President and Deputy Prime Minister in the Office of the President. On the 18th September, 1989, Mr. Chandisingh resigned as a Member of the National Assembly to take up an appointment as Guyana's Ambassador in Moscow.

On behalf of Members of the Assembly and himself, the Speaker extended deepest sympathy to the bereaved family and relatives of the late Mr. Ranji Chandisingh.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

(1) By the Speaker of the National Assembly:

- (i) The Report of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts of Guyana and on the accounts of Ministries, Departments and Regions for the fiscal year ended 31st December, 2007.

(Circulated)

- (ii) The Ethnic Relations Commission Annual Report for the year 2008.

(Circulated)

- (iii) The Ethnic Relations Commission Report on the Religious Leaders Conference and Religious Broadcasters Workshop for 2008.

(Circulated)

7.

(2) By the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications:

The Guyana Gold Board Annual Reports for the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008.

(Circulated)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-

Presentation and First Reading

CUSTODY, CONTACT, GUARDIANSHIP AND MAINTENANCE BILL 2009 –

Bill No. 29/2009

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the granting of custody, contact, guardianship and maintenance rights with respect to children and for connected purposes.

Thereafter, the Custody, Contact, Guardianship and Maintenance Bill 2009 was referred to a Special Select Committee.

PUBLIC BUSINESS -

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS – Second Readings

ITEM 1 – LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (BENEFITS AND OTHER FACILITIES)

BILL 2009 – Bill No. 16/2009 published on 2009-04-30

At the request of the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Minister of Finance, the second reading of the following Bill was deferred:

/...8

8.

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for benefits and other facilities to the Leader of the Opposition.

(Read a first time on 2009-04-30)

ITEM 2 - ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE BILL 2009 – Bill No. 24/2009 published on 2009-06-04

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Petty Debt) Act to extend the civil jurisdiction of Magistrates' Courts.

(Read a first time on 2009-06-11)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mrs. Clarissa Riehl

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan

Thereafter the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 and 2 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Administration of Justice Bill 2009 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ITEM 3 - BILLS OF SALE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2009 – Bill No. 27/2009 published on 2009-06-11

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Bills of Sale Act.

(Read a first time on 2009-06-11)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mrs. Clarissa Riehl

The Minister in the Ministry of Finance

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan

Thereafter the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 and 2 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Bill of Sale (Amendment) Bill 2009 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ITEM 4 - SUMMARY JURISDICTION (LAY MAGISTRATES) BILL 2009 – Bill No. 28/2009 published on 2009-06-11

At the request of the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs the second reading of the following Bill was deferred:

A BILL intituled AN ACT for the constitution of lay magistrates' courts; for the appointment of lay magistrates; for the regulation of their jurisdiction, practice and procedure and for other like purposes.

(Read a first time on 2009-06-11)

(ii) PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTION

ITEM 5 - PROTECTION OF GUYANESE IN THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

At the request of Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P. consideration of the following motion was deferred:

WHEREAS the Government and people of Guyana are disturbed about the situation regarding the fate of Guyanese nationals who reside and work in Caricom States ("The Community");

AND WHEREAS the Government and people of Guyana are mindful of the conditions and realities that affect the security and well being of Guyanese citizens in the Community, and mindful that the Government of Guyana has received expressions of concerns from Guyanese resident in Barbados and elsewhere in the Community and from Guyanese who travel within the Community;

AND WHEREAS the Treaty of Chagaramus and the Caricom Charter of Civil Liberties (The "Instruments") to which Guyana, Barbados and the other Caricom State Parties are signatories, declare that inter alia the Community is moving to become one customs and economic Union (CSME) which requires that all of us as a united Community share and benefit from the region's resources, including human resources, collective expertise and skills;

AND WHEREAS the Government and people of Guyana recognise the right of the Government of Barbados and other Community States to enforce their national laws, Guyana reminds our sister States that collectively we all operate and exist in a community framework evolving from harmonized approaches and law;

AND WHEREAS the Members of the National Assembly of Guyana are deeply concerned about the welfare, human rights and dignity of Guyanese citizens resident and who travel to Barbados and the wider Community;

AND WHEREAS we Guyanese are cognizant that we as a people have a reputation of the utmost hospitality towards our Caribbean brothers and sisters, clearly manifested by giving the Caricom Secretariat its home at Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown,

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That this National Assembly calls on all sister Community Governments, and in particular, the Government of Barbados, to ensure that due process and protection under the Constitution and laws of Barbados and that the letter and spirit of the aforesaid Community Instruments that have been ratified is extended to our citizens who are resident in, or travel to Barbados and the wider Community;

12.

2. That the Government of Guyana seeks clarification from the Government of Barbados and other Community States, as to the welfare, legal protection, due process and preservation of the human rights and dignities of our citizens;
3. That the Government of Guyana intercedes with its sister States through diplomatic and any other means, with regard to representing the rights and protection of the Guyanese nationals residing in and traveling in our sister State of Barbados and the wider Community, so as to ensure that there is no real or perceived discrimination against Guyanese nationals residing in, or traveling to Barbados or the wider Community, on the basis of their nationality which treatment may be repugnant to the spirit and letter of the said Instruments to which we are all State Parties; and
4. That the Government of Guyana must exhaust all diplomatic and or legal efforts to guarantee the protection of our people, by providing the aforementioned assistance for the dignified repatriation of those Guyanese where unavoidably are returned to their homeland from Barbados or the wider Community, and to make preparation for their social and economic re-integration into Guyanese society and national life.

(Notice Paper No. 391 (M99 Opp 29) published on 2009-06-09)

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.32 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Thursday, 9th July, 2009.


.....

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

Speaker of the National Assembly

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

5th June, 2009.

25