

Official Report

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION (2012-2013) OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN

50TH Sitting

Wednesday, 17TH April, 2013

Assembly convened at 2.08 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Lost Cellular Phone

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I have two short announcements. One is that a Member may have been looking for a cellular phone, a Samsung phone. Please identify yourself with identification and you will be able to uplift it.

Invitation from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Mr. Speaker: Secondly, we have received an invitation from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment for all Members who would like to participate in a Three Parks Initiative to Paint the Parks Day, which will be on Sunday, 21st April, beginning at 8.00 a.m. The focus will be on whitewashing of the trees in the National Park and the Botanical Gardens. Brushes, gloves and refreshment will be provided to participants. The activity is being held as part of the observances of World Earth Day 2013, which is celebrated on 22nd April, 2013. So, all of you who are environmentally minded, and we ought all to be, are invited to participate on Sunday, 21st April at 8.00 a.m. to assist in Painting the Parks Day.

Those are the announcements Hon. Members.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

For Written Reply

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, there are four questions on the Order Paper for written replies. All of these questions are in the name of the Hon. Member Mr. Ronald Bulkan. Questions number one, two and three are for the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development. Question number four is for the Minister of Health. The answers for questions one, two and three have not as yet been received, but will be. I am assured by the Hon. Minister that they are going to be delivered by the end of the week at latest. The answer for question four has been received and has been circulated as per our Standing Orders.

MEDICAL TEAM DEPLOYED TO REGION NO. 7

Mr. Bulkan:

- (i) Could the Hon. Minister say why the medical team that was deployed to Region No. 7 in January and February, 2013 to the villages of Kamarang, Waramadong, Jawalla, Imbaimadai, Isseneru and Kato, among others, did not consult with or engage, either prior to their deployment, or subsequently, the RDC of Region No. 7?
- (ii) Could the Hon. Minister say if this practice referred to above, which now appears prevalent, is part of a campaign of Central Government to marginalize, usurp and bypass the authority of duly elected Regional Governments (RDCs) that are not under the control of the PPP/C?

Minister of Health [Dr. Ramsaran]:

- (i) This statement made by the Honourable Member Mr. R Bulkan, M.P. is very much inaccurate and uninformed, since the matter was in the first instance reported by the Regional Health Officer (RHO) who is stationed at Bartica and immediate action was taken by the Ministry of Health (MOH) to deploy an emergency response team to Waramadong. This immediate response started with a telephone call by the Minister to Commodore Bess aimed at mobilizing the airlift capacity of the GDF Air Wing and its

Medical personnel in a joint emergency response with the local Regional Health Sector workers and the National Malaria Control Services. The RHO of Region 7 was informed of the suspected outbreak of Malaria in the Waramadong School and Dormitory by the Regional Education Officer based in Bartica. The Head Mistress of that Institution had communicated the information about a suspected outbreak to the Regional Education Officer. The Director of the Regional Health Services Programme (Programme 4 of the MOH) was also informed of the evolving situation and took the most active part in the roll out of subsequent stages and components of the response activity. The Regional Health Services Programme (Programme 4) is charged with specific national responsibilities which each year are reaffirmed in the Budget and financed through the provisions of the said budget. The relevant sections can be perused in the *Volume 2 of the ESTIMATES of the PUBLIC SECTOR under Programme 474 – Regional and Clinical Services*.

Noting the significance of Malaria in our country the Minister invoked the War Room in his Office and placed on alert all the relevant officers with meetings key senior MOH personnel on a daily basis to keep abreast with the situation on the ground.

During that period the Ministry was in constant contact with the medical personnel in Bartica, giving updates on the immediate plans that were being put in place to address the perceived emergency. *In the very initial stages of these arrangements a stop-over in Bartica by the GDF Sky Van was contemplated.* This would have allowed the pick-up of the RHO and possibly additional health care providers to join the local workers already in Waramadong. This diversion which would have taken time and reduced cargo capacity for more critically anti-malaria supplies and equipment was discarded since the team from Georgetown was among the best and headed by the Director of the National Malaria Services himself. The cargo capacity that would have been lost to accommodating Health care providers from Bartica was instead used for the airlift of insecticides, treated bed-nets and spray cans. *This decision was communicated with the RHO who saw the wisdom in it and supported it.*

In keeping with good administrative protocols and practices, it is expected that the RHO reported to the REO who would then have apprised or adequately informed the Regional

Chairman. The RHO and the MOH were in constant contact as the emergency response progressed. The RHO of Region 7 is one of the most experienced and long-serving among Regional Health Officers and is one of the best over the past decade. The Regional Executive Officer of Region 7 has unreserved confidence in the RHO and these two senior Regional Democratic Council Officers work and collaborate professionally.

The Ministry of Health brings to the attention of Parliament and the Nation the swift and effective response of Commodore Bess and the GDF Air Wing. This was a highly successful joint activity. This is an excellent example of the various elements of the Government of Guyana working together to achieve the benefits of synergies, optimal use of the tax payers' dollar and delivery of services.

The Ministry of Health wishes to recognize the contribution of GDF pilots Captain Patrick Nicholas and Captain Azeez Nizamudeen.

The Ministry of Health also wishes to recognize the effective and professional support given by *Medex Chavez Edwards* who led the local Mazaruni health care provider component of the joint emergency response team.

The emergency response team discovered a very small number of children with Malaria at the School and treated these. There are over 900 children enrolled at the School and living at the Waramadong Dormitory. Only 13 were found to be infected with Malaria. These students hail from four surrounding Amerindian Villages. The children had returned to School from various Amerindian Villages following the Christmas Holidays and had most likely been infected in their respective home communities. That is to say there was no outbreak at the School or Dormitory.

The emergency response team executed microscopy investigations, did mass screening, treated those ill with malaria and distributes health literacy material. The team also conducted training in the safe and effective use of spray cans and the insecticide used in the spraying exercises. The training benefited the Toshua and leading residents of the Community. The team conducted spraying exercises along with the recently trained residents. The Team donated to the Village Council spray cans and insecticide. The MOH committed to a return visit.

This return visit was started over the over the past week-end by four persons from Georgetown and their efforts will be strengthened by the addition of seven more persons from Georgetown during the current week. Extended training of two persons from each of the communities from where the infected students hail and from other communities will be done in use of spray can and chemicals and other anti-malaria work.

The MOH/Regional/GDF emergency response team comprised the following persons:

Dr. Reyaud Rhaman, Director of the National Malaria Control Services (NMCS)

Dr. Irv Chan, Director Regional; Health Services (Programme 4)

Corporal Bouyeam Medec, Guyana Defence Force

Mr. Marvin Roberts, Microscopist, NMCS

Mr. David Williams., Microscopist, NMCS

Ms. Rina Marks, Senior Microscopist, NMCS

Nurse Patricia Singh, RN, BSc (Nursing); and former Coordinator, Indigenous Peoples' Communities

Captain Patrick Nichols, GDF

Captain Azeez Nezamudeen, GDF

This response effort demonstrated the capacity of the Central Ministry through its Programme 4 to effectively execute its mandate **to assist in the provision of *specialist health care services to any Region(s) of the country this is deemed necessary*; and to support the regional health service in provision of quality care for the residents.**

I would like to remind the honorable Member Mr. R Bulkan M.P. that the PPP/C Government is a caring Government. The caring PPP/C Administration will continue to work according to its mandate with all stakeholders at the National and Regional levels to effectively and efficiently address any emerging Public Health Threat

(ii) The Honourable Mr. Bulkan’s reference to attempts to marginalize, usurp and bypass are misplaced and misinformed. This reference indicates a profound lack of understanding of how the Government and Country the Honourable Member and his Party aspire to lead legitimately works. I posit that the real reason for this question the discomfort Mr. Bulkan experiences when he recognizes the swiftness of the effective response and the positive impact it has created among the leaders and residents of the Mazaruni Amerindian Communities, the hard working senior Officers of Region 10 and the health care providers of that Region.

Yes, Mr. Bulkan the Government of Guyana, including its Ministry of Health, intend to continue to execute its legitimate mandate in this swift, effective, efficient and sustainable manner.

(See photographs below)”

PICTURES OF MINISTRY OF HEALTH TEAM TO WARAMADONG VILLAGE, REGION 7



MOH TEAM DEPARTING OGLE AIRSTRIP



MOH TEAM EDUCATING STUDENTS ON USE AND CARE ON TREATED BED NETS



**COPORAL BOUYEA, MEDEC OF GUYANA DEFENCE
FORCE DISTRIBUTING BED NETS**

**MR. DAVID WILLIAMS, MICROSCOPIST HANDING
OVER SPRAYCANS TO VILLAGE COUNCILLORS**

PROTECTING THE NATION'S HEALTH 24/7

Ministry of Health

PUBLIC BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS

MOTION

BUDGET SPEECH 2013 – MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2013

“WHEREAS the Constitution of Guyana requires that Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of Guyana for any financial year should be laid before the National Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution also provides that when the Estimates of Expenditure have been approved by the Assembly an Appropriation Bill shall be introduced in the Assembly providing for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sums necessary to meet that expenditure;

AND WHEREAS Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of Guyana for the financial year 2013 have been prepared and laid before the Assembly on 2013-03-25;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2013, of a total sum of **one hundred and ninety four billion, three hundred and forty three million, seven hundred and sixty four thousand, eight hundred and seventy three dollars**

(\$194,343,764,873), excluding fourteen billion, and four hundred and ninety six million, six hundred and seventy nine thousand, one hundred and twenty seven dollars (\$14,496,679,127) which is chargeable by law, as detailed therein and summarised in the undermentioned schedule, and agree that it is expedient to amend the law and to make further provision in respect of finance.” [Minister of Finance]

Mr. Speaker: We will consider the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs until we take the break, from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. – we are running about ten minutes late – and from 4.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. the Ministry of Public Service. We will then take a break, and then from 6.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m., we will do the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation and the Ministry of Health. That will take us to the end of today.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

In Committee of Supply

Agency: 16 Ministry of Amerindian Affairs

Current Expenditure

Programme: 161 – Amerindian Development - \$398,593,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – I see there was an increase of 14 from the staffing details. Could the Hon. Minister say what the designations of these contracted employees are?

Minister of Amerindian Affairs [Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai]: Mr. Chairman, there is an increase of five, not 14. Sorry. The designations of the 14 are the Organisational Development Adviser, Coordinator of Regional Development, Technical Officer, Management Development Officer, a Storekeeper, Staff Nurse, Head Cook, Administrator, Handyman, House mother, House father, two Drivers, and I missed one Handyman, so there are two handymen.

Dr. Norton: A follow up, Mr. Chairman: could the Hon. Minister say if the House father is designated to the village of Aishalton that is without a House father?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: No, Mr. Chairman. The House father is designated to the Liliendaal Student Dormitory. If I may provide additional information, the House father of Aishalton Dormitory is a regional responsibility.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say where the Storekeeper will be placed?

Mr. Chairman: Is that the Storekeeper for the Ministry?

Dr. Norton: I am talking about the contracted employee.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the Storekeeper is attached to the Ministry's head office and is responsible for our head office's stores.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say under line item 6321 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations – why would the Amerindian Handicraft Association, as a local organisation, be placed under another Ministry rather than that of the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that we do not cater for that. We cater for the National Toshias Council (NTC). This allocation here is for the NTC.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister, under line item 6264 – Vehicle Spares and Service – say what is the total fleet of vehicles under this Ministry?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the total fleet of vehicles under the Ministry is 29.

Dr. Norton: Under line item 6272 – Electricity Charges – there is an increase of \$6 million for electricity. Could the Hon. Minister give an account for this increase?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: I am advised that the increase is as a result of the new dormitory.

Mr. B. Williams: Line item 6292 – Dietary – could the Hon. Minister say in what Regions this amount is spent?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: It is spent on the hostel and the dormitory.

Mr. B. Williams: I asked about Regions.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: It is the Liliendaal dormitory.

Mr. B. Williams: The Liliendaal dormitory?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes. All regional dorms fall under Local Government and Regional Administration.

Mr. B. Williams: Okay, thank you. The nature of the meal, how many persons are you catering for there with this \$29 million?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, we are catering for 120 students at the Liliendaal dormitory and we are catering for 100 at the Amerindian Residence.

Mr. B. Williams: How many meals are catered for per day?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: We cater for three full meals per day per day and two snacks.

Mr. B. Williams: Is any meal cassava bread and peanut butter?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, no, but we make available cassava bread and farine.

Mr. B. Williams: Okay.

Ms. Hastings: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings – could the Hon. Minister tell this House which buildings will be maintained for this year?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, we will be maintaining the Amerindian Residence in Princess Street, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs' head office and minor maintenance at the student dormitory in Liliendaal.

Ms. Hastings: Could the Minister specify exactly how much will be allocated to repair the Amerindian Residence?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The allocation will be \$4.8 million.

Mr. Allicock: Line item 6281 – Security Services – can the Hon. Minister identify the security company that provides this service and state whether the system of competitive bidding was utilised?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The last question first, Mr. Chairman, the answer is yes. As for the first question, the security company is RK's Security Services.

Mr. Allicock: Mr. Chairman, line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – can the Hon. Minister say who will benefit from this training and what areas of training will be done?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the training and scholarship allocation is spent on Hinterland students. We have catered for training for Village Councils.

Mr. Allicock: Follow up question, Mr. Chairman: could the Hon. Minister say whether there is a plan for scholarship or training in the legal area? Communities suffer greatly because of not having the presence of legal minds in the communities.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs caters for students under the age of 18 or 17 years, four months. It does not cater for beyond at the professional level. So definitely the Public Service Ministry (PSM) takes care of that.

Mr. Chairman: A child from the Hinterland, if I may, who comes to go to the University, do you have any responsibility for such a child?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, yes, we provide services in whatever form of representation. Of recent, we have been assisting some University students with accommodation space if they find difficulties.

Mr. Allicock: Thank you very much.

Mr. Trotman: I have a couple of questions for the Minister. The first question refers to line item 6265 – Other Transport, Travel and Postage. I am wondering if it is that the Minister can say specifically what the nature of the business is that takes place under this head.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, under line item 6265 – Other Transport, Travel and Postage – the Ministry caters for the chartering of flights. The usage of the charter for flights is to take the Ministry's staff into areas whereby flights are necessary. Those activities are usually required to monitor presidential grants, take children home from Mahdia to Chenapau and Aishalton to Konashen, and to also provide the level of flights when necessary to patients going in directions that need regular flights.

Mr. Trotman: A follow up question, Mr. Chairman: I note that in 2012 the Ministry requested \$40 million for this head and actually spent \$25.8 million. In 2013, the Ministry is requesting \$30 million. Can you say why it is that in 2013 you are requesting more than you actually spent in 2012, when in 2012 you actually requested more than you spent?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: I am advised that we did not spend all that was requested last year, but this year we have included the additional cost that will be incurred for our staff to monitor the community development plans which we envisage will kick-start in terms of implementation in May.

Mr. Trotman: A follow up question, Mr. Chairman: is the Minister prepared to lay before this House a breakdown of the actual expenses incurred for each specific activity in 2012?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, we will commit to do that for 2012.

Mr. Trotman: I direct the Minister's attention to line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants. Can the Minister say what fuel and lubricants are used under this head?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – caters for vehicles which include the pickup, the all-terrain vehicle (ATV), motorcycles used by the head office, the Student Dormitory and the Amerindian Residence in addition to a generator set which we acquired in 2012. That is sited at the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs' head office. It also caters for fuel and lubricants for the Community Development Officers (CDOs) in the various hinterland regions to make them mobile in terms of performing their duties. I am reminded of cooking gas for the dormitory and the Amerindian Residence.

Ms. Marcello: I am focusing on line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure. Can the Hon. Minister say what other infrastructure would be catered for under this head?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, it caters for maintenance of infrastructure external to buildings at the Amerindian Hostel - the head office and the student dorms.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say, under line item 6133 – Benefits & Allowance – if the Toshaos stipend falls under this line item?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: No, Mr. Chairman. The stipend is catered for under the regional system.

Mr. Sharma: Under line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – the Hon. Minister did indicate that the 14 staff were added to the Ministry, but there was an increase of about \$18 million compared with 2012. Could we have the salaries of these 14 persons?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, just one minute, I am looking for the breakdown. The salaries are: for the Organisation Development Adviser \$315,000; for the Regional Coordinator \$218,278; for the Technical Officer \$200,000; for the Management Development Officer \$126,594; for the Storekeeper \$44,408; for the Staff Nurse \$60,224; for the Head Cook \$49,827; for the Administrator \$60,224; for the Handyman \$37,657; for the House mother \$60,224; for the second Handyman \$37,653; for the House father \$57,356; and for the two Drivers \$39,127 each per month.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the details that you provided for salaries in relation to the designations, although these are contracted employees, as compared to the salary scale, are the salaries for these staff above the salaries of the salary scale?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the salary scale is within certain bands and it is not above. If for any reason it is above, it depends on the year of employment, but these are relatively new employees, so they will be within the band even though they are contracted.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you. Line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – the Hon. Minister did indicate that there are 29 vehicles. I do not know if this includes equipment and the stove, but there are 29 that were noted. However, there is in the Budget - and I do not know if the Hon. Minister is aware - capital budget, a provision for vehicles and engine, and there seems to be a decrease in the amount of money being requested for 2013. Could you explain?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the vehicles catered for under the capital allocation are usually vehicles that are allocated to villages including, as you said, equipment. I would want to say including boats and engines and so on. The village council will take care of those expenditures associated with fuel for its usage. When we get to capital expenditure, I may want to posit that there is one vehicle in there which will be in addition to our fleet.

Mr. Sharma: Line item 6284 – Other – can you say what this consists of?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: This allocation caters for support for burials and other medical expenditures, including Computed Tomography (CAT) scans, ultrasounds, and any associated cost that may come to us, and also Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRIs).

Mr. Sharma: Can the Hon. Minister say what are the costs allocated to the various categories that were indicated, health care and so forth?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, Mr. Chairman. For burials, we catered \$1.8 million; CAT scans \$600,000; Ultrasounds \$408,000; any medical requirement associated with cancer treatment \$360,000; and for MRIs \$780,000.

Mr. Sharma: Is there a figure, in terms of number of persons, attached to that amount?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman...

Mr. Chairman: One second, Minister. It may be difficult to calculate how many people die and how many you are going to render assistance to. I can say that persons from the Hinterland have come to me sometimes to say that they have received moneys from the Ministry, but they sometime need a little more to augment. It really is a factor of how many people die or fall ill. That is sometimes kind of hard to gauge. So, you put a cap on it, but you cannot say that there will be ten people dying this month or in the year. Two may die and seven may need MRIs. With respect, I think it is very difficult to put a cap on how many people you are going to treat or how many funerals you are going to help with. I do know, because I can speak from experience, that persons have come to me to say that they have received sometimes for flights to take bodies in for funerals, bring relatives out or to help with some assistance at the hospital or something like that. If the Minister can put a number to some of these categories, I do not know.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, you articulated it well. That is what happens. For the burial, we offer \$30,000 and that does not cover the entire cost.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, as was indicated, the \$30,000, if you divide that by the amount, it is going to give us the number of persons.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, if in fact it is \$30,000 then we can do that calculation, but the figure is in excess of \$3 million to cover a category of four or five things. It is estimated.

Mr. Sharma: Line item 6291 – National and Other Events – could we have a breakdown of the national events for this \$31 million?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, yes. For heritage celebrations we have an estimated sum of \$19 million; contribution to Amerindian Village Day, which is the host village annually - \$1.5 million; support to Regional Village Day - \$1.5 million; for assistance to North Rupununi Village Day - \$500,000; the contribution that we make to sporting events, village expo, et cetera - \$1 million; Mashramani celebration - \$3 million; Independence Day celebration - \$300,000; Rupununi Rodeo - \$1 million; Rupununi Expo - \$500,000; Upper Mazaruni sports - \$2 million; and Moruka Expo - \$700,000.

2.38 p.m.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister say, specifically, if there are any moneys earmarked for the August month sports at Shea Village in South Rupununi?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The Ministry will be supporting. We received the request already. It is a request that is not an annual request and so it will be taken out of this line item. I wish that we could provide a reasonable sum when we deal with this later on.

Dr. Norton: Just to inform, while it may not be an annual August month sports in Shea, it is an annual event in all of the South Rupununi villages. It moves from one village to the other. Could you say how much you have earmarked for that Village?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The last time the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs supported Karasabai. My staff cannot remember off-hand the amount that was budgeted.

Mr. Sharma: Just a general observation: what I am noticing is that for Budget 2012, \$292,441,000 was budgeted under Other Charges. The actual expenditure was \$264,533,000. In effect, \$28 million was not spent. The Auditor General, at some point, I believe, in his Report for 2010 – I am not too sure – indicated that the Amerindian Fund was being used to offset certain

Treasury expenditure and then the Treasury would reimburse the Fund at a later date. Was any expenditure taken out from the Amerindian Fund and the fund is waiting to be reimbursed?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: I am advised that the answer is no.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): I would like the Hon. Minister to say how many scholarships the amount caters for and if any University students are catered for in this allocation.

Mr. Chairman: Insofar as the second part of your question, the question was posed about the University students and the Minister answered that once they come of age – beyond 18 years – the Public Service Ministry (PSM) takes over. This scholarship fund is for students up to the age of 18, though if one is a University student, one may receive assistance from the Ministry but not for scholarships. That is the function of the Public Service Ministry. How many scholarships does this fund cater for?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: For this year, we are catering for 388 scholarship students. I can list some additional areas which it caters for. It caters for: pocket allowance, dorm allowance, support for the provision of examination fees for hinterland scholarship students, assistance in the provision of materials for School Based Assessment (SBA) projects at the secondary schools, assistance in the provision of supplies and materials for the Guyana Technical Institute (GTI) students and the Carnegie School of Home Economics students under this allocation.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6292 – Dietary: is the Minister aware that during last year the students at the dormitory at Aishalton were fed a meal of rice porridge three times a day?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Aishalton does not fall under the purview of the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs but, from time to time, if there are any issues with dormitories where students are located, we are privy to issues that would have arisen over the period and I am not aware of that.

Mr. Jones: Is the Minister aware that when the students at the dormitory at Aishalton queried the meals being provided to them, they were told that it was due to the Opposition budget cuts?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: No, I am not aware of that.

Mr. Jones: Could the Hon. Minister please indicate to this House how much money was allocated to the dormitory at Aishalton in the 20...

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The questions on the dormitory at Aishalton do not fall under Estimates of Expenditure of the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs does not cater for the dormitory at Aishalton.

Programme: 161 – Amerindian Development - \$398,593,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 161 – Amerindian Development - \$435,188,000

Dr. Norton: Project code 1400100 – Amerindian Development Fund - as one of the projects, there is land for demarcation and titling. Could the Hon. Minister say how many of the villages are earmarked and how much is budgeted for these villages?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Under this allocation, we will be addressing titling for 14 communities and we will be addressing demarcation for eight communities.

Dr. Norton: A follow-up question: could the Hon. Minister name these communities?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: There is Kariako, Four Miles, Batavia, Kumbaru, Tasserine, Kangaruma, Tuseneng, Karisparu, Parabar, and Sawariwau. We will also be demarcating Massara extension -Tracks A and C and Yakarinta extension. We will also be looking at Waramuri, Manawarin, Kamana, Kurukabaru and Taruka.

Dr. Norton: For Four Miles, could I have a more geographical location?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: At Four Miles in Region 1, it is the Matakai sub-region.

Dr. Norton: On the same project code, could the Hon. Minister say where the ecotourism projects are earmarked for and the nature of these ecotourism projects?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The areas are Wakapau, Koko, Mora, Kamwatta, and Eclipse Falls in Region 1. For Region 2, there is Wakapau; for Region 5, there is Maraikobai; for Region 6, there

is Siparuta; for Region 7, there are Batavia, Tasserine, Parima, and Waramadong. For Region 8, we have had requests from Kato, Chenapau, Kopinang, Apoteri, Fair View, Kumu, Waruni and Rockstone.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister give us a follow up on the nature of these ecotourism projects?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: I do not have the details of the requests here. We did not bring the request letters but we can produce them.

Dr. Norton: Thanks a whole lot, Ma'am. Could we get a commitment on the time in which you will present this to us? Along with that, could we get the cost attached to each project?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The cost is \$1.5 million each. It is a form of support to their initiative. My staff are informing me that they can prepare it for Monday of next week.

Dr. Norton: Under the same project code, could the Hon. Minister say where the hot meal kitchen and day care centre are earmarked for?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The request we are fulfilling is for Santa Rosa. This is for the day care centre. The hot meal kitchen is from the Warapoka Village.

Dr. Norton: Could the Minister kindly say exactly where these musical instruments are earmarked for? Are they for one community or various communities and what are the types of musical instruments?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: I am informed that the request is from Ruperti village.

Dr. Norton: What are the types of instruments?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: I am advised that they are guitar, keyboard, flute, and amplifier.

Dr. Norton: Is it Ruperti alone?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, for this year.

Dr. Norton: Under the same project code, there is the purchasing of tractors. Could the Hon. Minister say how many tractors and for which community they will be purchased?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: It is to enhance the Community Development Programme (CDP) of Bethany, because its CDP this year is going to be in the area of agriculture. They would be provided with tractor and trailer to expand agricultural production in their village. It is also for Manawarin. According to the notes, it is also to expand agriculture production.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister say if in this project, especially where tractors are concerned, the conditions are made for the maintenance and repairs of these tractors?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, Mr. Chairman. This year, we will be looking at collaborating with the Ministry of Labour with respect to training in repairs, maintenance and the use of heavy duty equipment.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister say if the tractor at Aishalton that is broken is earmarked for repairs?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: I am advised that the answer is no.

Dr. Norton: Project code 2403000 – Water Transport - could the Hon. Minister say for the purchase of these boat engines how many are earmarked for each area?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: They are earmarked for Moruka and Mabaruma in Region 1; Wakapau in Region 2; Karia Karia in Region 3; Maraikobai in Region 5; Siparuta in Region 6; Batavia and Itabali in Region 7; Kaibarupai and Kanapang in Region 8; Malali and Sand Hills in Region 10.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister say if the \$10 million budgeted will be able to purchase all of that?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, \$10 million will be able to purchase all of that. Maybe I failed to list what will be provided to each of the village I mentioned. An engine has been requested in the Moruka area; a boat in the Mabaruma area; a boat and engine, which will be a 25 horse power, for Wakapau; a boat and engine for Karia Karia; one boat for Maraikobai; one boat for Siparuta; one boat for Batavia; a 15 horse power outboard for Itabali; a 15 horse power engine and an aluminium boat for Kaibarupai; a 25 horse power engine and aluminium boat for Kanapang; a boat and engine of 40 horse power for Malali; and one boat and 25 horse power engine for Sand Hills. They all add up to \$10 million which is the vote we have received.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister say if the Ministry is getting these boats and engines at a special price?

Mr. Chairman: I was thinking the same thing. That is quite a bit of equipment, especially the outboard engines, for \$10 million. It seems to be that the Ministry is getting very, very, very good value for money there.

Dr. Norton: Project code 2403100 – Land Transport - purchase of vehicles: could the Hon. Minister say if any of the minibuses that are earmarked under this project is for Parikadanau, which is a little village down south, specifically for the school children since they lost the opportunity to write their final exams due to the lack of transportation?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: No. Last year, the Ministry provided a vehicle to that small satellite of Aishalton. It was a 4x4 pick-up because of the terrain. They ought not to have lost any opportunity in writing exams because the Ministry made sure that when the vehicle was handed over, it was very clear to the Toshao and Councillors that it was bought for them. In fact, it was budgeted in last year's Budget for them.

The minibus is for Rockstone to transport school children from Rockstone to Linden. It is for secondary school and for Parakeese in Region 1 to transport school children from that village to the secondary school in the Kumaka/Santa Rosa area.

Dr. Norton: Just for the Minister's information, that 4x4 pick-up is controlled entirely by the Aishalton Village Council and is not in the village at this particular time. It was handed over to the Aishalton Village Council.

Mr. Chairman: This is a clear case of Members going on the ground, finding information and sharing it with the Minister. If it was bought for a particular purpose and it has been "hijacked", I believe that you have a duty – which you are doing now – not just to air it, but to ensure that the Minister is spoken to and it is returned to that village for which it was bought and the students get the benefit. If it is that they cannot go to school because some group of adults have commandeered a vehicle that was meant for them, it is not a government problem, it is a problem that has to be addressed at this end and I am happy that you have raised it. I hope that you follow it up because it is really distressing to hear what you just said.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much. Under the same project code, could the Hon. Minister say where the ambulance is earmarked for and the cost, as compared to the cost that is here?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs does not purchase ambulances. We do not provide ambulance to communities. What we do is support emergency situations and it would probably be termed ambulatory support or emergency support but it appears as ambulance in the legend. Usually, in the Hinterland where the roads are not similar to the roads that are in the city or urban areas, for our support for any education, health or community emergency, we give the appropriate vehicle that can be used. Usually, it is a pick-up.

Dr. Norton: It has under Capital Expenditure, Agency Code 16 that the project includes purchase of minibuses, ATVs, motorcycles, and ambulances. Should that then not be under a different head?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: We will be providing a vehicle to assist in emergencies. Whether the Hon. Member wants to call it an ambulance or not, it is to assist the request that came to us with respect to community emergencies which, obviously, will, from time to time, be health emergencies. Maybe, that is the reason it is put there as ambulance but we do not...that is the task of the Ministry of Health.

Dr. Norton: Would the Hon. Minister say that placing ambulance here is incorrect?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Maybe the description is incorrect, but the meaning of health emergency may very well signal that.

Ms. Selman: Project code 1400100 – Amerindian Development Fund: could the Hon. Minister say what the nature of the apprenticeship programme is, the proposed starting date and the duration? Also, what are the criteria for entry into the programme? Finally, Mdm. Minister, how would the selection be done?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The Youth Apprenticeship Programme earmarked to be funded this year is expected to be launched sometime in May. The criteria for selection are the responsibility of the village councils. The Ministry has provided some pointing guidelines which they may wish to consider during selection. Those guidelines will be: it is an equal opportunity programme so that both males and females can be selected; they should enquire about the interests of

candidates and the interests that we would like to see supported are sports development and culture, computer literacy, in anticipation that we are going to move forward with the One Laptop Per Family (OLPF) hubs in the first instance in some communities; also data and record keeping to provide levels of support to the CDPs, the presidential grants, and also to collect data for the Ministry; we will also be looking at areas of interests that will capture repairs and maintenance of solar panels, tractors, minor equipment, et cetera. There are some pointers which we provided to the village council while it is going to be responsible for selection. The age range is 18 to 40.

Mr. B. Williams: I would like to direct the Minister's mind to South Pakaraimas, Region 9 and villages including Paipang, Tiger Pond and Karasabai. Are you aware that there is a dire need for transportation for children to go to school from as far as St. Ignatius? Have you provided for that here?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs supports scholarship students who go to St. Ignatius. We provide for students from the South Pakaraimas going to Annai. We support that also.

Mr. B. Williams: A follow-up question: what does the Minister mean by "support"? They are saying that they do not have any transportation for the children to go to school from the South Pakaraimas. What is the support that you are providing?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: We would support them by transporting them to the dormitory at St. Ignatius and, at the end of the term, they are transported back to their villages.

Mr. B. Williams: That is the boarding school. What about the primary schools and the other villages' schools? What is happening? They are complaining.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, is there a policy on the part of the Government to provide transportation for school students?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, that is a concern for the Ministry of Education but because it is a concern for the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs as well, we have a big role in it. Every year, as the requests come in to us, we seek to address them.

3.08 p.m.

This year's request came in from Rockstone and Parakeese. I want to say that the request is not only in written form but is provided during the budgetary period when the National Toshaos Council (NTC) meeting is held, particularly during the budgeting period, so we can capture this in the planning.

Mr. Chairman: Minister are you saying therefore that your Ministry can only provide support services from time to time, but you cannot take on this responsibility?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, it is like yes and no. I think it is a relevant concern and this matter has been engaging discussions.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Project code 1400100- could the Hon. Minister kindly say how much money was allocated for each project? And, the amount allocated was \$392,388,000- can you say where this money is coming from to fund these projects?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the money is requested under the Amerindian Development Fund (ADF). For the various projects: secure livelihood, \$5 million; subvention to Bina Hill, \$6 million; the grants as you see it for eco-tourism, \$30 million; for equipment such as brush cutters, chain saws, sewing machines, radio sets, Public Address systems, cassava mill, the tractor and trailer implements, water pump, the grant for construction of multi-purpose building, the construction of village office, the purchase of a solar system – this is not the household one but is a single request that comes in from a school or a health centre; musical instruments, sports gears, some support for barbed wire, All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and so on. That adds up to \$160 million for the ADF. Those are the components that would add up to \$160 million which also includes the Youth Apprenticeship Programme of \$200,000, and \$77.8 million for land demarcation which will give a total of \$392,388,000.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Are the moneys in the ADF fund coming from the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS)?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: No, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Can you elaborate where it will come from?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, it will come from the Consolidated Fund.

Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Harmon: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister state by what time the issuing of land titling between the villages of Sawariwau and Katunarib would be settled?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, addressing that issue is catered for in this year's Budget. We expect to have resolution to it this year.

Ms. Kissoon: Project code 1400100- Amerindian Development Fund- could the Hon. Minister say if there is any allocation for Region No.10 and, if yes, which communities will benefit?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, Mr. Chairman, there is support here for Region No.10. The villages that will benefit are Kimbia, Sand Hills, Rockstone, Riversview, Malali, and Wiruni.

Ms. Kissoon: A follow-up question: could the Hon. Minister say which programmes or areas under the description of the project and the costs allocated?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, Rockstone will receive their request of the purchase of a water pump which they are hoping will assist in their agriculture pursuits. The total of \$100,000 is the estimated budgeted figure for the purchase of the water pump. Kimbia – we will be allocating the estimated \$250,000 to assist with repairs. Sand Hills, Rockstone, Riversview and Malali will all be supported this year with sports gears.

Ms. Hastings: Mr. Chairman, project code 1400100, under provision for land demarcation and titling my question to you Hon. Minister: Is the title granted to Amerindian lands irrevocable?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, titles granted to Amerindians are absolute grants, forever and ever.

Ms. Hastings: Thank you. Could the Hon. Minister explain why then titles granted to Kambaru/ Ominike in 2012 at the National Toshaos Conference were taken back without reasonable explanation to the Toshaos?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the land was not taken back from the village. There was objection which everyone knows about that appeared in the newspapers. The titles were held for

final investigation. Therefore, what will happen is that because we have funding this year we will go and do the additional investigation to certify that Kambaru land is totally cleared.

Ms. Hastings: So then are you assuring this House that the matte will be solved during this year?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: We are hopeful, and, yes, we expect we will be solving it this year.

Ms. Kissoon: Mr. Chair, just a clarification. The Hon. Minister said \$250,000 for repairs at Kimbia, but she did not say repairs for what. Could you say the amount Sand Hills, Riversview, and Malali would be receiving for the sports gears?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the repairs is to a solar system. For the sports gears they will receive footballs, volleyballs, cricket gears...

Ms. Kissoon: The cost.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Actually, I am advised it is a bulk purchase, and all the communities which requested some level of support will be provided such. But the items purchased are footballs, cricket gears, volleyballs and, I think, for the female “rounders” sporting equipment.

Mr. Chairman: There are three microphones indicating. Are you finished Mr. Allicock? I would like to go on to Mrs. Garrido-Lowe, then come back to Mr. Trotman, then the Deputy Speaker has a question as well. Mrs. Garrido-Lowe, Mr. Allicock, Mr. Trotman, Mrs. Backer; Mr. Sharma your space is reserved last not because you are... by your request.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Project code 1400100, a point of clarification. Hon. Minister you did say for the youth entrepreneurship there will be training in auto-mechanics. Did you mention that...?

Mr. Chairman: I am not hearing you clearly. Can you speak a little closer to the microphone, please?

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Minister, you did say for youth entrepreneurship that the youths will be trained in motor mechanics etcetera. If this is so will they be trained in their communities and for how long?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, under this programme we will not be offering a diploma or degree in any one of the fields. We will be training them to build capacity in relation to minor

repairs and maintenance of the equipment available in the community, for example, outboard engines, chain saws, tractor, and ATVs. We will be training in the sub-district which means we will work to have tutors go so we will be able to bring larger group together.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: So we could expect that each village will be represented in the training, like two youths per village perhaps.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: You are correct.

Mr. Allicock: This is with regard to land demarcation at Katunarib and Sawariwau. I understand, according to the Minister, that funds would be made available for that demarcation this year. Could the Hon. Minister say what is the starting time so we have an idea?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, we expect the starting time to be very shortly after the Budget has been approved.

Mr. Allicock: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say whether there is a system of evaluation for these projects within the Amerindian Development Fund so we could be able to see whether it is helping, it is stagnated or nothing...?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the Amerindian Development Fund under this heading provides mainly equipment and construction, as I read out earlier, of a village office to assist in administration and governance. And, of course, support for sports as I mentioned.

Over the years, I believe, our investment under this heading has brought much relieve to those who have benefited. I would say that we do have a system where we track what is happening with some of the equipment and vehicles we provided. I want to use an example where Surama received a minibus last year for transportation and is required to submit quarterly reports to the Ministry with respect to its operation so we would be able to see the reports coming in. We have Community Development Officers (CDOs) who have the responsibility of providing feedback. So far the investment the Government has made under this Fund has helped communities to move forward on some of the initial initiatives they are engaged in at the community level.

Mr. Allicock: Thank you very much Minister. Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say what is the process for accessing funding? How do communities access funding from this Fund? Is there a contact person so we know exactly who to go to?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the budget head is one which is annual. For communities to benefit from this Fund - because we do not disburse the fund to the community – when we meet at NTC they would make requests for support from the Government and we cater for this under the ADF which is the budget head in this process.

Mr. Chairman: One second Mr. Trotman, we will have Ms. Wade; Mr. Sharma you are still in line, stand by.

Ms. Wade: Mr. Chairman, I had a question for the Minister but after listening to her I want to ask her whether road constructions fall under this project code. If it does could the Hon. Minister state whether the Kuma Road, the farm to market road, is listed for construction in 2013.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs does not do such roads; it does not fall under our Ministry. It will usually fall under the governance system of the Regional Democratic Council (RDC).

Mr. Trotman: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, project code 1400100. I would like to draw the Minister's attention to the project profile and specifically to items 4 and 5. Item 4 speaks of the construction of multipurpose buildings, day care centres, hot meal kitchen and village offices. Item 5 speaks of the purchase of several different items. I believe it is unfair for any ministry to come to the House and not give specifics in terms of what these things are.

Mr. Chairman: You can ask the question.

Mr. Trotman: My question: What is the relevant breakdown in relation to these specific items? And in the case of the construction of buildings I will like to hear dimensions and cost. In relation to the items being purchased I would like to hear about quantity *vis-à-vis* cost. I am prepared to accept written information in relation to this, but I am not prepared to accept no information in relation to the block sums which are being given.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, for the communities to receive benefits this year with respect to buildings the Ministry provides support no higher than \$1.5 million; that is the limit for any village with respect to infrastructure. The villages are required to submit their estimates before this money is disbursed. We do not add any village if they do not request for village offices. It is their call. Therefore, for the information of Hon. Member this year under construction of village office the Taruka Village Office in Region No.8 has requested support in constructing their village office and the Ministry will provide the usual support, which we have done over the years to many villages, in the sum of \$1.5 million. But before that village receives the sum it has to send the estimates. At this point in time the estimates are not yet in.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, notwithstanding the Minister's explanation, I do not think she fully understood the question. The question really has to do with a range of items which she said will be done under the proposed request. I would like to know, and I am quite sure this House would like to know, in the case of the construction of multi-purpose buildings, how many will be built. We will like to know what are the dimensions and the respective costs for each building. I am saying that in relation to all of the items that fall under items 4 and 5 we will like to have a breakdown. I am sure you are not in a position to give that breakdown now so I am prepared to wait until tomorrow for you to give us an accurate breakdown in dollars and cents terms, and in measurements, so we can have a sense of exactly what you are proposing to do under items 4 and 5 of this head.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, I understand the Hon. Member quite well and I am prepared to provide the information as the Ministry receives it.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member my sense is that the Ministry disburses a maximum of \$1.5 million per village per project.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, and we wait for the estimates to come in.

Mr. Chairman: And when the village makes the request that village comes with its designs and then the request is processed. If the request has not been made it will not be possible for the Ministry to provide details such as dimensions and so on. That is my understanding.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, you are correct. As soon as the Budget is approved the village is notified and requested to bring in, not necessarily their design, their estimates with the dimensions and so on because this is just a block support to the village. Normally the design may require far in excess of this sum but this is the Ministry's matching sum.

Deputy Speaker [Mrs. Backer]: Mr. Chair, respectfully to the Hon. Minister, there are six items listed, the request is that you provide in writing first of all the total under each— provision for youth, provision for land demarcation which everybody is asking about - off the \$392 million, x million is budgeted for that and go through all six; and vis-à-vis the village offices, although you are saying the villages will have to request and the maximum is \$1.5. We want to know what is this block sum? Because if you tell us the block sum is \$3 million then we know that in the year only two villages could benefit. What we are asking is for a breakdown. It is a lot of money. We would like a breakdown of the six main items, and even within the six could you give us a sub-breakdown? We could look at them so when we go back to Region No.9 or the other regions we would be able to say the Hon. Minister said this, they voted money, look we have a copy with the stamp of the Ministry but it is not happening; so we can be on safe grounds. You will not have to go back and try to clean up.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the request is coming and I will so comply. The way we have been asking questions is heartening. This did not come up earlier but now that it is up I will comply.

Mrs. Backer: Just one further question, for item 5 among the various things listed is a solar system. You did say Hon. Minister that the solar system is not for households. Could you indicate either on this head or any other head where there is provision for solar panels for households?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: No, Mr. Chairman, not households, not under this head or any other head under our estimates.

Mrs. Backer: Am I to understand that the Ministry has no plan for 2013 to provide solar panels for households in 2013 in Amerindian villages.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the Ministry collaborates with the Office of the Prime Minister and the votes will come under his Office.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, part of my question to the Hon. Minister was addressed by Mdm. Deputy Speaker under 1400100. The first part relates to the breakdown to each of the interventions listed under the project profile. The Minister had said earlier that two of the villages targeted under item 2, land demarcation, are the villages of Massara and Yakarinta. Could the Minister inform us if there are terms of reference for this activity and, if so, would she be prepared to make it available to this House.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the Massara and Yakarinta extensions are for demarcations. The only process required for demarcations from our end is the approval of the village, and they have sent their approval. And because it is demarcation which entails field surveys or cadastral surveys that is done by the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission.

Mr. Bulkan: So you are saying those are the terms of reference you just outlined.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, yes.

Ms. Hastings: I just want to take the Minister back to land demarcation. You said to this House that the title cannot be taken back; the land was not taken back. But Mdm. Minister my question is what is the nature of the investigation and who is now in charge of the land as it stands? Is it the miners or the Amerindian people?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the proposed area that is under discussion right now is at this time I am speaking is an area proposed to the Ministry, which the investigation will entail.

3.38 p.m.

Following the Amerindian Act, there is a specific role of the Minister who will cause an investigation to occur. The investigation will look at the establishment of the village; the year, the population, demographics, the connection of the community to the land. It will also investigate what other competing interests they may have on the land. It will also look at whether there are cultural ties to the land before a determination is done. It is listed in that fashion.

Ms. Hastings: Follow up question. Can the Hon. Minister kindly include someone from the A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) to be a part of the investigation team?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: That is a question that maybe is not relevant to the Estimates and I would prefer not to encourage discussions on that at this session.

Mr. Sharma: Project 1209600 – Building- there is an amount of \$5 million for the construction of a tarmac. Could we have the dimension of the tarmac - the size?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: We will have to submit the dimension of the tarmac plan to be surfaced at the Liliendaal hostel dormitory.

Mr. Sharma: Project 1400100 – Amerindian Development Fund- can the Hon. Minister say if this is the only source of funding for the fund?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, yes.

Mr. Sharma: The Amerindian Act, I believe, indicates 1% from the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC). Is this the amount allocated in this estimate; is this the amount from GGMC?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, no.

Mr. Sharma: Can the Hon. Minister say where this 1% from the GGMC is?

Mr. Chairman: That is a fair question, but not under this line item. We are dealing with the allocation here. It is a valid question, the Minister may answer it, but it does not arise. We are dealing with approving funding, as stated here. It is a fair question generally, but I do not know that it arises.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: It is a fair question and I would answer it, but not today and not under this line item.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, the Minister is saying that she is prepared to answer it, if it is put in as a formal question. As a Member it will be answered.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Just for the record the Amerindian Act states the 1% is for the Amerindian Development Fund. Could the Hon. Minister say what the balance was of this account at the 31st December, 2012?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: I believe that this matter is not part of the Estimates. I indicated that it is a fair question, but I will not answer today. Maybe the Member can proceed to ask me question on this matter through the other process that is available to us.

Mr. Chairman: We are dealing with the sum stated here for approval and like I said I would not push the Minister because it does not flow.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you Mr. Chairman. However, the Amerindian people need to know what the amount is in their accounts.

Mr. Chairman: I agree with you, but like I am saying, we are dealing with the approval of \$1.4 billion. Therefore, those questions, as I said, can come normally through the question and answer process of the House.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you Mr. Chairman, project 2403100 – Land Transport- the description of the project says, purchases of minibuses, ATVs, motor cycles and in the last part ambulance. The Hon. Minister has indicated that she is not aware of what is the description of the ambulance. How many mini-buses are being purchased here?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Did the Hon. Member say how many minibuses?

Mr. Chairman: Buses being purchased.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, there will be two mini-buses being purchased. I have already answered the question; one for Rockstone to support the transportation of students and one for Parakeese for the transportation of students.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, will it be safe to say that we can add one more to that, which will be the minibus that will be purchased for the ambulance?

Mr. Chairman: No, both buses will be used for the transportation of children. Be careful.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, I am saying that maybe the ambulance is a minibus, so it will be three minibuses they are purchasing.

Mr. Chairman: No. The question was how many minibuses are being purchased. The minister gave an answer and she said two and they are being used; one for Rockstone and one for the other village for the transportation of children.

Mr. Sharma: Would the ambulance be in the form of a minibus? [*Interruption*]

Mr. Chairman: Is there going to be a vehicle that looks like a minibus, which will be used for emergency services?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, no.

Mr. Chairman: The answer to that is no.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Would this ambulance, that we do not have a description of, have any life supporting equipment on board?

Mr. Chairman: Would it have any life supporting equipment?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, no.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, I respectfully submit that this is a minibus. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, point made.

Ms. Marcello: Can the Minister indicate to us how many ATVs she intends to buy under this heading. Back to project – 2403100 - Land Transport, who are the beneficiaries of this means of transport?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: We will be purchasing four ATVs. The communities benefitting will be: Itabac, Paramakatoi, Kurakbaru and Yawrapiaru.

Ms. Marcello: Further question, will the ATV for Paramakatoi be stationed at the health centre because the health centre is in a critical need of any means of transport.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The placement of it will be with the Village Council. Any vehicle that is placed with the Village Council is not only given for administration and governance mobility, but it is also for support of the provision transportation services, including emergencies, if and when it occurs.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Project 1400100 – Amerindian Development Fund- the Minister did say that the moneys for the buildings, the multi-purpose centres, et cetera is a block sum. What I would like to know Hon. Minister is, since you do not have the estimates now and they have to produce them, do you know beforehand how many villages will be sending in these estimates? Is that why arrived at this block sum?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: For the multipurpose building, the support that the Government will give will be to Itabac - \$1.5 million and Rukumuta - \$1.5 million.

Programme: 161 – Amerindian Development - \$435,188,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, that brings us to the end of our consideration of the Estimates for the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. Thank you very much and thank you to your officers for attending and providing the answers.

Hon. Members, we are at a quarter to four, we will now commence up until five o'clock with the Ministry of the Public Service. Minister we will give you a few minutes to get ready. I know that Minister on her own, sometimes feels competent to address everything, but that is not always a wise thing to do.

Minister of Public Service [Dr. Westford]: I am ready.

Mr. Chairman: Are you expecting anyone Minister?

Dr. Westford: No. I am ready.

Mr. Chairman: Are you serious?

Dr. Westford: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: I see. The Minister is saying that she is ready. Mr. B. Williams.

Agency: 14 – Public Service Ministry

Current Expenditure

Programme: 141 – Public Service Management - \$748,710,000

Mr. B. Williams: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees- there are more than the actual number of administrative staff, could the Hon. Minister say what are the positions and salaries of the three highest paid staff of those 25 contracted employees?

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, yes. We have the Permanent Secretary, on Band 14 whose salaries is \$562,342; we have the Chief Personnel Officer, a Band 12 position that salary is \$302,996; we have the Principle Personnel Officer, a Band 11 position that salary is \$219,433.

Mr. B. Williams: You have two employees under administrative, totalling \$6 million. Who are those employees and what are their salaries?

Dr. Westford: Under administrative, we have two Principle Personnel Officers, one of whose salary is \$248,415 and the other is \$205,254. There are two Principle Personnel Officers.

Mr. B. Williams: Thank you Hon. Minister. Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings - \$3 million, which building is this?

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, we have two buildings; we have the main office, which is in 164 Waterloo Street and then we have the Training Division, which is Joseph Pollydore Street and Vlissingen Road. We are going to be spending \$1.9 million in Waterloo Street and \$1.1 million in the Training Division.

Mr. B. Williams: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Minister would agree that that building in Joseph Pollydore Street is an eyesore. Who do you have in that building?

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, that building is the Training Division. We have staff there – Public Servants. I do not know what the Hon. Member’s definition of an eyesore is, but the two buildings that the Public Service Ministry occupies are very old buildings. One is 155 years old, which is the one in Waterloo Street and the other one is approximately, I think next year it is going to be 65 years old. We have over the years been trying to get those buildings - one is a

heritage building mine you - we have been trying to maintain those buildings. If my Hon. Friend will recall, over the years we have been doing repairs to those buildings. I think they have been improving as the years go on and we will continue doing so, until the situation arises where we can have enough money to probably build two new buildings.

Mr. Lumumba: A conservative approach to spending.

Mr. B. Williams: Mr. Chairman, yes, a conservative approach to spending. In fact, when the Hon. Minister spoke, it reminded me of that request for \$200 million for another eyesore in Linden. You should know that well Hon. Prime Minister, it was burned down.

Mr. Chairman, line item 6281 – Security Services- this big business in the Public Service of Guyana; security services. I see an increase from \$3 million to \$15 million. Hon. Minister, who is enjoying this largest; which firm?

Dr. Westford: I am happy to hear that the Hon. Member is saying that \$3 million is a largest. Our security company is the Federal Management Security Company. We tendered, as the system requires us to do and they won. We had three security services who tendered and Federal Management Security Company won the bid.

And yes Mr. Chairman, I would also like to say that we did have a security evaluation.

Mr. B. Williams: Why I mentioned it is that that is the highest paid security service in the Public Service. I want to ask the Hon. Minister what it is she is protecting in that 165 year old building, that she requires that and the other decrypted one in Joseph Pollydore Street?

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, I will answer the Hon. Member.

Mr. Chairman: I do not know if there is an answer to that, unless there is some specific...

Dr. Westford: What I am protecting is the people's property. The people's property is being protected there in those Government buildings and for the Hon. Member's information that Security Company happen to have been the lowest bidder of the three persons.

Mr. B. Williams: That could not have been. When we get the Procurement Commission we would know whether that is so or not.

Line item 6294 – Other- could the Hon. Minister tell us what items of expenditures are contemplated under this item?

Dr. Westford: Under this line item, we pay for the Ethernet and the internet connections on our broadband. The Public Service Ministry controls the entire connection in human resources within the Public Service. We are also currently doing our database link up with our payroll, so that is where that is paid under.

Mr. B. Williams: Line item 6302 –Training (including Scholarships)- Hon. Minister you have a very large sum this year, \$616 million. We are interested in the relevance of the training because you have been training for years. Might I respectfully ask if this sum includes training for pathologists?

Dr. Westford: I dare say that the training that the Government has been doing over the years has been relevant and continues to be relevant and we will continue training. Yes, this training is for pathologists. We do have one person in training and we are currently sending off two within the next few weeks to be trained.

Mr. B. Williams: Is the Hon. Minister saying that that is adequate for what is happening in Guyana? All those unlawful and extrajudicial killings, can that handle that?

Dr. Westford: As I said, training is a process that is continuous and we will continue to train as we need such individuals.

Mr. B. Williams: Hon. Minister, are you training in isolation or do you have a plan? For example, it has been recommended that you have a Coroner Department staffed with independent pathologists connected to the Ministry of Home Affairs or the Georgetown Hospital. That is the context in which we want to know how you...

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, yes. We do have a plan and I empathise with the Hon. Member, but that specialty is not the only specialty that we are in need of at this point in time. We have obstetricians that we have to get who are very important. We have had our mothers dying and it have been a big thing in this country, so we have get obstetricians; we have to get paediatricians; we have to get surgeons and; we have to balance how we are training persons. We just cannot train pathologists alone; we have to balance it.

Mr. B. Williams: I am not suggesting that.

Dr. Westford: We do have a plan and the persons that we have been sending, I did answer the Hon. Member and I said we are send two pathologists, but they are not the only specialist positions we are doing now. We are also sending other categories of specialists this year also and we have been doing so.

Mr. B. Williams: I am asking you for specific ones. In the context of what is happening in Guyana, in the context of the state of Guyana, could the Hon. Minister say whether they are training under this head, psychiatrists?

Dr. Westford: Yes, that is another specialty that will also be leaving. We have two persons who are also leaving within the next two weeks.

Mr. Chairman: Only this morning I was driving somewhere and I saw these three persons who needed immediate, urgent intervention.

Mr. B. Williams: That brings me to my next question. *[Interruption]*

Mr. Chairman: I tell you it is becoming a public health problem.

Dr. Westford: May I continue. We also have training in psychiatry. Currently we have a post graduate course, which is being done in Guyana.

Mr. B. Williams: A follow up question: recognising the magnitude of the problem in Guyana, how many psychiatrist are you training under this head? Are you answering me Minister?

Mr. Chairman: That answer was given actually. But, please repeat it.

Mr. B. Williams: What was the answer? I do not think the Minister heard me.

Dr. Westford: I did not hear the question.

Mr. Chairman: The question was how many psychiatrists you are training, but that answer was given. Could you repeat it?

Dr. Westford: I did answer.

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Dr. Westford: I said we are sending two persons within the next two weeks.

Mr. B. Williams: Will it be this year?

Dr. Westford: Yes, for this year.

Mr. Greenidge: I wonder whether I might help here, we are seeking to ascertain a plan for training. To explain that two or three persons are being trained, that is fine, but it does not constitute a plan. I think what is being asked here as was asked in relations to the pathologist is what is the plan. How many persons do you plan to train and within what period? Are you going to train three within the next five years? To what is that addressed? To you anticipate, expand ... *[Interruption]* That is the question I am asking, whether they think it is or is not, it does not matter. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you for assisting Mr. Williams.

Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs [Mr. Hinds]: I would say that the question raised by the Hon. Member Greenidge is quite appropriate, but I think it is for one of our sector committees; to be pursued in that. The issue here is that some \$616 million in our budget for 2013 has been allocated to training in the Ministry of Public Service. I think that is the issue that is to be addressed.

Mr. Greenidge: With all due respect Prime Minister, the numbers set out for training are normally informed by a context and whether it is the sector that answers or the Minister is immaterial. At this moment you are asking the Minister about her management of that element and there has to be a logic informing the number of persons she chooses or the number of persons the Ministry chooses to inform. She has to know that and she has to say that. I doubt whether she is unable to answer. I am sure she will be able to answer.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, let me see if I can restore some order and some symmetry here. Mr. Williams, you were at the point where you were inquiring about the number of persons being trained in psychiatry. The Minister had provided an answer which I had asked her to repeat and I think she was just about to give the context in terms of how many. Also, for the period of

training, Minister also mentioned that in the country at present, there is also a post-graduate programme ongoing in Guyana, training persons in psychiatry and perhaps I do not know if in psychology. Go ahead.

Dr. Westford: To answer the Hon. Member's question, we have a five year post-graduate training plan which started last year and over the five year period in the specialities of psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology, paediatrics, general surgery, dermatology and emergency medicine. We aim over the five year period to have ten of those specialists being sent within that period.

We have to understand too that these persons, even though I am saying over this five year period, to send ten of these persons, they will not come back within that period because it takes some time for them to train. In the interim, I think the Minister of Health will explain what is being done. That is our five year plan that we have for the specialist programme.

Mr. Chairman: Before we go on, I think Mr. Greenidge did raise what I thought was a good and valid point because it was in my mind. Certainly, if we are training 100 young persons, sending them on scholarships, it must be informed or be in the context of what is the development thrust that the Ministry is meeting; mining, engineering, environment sciences or health sciences. We have too many lawyers already, so we do not need to put a ... it must be informed by something and I do not think that something is a State secret. If there is anyone who has the knowledge of it, it is the Minister and I know that she has it because this Minister is very much on top of her Ministry but let us be a little more forthcoming.

4.08 p.m.

It is not a state secret. It is in the national interest that we are having this exercise and at some later stage Members should enjoy the benefit, perhaps in a Committee or here, of just being informed by receiving a briefing from the Minister on what is happening in that sector. I remember the Minister speaking about how many students were presently in Cuba – we thank the government of Cuba – but we need to know, when they come back, where they are going to be. It is part of the national development. Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Williams.

Mr. B. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In keeping with our theme on training we note that it is proposed to construct a new bridge over the Demerara River. Could the Hon. Minister say how many engineers she has subsumed under this head for training in relation to that specialist area of building that bridge across the Demerara River?

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, I will state to the Hon. Member how many post graduate engineers there are. I have three post graduate engineers, civil engineers; one specifically specialising in bridges, one in roads and who are supposed to be returning next year. I know that we do have post graduate civil engineers currently at the Ministry of Public Works who would have returned over the last two years and by the 15th September I will be sending two persons to... one to New Zealand and one to Australia. One to do transportation engineering, a posts graduate degree, and the other one to do building engineering as a post graduate degree.

Mr. B. Williams: Finally, Sir, not to leave you out, what scholarships do you have for the training here of parliamentary staff?

Dr. Westford: Parliamentary staff training is supposed to be done. The parliamentary staff enjoys training at a local level and at an overseas level. They enjoy general staff training and then training that is specific to Parliament. I must congratulate those members of staff who would have successfully concluded that training. We have over the last few years training which is specific to Parliament. Every year we try to send at least two or three persons on training to do things that are specific to Parliament. That is a continuous thing. We have an arrangement with the government of India which provides that training.

Mr. B. Williams: A follow up question: it is proposed for this Parliament to join the others in CARICOM to have its own parliamentary channel. Have you enlisted anyone for training in that area?

Dr. Westford: No, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Lawrence: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you to the Minister, I note at line 6261, that the amounts allocated for 2011, 2012 and 2013 are constant and so I would like to know when the last time was that there was an increase for Public Servants for Travelling and Subsistence. When did we last have an increase for these people?

Dr. Westford: Under this head, these are not payments to persons. These are sums that are utilised by the staff of the Public Service Ministry to go out to do their training activities when they go to Regions or other places. This is not payment to...

Mrs. Lawrence: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister kindly point me to the line item that caters for that particular expense and tell us whether there has been an increase in the last two or three years?

Dr. Westford: That is under Benefits and Allowances. Benefits and Allowance will fluctuate based on the category of staff, their salaries and those things. As I said yesterday, even though it may be reflected that one has the same numbers the categories may differ and ones' benefits and allowances differ based on the categories of staff.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6302, Training (including Scholarships)- Hon. Minister, you did mention that some training started last year but I would like to know, for this year, how many new scholarships you have granted or have intentions of doing so and how many indigenous applications have you had? Thank you.

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, this year the Public Service Ministry is expecting to offer a total of 340 scholarships at various levels – at the university level, local as well as overseas; at the technical level. There are different categories that I would have mentioned in my budget speech but I can provide that again for the Hon. Member if she so desires. As it relates to indigenous persons... May I say here that for this year, already, 2013, we have received four applications and I think the Hon. Member is aware of two of those. We have received four such applications and I am happy and proud to say that all four of those applications that came from our indigenous children have the qualifications and they are eligible and they, themselves, will soon be leaving for scholarships and, incidentally, all four of them will be studying medicine.

Mrs. Backer: I believe that it may become relevant as we get to Local Government but, Hon. Minister, under line item 6281- Security Services- you did say that Federal Management is the security service and they were the lowest bidders and you also said that there were three security services that bid. Could you provide us with the names of the other two?

Dr. Westford: One was GEB and the other was RK Security. I did say that, of the three, two were responsive and the two that were responsive were GEB and Federal and of the two Federal had the lower bid.

Mrs. Backer: Line item 6322- Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations- Hon. Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman, when we look at page 404 we see Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) and the figure budgeted last year was for \$2.224 million and that is the revised figure. This year we see that we have budgeted \$3.664 million. My question is, firstly: What are the benefits that we derive from being a member of the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration and what is the reason for the increase?

Dr. Westford: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been an increase in the dues to be paid which was... *[Interruption]*

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, it is a distraction to your colleague Minister...

Dr. Westford: ...certified by the CARICOM Secretariat and agreed to by member states; that increase in payment of dues. Our benefits: On a yearly basis we get no less than five training courses on which we send our administrative professionals to one of the Caribbean countries and these training courses are hosted by CARICAD, themselves. They come into our countries. We currently have two such persons here and they are looking at the reviews and the reforms of the Public Services throughout the CARICOM countries.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you. Just a follow up on that; Minister, would you be in a position to say – where it said that there is training and so on – whether other CARICOM countries are going the way, like Guyana, where there seems to be a preference for contract workers rather than people under permanent establishment.

Dr. Westford: Yes, our CARICOM neighbours do have contracted workers and, actually, two months ago I think that we had a teleconference through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that is one of the topics high on our agenda among the Ministers of the Public Service. It is occurring and it is currently engaging our attention. There are other countries which do not have so they are in discussion with those countries who do have and how it is being looked at.

Mr. B. Williams: Hon. Minister, what is the main business of the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration?

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, CARICAD, the organisation, is responsible for development of administration within the Public Sector. They are responsible for the reforms that have taken place within the Commonwealth, within the CARICOM, at the level of the Public Services. They also do training for all of the high-level administrative staff within the Public Sector.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must commend the Hon. Minister to be brave enough to answer her questions without the assistance...

Mr. Chairman: After hearing from you she might rethink the decision. Go ahead.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, in Budget 2012, I questioned under the line item 6231- Fuel and Lubricants- the minimal amount of increase that was being requested was less than \$150,000 and I asked the Hon. Minister if she was aware that her Ministry was purchasing a vehicle and she said “yes” and I said “describe the vehicle” and she said “a six-cylinder vehicle”. I am vindicated to say that in 2012 the actual expenditure was \$5.7 million over what was budgeted in 2012. In Budget 2012 it was \$4,175,000. The actual expenditure is \$9,875,000. This is a result of the six-cylinder vehicle which the Minister said then they would ensure they stay within the budget for. Now we see this scenario with some Ministries as an indicator that purchasing vehicles without increasing this line item so I would like the Hon. Minister to say if this increase of \$5.7 million was a result of the new vehicle or was the Ministry engaged in other activities that caused this increase?

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, thanks to the Hon. Member for his commendation a few minutes ago. That increase in “Fuel” was not based on the vehicle that was bought. Actually, what happened, and it must be remembered, was we brought home a large number of our fifth-year medical students who were doing their final-year studies here. As a result of that we have in our midst right now six faculties. The Cubans have organised six faculties. Those faculties are in Regions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 and because there was no housing initially for the professors we were able to secure houses for the students and we tried our best to place those students where they originated from so it was easy for them to get to their teaching areas but with the professors we had a problem. We have an obligation; we provide transportation/fuel. There are two vehicles

that are provided by the Ministry of Health so we have to provide the fuel and other materials for the movement of those persons so we had to have transportation moving those professors in Region No.3 from... We have two in Region 3; one in the West Demerara area and the other one way down to the Parika area. We have to provide transportation for them. We also have Region 5 that we have to provide for and Region 6. We also have two persons who are supervisors of that programme and they have to go across to all of those faculties, checking and ensuring. We, ourselves, have a monitoring role to play with those students so my officers had to be going there.

I am anticipating, and I am going to say it now, this year our fuel budget is slightly less than last year. Why is it slightly less than last year? [**Mrs. Backer:** You are getting a plane.] No, we are not getting a plane. I hope we can get one. We have secure housing for most of those professors so the only movement that we will be having will be for the supervision or on weekends if they have to come to the embassy or when we are going to visit.

Yes, we are buying a vehicle this year. I am anticipating all the questions as to why we have less money this year in fuel. Our fuel consumption will be drastically lower because we do not have that movement to be doing with the Cuban professors and the students this year.

Mr. Sharma: I listened to the explanation and it is somewhat unacceptable. Unless the Minister could say to me or to this House that this vehicle was somehow transferred to the Ministry of Public Service the explanation is not acceptable. The reason why is, if the vehicle belongs to the Ministry of Health the log books will be at the Ministry of Health. How is the Auditor General going to verify the use of this fuel? It means that a warrant should have been issued to the Ministry of Health so that they could carry out that expenditure. Could the Hon. Minister respond?

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, the vehicles have been assigned to the Cuban brigade. Those vehicles are permanently assigned to the Cuban brigade and the only reason that we actually loaned to vehicles from the Ministry of Health is the Public Service Ministry is not that imbued. We have a large responsibility with very small assets so the Ministry of Health which had vehicles at their disposal... it was the Hon. Minister who is now the Minister of Agriculture who had first made that promise to provide the vehicles for those persons. Hence, even though it is

the Ministry of Health's vehicle on paper it was assigned to that brigade so we provide the fuel. We have to provide the fuel and when we can afford it we will probably also have to provide the vehicles.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am looking forward to the Auditor General's 2012 report and I will be looking at this particular line item to see how the Auditor General going to treat this matter. In relation to line item 6281- Security Services- between Budgets 2012 and 2013, there is about a \$5 million increase in security. \$15,103,000 has been requested for security. Can the Hon. Minister state the location of security. Is this the Minister's residence, the Permanent Secretary's residence, the Training Division and Public Service Ministry (PSM) building? What is the amount allocated?

Dr. Westford: The security service that we have is for three locations – the Ministry, two buildings, and the Permanent Secretary's home. The Minister does not enjoy security under this head.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In relation to the Permanent Secretary, could we get the number of guards, armed guards, baton guards, radio guards, whatever the case may be? It is 24-hour security. Could we get a little detail on that?

Mr. Chairman: Last year we went through this. What I would ask that information be provided but to give the security details publicly of installation – and I am sure Mr. Felix would advise – could compromise the security that is being provided and I would not want to encourage that. The question may be asked. You may speak to the Minister, but I would not want installations being compromised by us disclosing. I do not know what is being secured but indeed that is my suggestion about the details of... we went through this last year and we agreed that we would not press particularly for security; that we would not be getting down to the minutiae as to what is where, exactly, because the truth is that while we were here yesterday a man and a lady were shot outside of the High Court while we were here so I would not want to know that an installation is exposed because we have given details but that is not to say that one is not free to approach the Minister and get an idea.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Minister could provide the total then that is allocated, of this \$15 million, to the residence of the Permanent Secretary.

Mr. Chairman: That is fair.

Mr. Sharma: One of the Members did ask what the PSM is protecting. I want to know if it is the Permanent Secretary.

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, I take offence to that. We have to protect our workers, whether it is the Permanent Secretary or whoever it is; we have to protect...

Mr. Chairman: Agreed. What the Member is asking...

Dr. Westford: My staff at the Ministry, whether they are the sweeper, the cleaner...

Mr. Chairman: How is the \$15 million distributed in terms of the installation? That is fair.

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Member should know that one does not allocate \$5 million here, \$3 million there or \$2 million there. One has a contract which says this is a service we are providing. When we tender we tender for a service, not – you understand – for individual places. We said, “Public Service Ministry, these are the five places we would like you... or four places...” [Mrs. Backer: Five? It was three.] I am just giving... Hypothetically, I am speaking. ‘...we would like you to protect.’ They had to come up with their analysis, all of them, to say that you will need “X” number of guards to protect and to secure your area and at the end of the month we get a bill which says the total what it is we get.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, it is not necessarily true what the Minister is saying. The budget is prepared by programme budgeting. It has to start at a level of activity.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, could the Member please withdraw this whole issue of saying that the Member is not speaking the truth? He said that what the Member said is not true. Basically, he is saying that she is telling untruth.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, indeed you may say that you do not agree with the Member or that you do not share her opinion but to say that she is not speaking the truth implies that she is lying, which we will not allow. You may say that you do not share that opinion or the opinion seems to be far from reality or something like that but please do not use terminology like...

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be guided by your recommendation.

Mr. Chairman: So it is withdrawn, Mr. Sharma?

Mr. Sharma: Yes, I withdraw.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Mr. Sharma: I do not share the opinion. In that programme budgeted commences at activity level. For the activity it would have stated what the activity is for the Permanent Secretary and the billing process is billed per building. If one wants to pay it in a lump sum that is up to the Ministry but there is a bill for each and every resident so that the security could be verified. They have a verification process before one pays so I am saying that the Hon. Minister could tell us in this honourable House what the amount is that was allocated of this \$15 million for the Permanent Secretary's residence.

Mr. Chairman: The Hon. Minister has answered that she is no position to do that.

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, there is no logical answer to what the Hon. Member is asking. That is an activity.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Hon. Member, the Minister is saying that there is a contract and one cannot disaggregate to say that for Waterloo Street it is "X", for Durban and Vlissengen it is "Y" and for the Permanent Secretary it is "Z". That is the Minister's answer. If Members want to go further they may but the Minister has answered the question. I do not know whether we want to and how one intends to proceed beyond that.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Hon. Minister is insulting my intelligence. I have expertise in this area. This is my area. Budgeting is my field. Could I ask the Hon. Minister then to present to this honourable House, lay to this House, that page for the security in her budget and you will see the figure.

4.38 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Are you in a position to provide the page?

Dr. Westford: I decline to answer Mr. Sharma.

Mr. Chairman: The Minister is declining to answer.

Mrs. Backer: I hope I would be more successful, Sir.

Line item 6117 – Temporary Employees: Could the Minister share with us the two employees? What are their positions and their salaries, no names of course?

Dr. Westford: It is a cleaner, \$37,657 and there is a labourer, \$42,982. They are temporary workers. They interchange when someone goes off on leave, or so.

Mr. Felix: I have one question for the Hon. Minister and it depends on how she answers I may have another.

I have heard the Minister spoke of overseas training. My question is on local training of the public service. Could the Minister please direct me to the line item which deals with training for the local public service?

Dr. Westford: It is the very head, under Scholarships and Training. All trainings are done, local, foreign, all of them, under this line item.

Mr. Felix: My question now is: Does the Ministry have the capacity to train the local public service, as we know it. I would like to know what levels of staff it needs as against what it has to conduct the local training of our public service.

Dr. Westford: When we say local training it means it is at the local institutions. It can be the University of Guyana (UG); it can be Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA); it can be the technical institutes; it can be other universities that are present in Guyana. There are other technical schools that do computer training, and all of those other trainings. Also there is the public service training where we, principally, train – there is a training manual, which I can provide to the House - public servants at various levels in management within the public service, their activities, such as secretaries and librarians, and we go up the ladder.

Mr. Felix: Would the Minister provide, in writing, the levels of staff? It is the strength the Ministry is supposed to have as against what it does have to execute this mandate – the in-house training.

Dr. Westford: I can provide it in writing, but I can tell the Member as it is.

Mr. Chairman: He wants it in writing.

Mr. Felix: I thought that I would have been stretching the Minister too far, so I give her that option, but if she can, I would listen. If she is willing to do so, I have no problem.

Dr. Westford: There is an adviser on training and policy; there are four training officers; there are four student affairs officers; there are two managers, a manager of training and one manager of training and administration. It is locally. There are two training officers who are currently stationed overseas. They are in Cuba.

There is one vacancy, within the training department, and that is for a training officer who is responsible for library training. That officer retired three and a half weeks ago, due to illness, so there is one vacancy to be filled. I am hoping that is going to be filled sometime soon. That is the staff of the Public Service Ministry.

Most of our trainings at times are more specific, such as in the financial area. The Ministry pays for what we call “resource persons”. There is a long list of resource persons in the various specialist areas, such as Accounts. The Hon. Member would know that the Ministry did some courses with the police at one time. We co-opt person to conduct those courses for us and we pay them for their services.

Mr. Sharma: Line item 6261 – Local Travel and Subsistence: An Hon. Member from this side of the House did ask the question as to why this amount remained constant throughout for a number of years. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister: What is the rate paid for subsistence – breakfast, lunch and dinner and lodging in the public service and when was that rate last revised?

Dr. Westford: As it stands currently the subsistence rate, the last circular that came out was in the year 1993. As it is, right now, it is breakfast - \$800, lunch - \$1,200 and dinner - \$800.

I will say that even though there is that circular, with that amount on it, when officers have to perform duties out of their office it is acceptable that once they would have expended, based on where they would have gone, in excess of that amount, they can present the receipts for those meals, which they would have utilised, and those moneys are reimbursed to them. If they do not provide receipts, that money, as is stated in the circular, that is what they can claim for. There is the avenue for them to claim for more than that, once they have receipts.

Mr. Sharma: I would like the Hon. Minister to submit that circular, which she cannot remember the date. However, the subsistence per day is \$800; lodging is \$1,000 with \$100 out-of-pocket since 20 years ago. It has never revised. If you do have a receipt then you have to accept this. This was one of the questions the Hon. Member posed, in relation to this line item 6261. That is what we are asking. When will this amount be realistically adjusted to a figure?

Mr. Chairman: Minister, you are not obliged to answer that because it does not arise, but you may say if your Government's policy is to revise it soon and when, because the question, as to whether or not,...

Dr. Westford: Mr. Chairman, the Guyana Public Service Union along with the Public Service Ministry is currently in discussion on employment benefits to workers which include allowances as well as salaries.

Mr. Greenidge: I have heard the Minister give a reaction to the question on when or whether the Government consider reviewing these allowances. I would urge her to pursue that line because I do not think we would like to come back to that next year. One of the concerns that it gave rise to is the use of honour certificates and the abuse of this mechanism, that an allowance could have been set so long ago and then people are given the flexibility for spending more. It makes little sense, unless the Minister is happy with the irregularities that follow. If the Hon. Minister is the one driving that initiative I would urge that she does it as quickly as possible because it also raises the question of, in a sense, exploitation of employees whose salaries, themselves, are not subjected to any radical change as it is neither travelling allowances.

Dr. Westford: I know I was not asked a question, but I never said anything about any honour certificate. I said receipts.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, but the Member is saying that the system, as it is, opens the door to possible abuse.

Programme: 141 – Public Service Management - \$748,710,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 141 – Public Service Management - \$24,550,000

Mr. B. Williams: Project 1207300 – Buildings: “Rehabilitation of building,” 58 is the profile reference page number. It is the training division and the head office, the same buildings that we were talking about maintenance, just now, under another head. How much the Ministry will be spending the building at the training division, the eye sore, out of this amount?

Dr. Westford: The Ministry will be spending \$4 million there. The Ministry is doing work to the southern wall and the ceiling. Maybe, that is the wall that is more visible to Mr. Basil Williams when he passes on that road there. At the central office in Waterloo Street the Ministry is spending \$7.2 million. It will be actually replacing the front stairway and the eastern wall of that building. The Ministry has replaced some of the other walls. Actually, it has to be doing this building in the manner in which the Ministry will do it, in stages, because according to the engineers and the architect, who gave that evaluation, it is a very old building. Only certain sections can be touched at certain time. If some other sections will be touched we may well have to find accommodation to remove from there. We keep doing it in pieces and I dare say it is looking better, and I differ with my colleague about the eyesore. Maybe it is an eyesore in relation to what he is accustomed to.

Mr. Sharma: I just would like to ask the Hon. Minister to say, in relation to project 2402900, Land Transport, the description of the vehicle to be purchased and who it is to be assigned to?

Dr. Westford: A four-wheel drive vehicle will be purchased...

Hon. Members (Opposition Members): What cylinder?

Dr. Westford: It is probably going to be a six-cylinder, I am not sure. That vehicle is being purchased for the Hon. Minister of the Public Service Ministry who drives a vehicle that is 16 years old.

Programme: 141 – Public Service Management - \$24,550,000 agreed to and ordered to stand as part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Minister for standing alone and doing so, so ably.

Assembly Resumed.

Mr. Speaker: We will now have a suspension for one hour. We have the Ministry of Health and the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation to consider on our return.

Sitting suspended at 4.55 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 6.00 p.m.

In Committee of Supply.

Agency: 46 Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation

Current Expenditure

Programme: 461 – Public Hospital - \$4,917,960,000

Dr. Norton: Under line item 6112 – Senior Technical: Could the Hon. Minister say, of the nine increase, the designation of the highest paid employee and what is the band of salary?

Minister of Health [Dr. Ramsaran]: These would be the Clinical Instructor, in which the salary would be \$126,597 and Government Medical Officer - \$207, 224. Those are among the two highest paid.

Dr. Norton: It is if the Minister can do the same also for line item 6116 - Contracted Employees. It is just for the two top salaries and designation.

Dr. Ramsarran: For line item 6116, the highest would be the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Director of Medical and Professional Services. The CEO - \$894,067 without the 5% and with the 5% it would be \$933,520 and the Director of Medical and Professional Services - \$1,182,171, last year and with the 5% added \$1,219,400.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister explain the increase by \$20 million under line item 6131 – Other Direct Labour Costs?

Dr. Ramsaran: While we sort that, could we get the other question?

Dr. Norton: Under line item 6281, Security Services, there is an increase by \$7 million as compared to last year. Could the Minister give an account of that increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: There have been significant increases in the rate for the guard services, for the personnel the guard services recruited.

Dr. Norton: In terms of the numbers of guards, could the Minister explain if there was a significant increase as well?

Dr. Ramsaran: I am told, by my finance personnel from the hospital, that it is from 31 to 42 souls now.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): There has been an increase by \$14 million. What exactly does this training entails for the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC)?

Dr. Ramsaran: I think the Hon. Member would have known that currently there are efforts to introduce various postgraduate programmes for the graduate doctors who are there now. There are numerous graduate doctors coming from different sources - the University of Guyana, itself, and of course the Cuban trained Guyanese graduate doctors. The programmes, I am referring to, would include the Master Degree in Emergency Medicine, Master in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Master in Paediatrics, Master in Internal Medicine, emergency cardiac care programmes and orthopaedic technicians. That is not postgraduate.

For the nurses, there is the anaesthetic nursing postgraduate programme; there is the surgical postgraduate programme for doctors. Further postgraduate programmes for doctors include orthopaedic and traumatology. This would include recruiting and taking care of faculty, some of whom are overseas based who visit periodically. It will include, for example, besides catering for the local faculty, payment of airfares for those who do come from the centres of excellence, accommodation, meals and incidentals.

Dr. Norton: Could I kindly ask the Hon. Minister if any of this is allotted to the actual postgraduates themselves or only to the faculty?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is for the programme itself. Remember if there would have been staff members, while they are training, their salary would be coming out of the regular budget as members of staff. This is to take care of, basically, the faculty members and expenses associated with delivering the programmes.

Ms. Ferguson: Follow-up question. Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarship): Could the Hon. Minister say how many persons are expected to be trained?

Dr. Ramsaran: These postgraduate programmes are small. For example, they range from five people to six or seven. The largest intake, I think, is in a recent one in gynaecology and obstetrics where there were nine persons. These are small numbers. The home-grown programmes are small programmes.

Ms. Ferguson: Line item 6241- Rental of Buildings: Could the Hon. Minister explain why there has been an increase for the year 2013 and where those buildings are located?

Dr. Ramsaran: These buildings are rented by the hospital in Georgetown. It is for the four buildings which are for the Cuban doctors and a building for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the hospital as per contract.

Ms. Ferguson: Follow-up. I first asked why has there been an increase for the year 2013 because last fiscal year the sum of \$18,239,000 was expended for rental and some \$3 million has been the increase for this year.

Dr. Ramsaran: There have been properties which have been rented. There is the one in Thomas Street, close by and conveniently located to the hospital, and another located in Middle Street, close by and very convenient. There has been an increase by a cost of 5%, approximately. That accounts, in the main, for the increase.

Ms. Ferguson: Follow-up. Could the Hon. Minister give a breakdown for each building that is being rented?

Dr. Ramsaran: The rental for each building is not, particularly, now available, but that can be provided.

Mr. Ramjattan: Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: The \$1.8 billion which is budgeted for this year, would that be through a process of single sourcing or competitive bidding?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is through competitive bidding when it will be done.

6.13 p.m.

Dr. Roopnarine: I would like to refer the Hon. Minister to line item 6282 – Equipment Maintenance. I make the observation that the expenditure in the year 2012 exceeded the budget allocation by \$7 million or so. I notice that in Budget 2013 the Minister is requesting \$110 million. Can I ask why the decrease? Is it that the Minister is anticipating to do less maintenance, notwithstanding the fact that I notice in detail of the capital expenditure that we will be spending many millions on the acquisition of new equipment? I was wondering what the significance of this reduction is in the year 2013.

Dr. Ramsaran: That is a good observation. What happened last year was that there were significant investments and those investments have put us in good stead. For example, there was a major reconfiguration of the internal power supply to the Thomas Street feeder, to the tune of some \$10 million, and because of that now we are consolidating as it were. Investment that we did last year hopefully allows us to spend less this year.

Mr. Trotman: I would like to take the Minister back to 6116 - Contracted Employees. I want to ask him if that category accounts for retired rehired nurses.

Dr. Ramsaran: That would not fall in that category.

Mr. Trotman: Follow-up. If they do not fall in that category, are retired rehired nurses contracted employees and if they are which category do they fall under?

Dr. Ramsaran: Usually staff nurses midwives are hired under the category 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled. I am advised that indeed if they are coming back on some contracts, after retirement, that will be considered short-term contracts. They will come under the contracted employees for short-term contracts.

Mr. Trotman: Will the Minister say then if it is that those persons are entitled to the benefits that are paid to contracted workers?

Dr. Ramsaran: As I understand it, those contracted employees will be entitled to similar conditions based on the parameter of the contracts. They are enunciated or adumbrated in their contracts.

Mr. Trotman: Follow-up question. Has any allowance been made under this programme for those persons who are contracted workers who are not being paid the benefits that accrued to them?

Dr. Ramsaran: I do not quite follow. What would happen in the Ministry and in the hospital is that the person will be getting the benefits that he or she signed on to. Those are the benefits that that person would be enjoying, in the contract that the person would have signed mutually between the hospital and himself or herself. If there is any difficulty in any particular case that will have to be pursued to defend the interest of the worker. It is if I understand the question correctly.

Mr. Trotman: The reason why I have asked this question is that it has to do with the fact that it has been brought to my attention that a number of nurses, who are contracted at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, are not being paid their benefits. That is why I am asking the Minister if he can throw any light on this matter. If it is true that they are not being paid their benefits, I am wondering if it is that the Minister can undertake, at this point in time, to seek to ensure that they are paid.

Dr. Ramsaran: First of all, it is not clear which benefits we speak of or of which nurses. Obviously, as I said, in my preceding intervention, that they have a contract and they will be defended within the ambit of that contract. First and foremost, they need, if they do have a grouse, to address themselves to the personnel officer. Of course, the Ministry of Health is always caring and willing to look into their interest.

Mr. Trotman: My understanding is that they have been addressing themselves to the personnel officer and they are not being attended to. That is why it is I am using this opportunity, which the budget provides us with, to raise this matter here.

Mr. Chairman: Well Hon. Members, I agree and I disagree with that because we are here for days together and there is nothing...I keep urging Members to approach each other, speak and meet. If there is a grievance out there, Members have a right and duty to raise it in this open forum and when we take recess, go over, send a note. Yes, but it does not fall under a particular line item or head, but there is nothing wrong with a Member raising it outside of the chamber. That is our duty.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, I have another question. Line item 6133 – Benefits and Allowances: Am I to assume, Mr. Minister, that the payment of allowances to nurses fall under this head?

Dr. Ramsaran: Generally the allowances would fall under those, but if you are linking to the preceding question, as the Chairman of the session pointed out, we would have to look at aggrievement those particular persons faced. I would not be able to clarify now if those persons fall under this.

Mr. Greenidge: I am looking at line item 6134 – National Insurance. I am having a difficulty understanding how it is that the amount estimated for the year 2013 seems to reflect such a large jump compared to the revised amount for the year 2012?

Dr. Ramsaran: As I understand it, there has been an increase in the salaries, and that is a function of how the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) is calculated. It will be on the new salaries, which this year will be increased, I think, by 5%. When it is summated that is what will happen.

Mr. Greenidge: Thank you very much Mr. Minister. The salaries increased to which you referred, is it the 5% across the board?

Dr. Ramsaran: What I think we are saying here is that salaries from last year would have accrued a 5% increase and when the expected NIS would have been calculated that is the sum approximately which will have to pay this year.

Mr. Greenidge: Well, I have a difficulty in understanding in how a 5% increase on the base would lead to an increase in the NIS that is so significant. Is it something that is missing? The increase here is close to 15% or perhaps a little more. It is the NIS I am speaking about.

Dr. Ramsaran: As I understand it, this has to be calculated not only on the increase on the salaries, but I think there was some increase on the NIS itself.

Mr. Greenidge: Is it for last year?

Dr. Ramsaran: No. You are talking about this year so this new sum will be related to this year's payments.

Mr. Greenidge: Well looking at it I am sure that I understand the arithmetic. If the Minister is sure perhaps he can pass us the numbers at some point in time, rather than hold him up on that.

The other question I have pertains to line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies. I was wondering whether the Minister is in a position to tell us about the arrangements for overseeing the contract for the acquisition of drugs and medical supplies, and the arrangements that the Ministry has in place to make sure that the problems, which have been characterised this, the utilisation of the funds for these particular items, will be satisfactory dealt with. I know, for example, that the investments in or acquisition of a building was supposed to contribute to that exercise. What are the organisational arrangements, apart from more expenditure, to oversee the management of that item in terms of...

Dr. Ramsaran: This is quite a complex question. I think the Hon. Member prompted the major part of the answer when he referred to the new facility that was constructed and commissioned on 8th of March of this year. That facility is referred to as the National Supply Management System. It is a chain complex which is fairly large, therefore it will give us the capacity to receive our stocks as ordered and at the same time, due to the methods used there, the automation, to use a cliché term now, it will allow us to be able to follow our inventory more adequately, more correctly in a more, modern fashion, that is, ordering as needed from the manufacturer and tracing better receipts of those products as we receive them in the facility and as we dispatch them to the end-user.

Mr. Greenidge: The Minister has disposed of a very complex problem, as he put it, in remarkably few words, but let me ask him about one dimension of it. What implications do the new arrangements have for the upfront payment and the holding of stocks, in future, by the New Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation (GPC)? Because he knows that this was one of the problems in the past, that is, that 100% of the cost of the drugs was paid at the beginning of the year, or soon after the budget, which in effect is a loan, in part. The other was the question of the holding of the stocks by New GPC, leaving the Minister with the problem of reconciliation later on in the year just to make sure that the Ministry receive what it has paid for and then there was the problem of expired drugs. I am asking really - I know it is complicated - what are the organisational arrangements to ensure that each of those problems is no longer experienced?

Dr. Ramsaran: Well, this one might not be as complicated because of the answer that preceded it. The new bond that is there, which incidentally is for the information for the wider public, is located in Diamond, not far from the big *Buster* sign. It is a fairly modern facility. It will give us the capacity to accommodate the entire stocks that the Ministry would have purchased and hopefully with other measures, for example, the introduction of the national treatment guidelines which would pursue doctors and practitioners to order in a particular fashion..., because there have been continuous complaints that, sometimes, doctors deviate from a particular pattern and this would cause a scamper to procure drugs to suit a particular taste and then that leads to some issues with inventory. Now with the introduction of the national treatment guidelines and hopefully with their regular updating along with the publishing and upgrading of the national essential drug list and sticking to that and continuing training we will avoid some degree of loss of drugs by them accumulating when that particular use or users would not be in the system anymore.

Now with ordering drugs and storing them on other properties, I inherited that little snafu and what I did discover is this that the drugs might have been ordered, in one instance, and stored in a bond, in a warehouse, which was physically owned by New GPC, but this bond was, as I understood it, supposed to be or was under the control of the Ministry of Health. In other words, the products there were no longer the property of the New GPC, so it was a matter, Hon. Member Greenidge, of management of the resources. That is why you would hear me speaking regularly of the economy of savings, because I am convinced that if we manage that major part of our inventory we will avoid some of the embarrassments, for example, as written in the Auditor General's Report. Although we can comment on that, sometimes those sums look huge because of the accumulation and a poor system of getting rid of stocks, which are accumulated over the years. There is a lot of "ifs" and "buts" there, but the issue is that we need to manage our resources better regardless of whose bond it is in.

I understand that the bond, in which the Hon. Member might be referring to, was the property of New GPC, but the goods had already been delivered to the Ministry and that bond was in the control or should have been in the control of the Ministry of Health. Your conclusion is not fully correct. It was not then being in the physical custody of the company, which produced them. We simply should have managed better and this is no secret because it is there in the Auditor

General's Report, the issue of New GPC, a few years back, the accumulation of some \$ 49 million of drugs that needed to be destroyed. That was an accumulation over three or four years. That, again, it was on the property of New GPC but that should have been managed better by the administration. It has been called to book by myself and senior members of the Ministry to account and see that this does not happen in the future. I hope that explains the issue of bond, the warehouse, which was the property of the company but which was in the control the Ministry of Health and the hospital.

Mr. Greenidge: It is a partial explanation. Yes, I heard the Minister and I heard that one before, but it still leaves us with that fact that part of the problem had to do with how well the stock in there was managed. I am asking for arrangements, other than the physical arrangements that are in place, this year to make sure that the Ministry properly manage the life cycle of the stocks in there.

The Minister made reference to part of it, in terms of the ordering, but the other aspect that I would like an answer to is about the cash management side. Is the Ministry proposing to have a different arrangement from the payment made to the GPC in the past? I gathered that the Minister of Finance, the Ministry of Finance, the treasury, of course, has demands on its own cash flow and therefore the desirability of paying at the beginning of a year for stocks that the hospital is going to use through the year is one that the Minister needs to look at presumably to see whether the payments should be phased rather than all paid up front. Has that been looked at and what has been the outcome? What is it the Minister is planning to do, because it is a large amount?

Dr. Ramsaran: That is a good question, Mr. Greenidge. There are the usual arrangements, for example, bank guarantees for moneys as in any contract, not only with New GPC, but with any contractor. There has to be some security for the Ministry of Health and for taxpayers' dollar. Those arrangements are in place, for any contract, especially large contracts.

Mr. Greenidge: Perhaps the point is lost. I could draw a parallel. If I were working for the Ministry of Health and I ask it to pay me all of my salary up front it might find it not entirely appropriate, even though I could give a bank guarantee. It is normal not to pay everything up front for an entire year's supply of stocks which are consumed reasonably evenly during the

course of the year. I am asking about that side. Why, if it is still the practice? Why is it appropriate to continue with that arrangement and not pay, for example, quarterly?

Let me tell the Minister, in case he does not know that there is, in raising, another matter which the Ministry had drawn to our arrangement. That is, of course, if when expenditures arise its cash flow into the treasury does not match the demands for funds, it has to borrow, which is fair enough. It is normal, but to the extent that the Ministry has payments and it could phase them during the year and chooses to pay all up front in one lump sum it makes the demands on its cash flow unnecessary onerous. I am asking whether the Hon. Minister has been looking to relief the Minister of some of that burden.

Dr. Ramsaran: Well, I am certain that the Minister is capable of implementing and advising us with those financial arrangements and we definitely at the Ministry of Health will subject ourselves to any advised from the Minister of Finance in that regard. We will especially be paying good attention, and keen attention, to the contract management. I think that is what the Hon. Member is getting at, how we do manage our cash flow and how we see that things are done a correct and proper manner. I am certain that the Ministry of Finance, which is very tight in releases, will also be a good steward and watchdog in this process.

Mr. Greenidge: It is just for clarification. The contract for the supply of drugs presumably is managed by the Ministry of Health and the hospital, between them in some way. I am asking, therefore, what is in the contract, in terms of payment, for the year's supply of drugs? The year 2013 supply of drugs, under this item, has a contract. That contract obliges the Ministry to pay how? Is it a 100% at the beginning of the year or later? That is really what I am asking. I suspect you rather than the Minister of Finance who...

Dr. Ramsaran: I am advised by my Permanent Secretary that there is not provision for payments of products of a 100% in advance in any contract that is there in the year 2013.

Mr. Greenidge: Does that mean that the Ministry's arrangements are different from the years 2012, 2011 and 2010 for the supply of drugs, in that sense? If it so, perhaps you could let us have sight of the contract please?

Dr. Ramsaran: I am advised that the arrangement, which is there now, is what the Ministry has been accustomed to, but indeed in some cases funds have to be paid up front. Some funds have to be paid in advance, but, as I understand it, the year 2013 practice is what we would have been practising since I have known it.

Mr. Greenidge: Thank you very much Mr. Minister. I would like to advise the Minister that sitting on the Public Accounts Committee, and there are other Members here, maybe I got it completely wrong. We understood that the payment, in the past, certainly the years 2010 and 2011, were paid up front for the supply of drugs from New GPC, in particular, in respect of the bond. This was the subject of a long discussion in the Public Accounts Committee. I hope we do not have an interpretation problem here or a language problem, but in any case we would like to have a look at the contract so that we can verify what the Minister is saying. It is the year 2013 contract and, if he wants to, the years 2010 and 2011, so that we can be sure that we are at one.

Dr. Ramsaran: Well, I do not think that is a problem. The contract should be public fair. As a matter of fact, the competitors are subjected to similar contracts, because it is a standard contract so it could be shared easily.

Mr. Greenidge: How soon?

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6284 – Other: Hon. Minister, could you kindly give us details on how this allocation is going to be spent?

Dr. Ramsaran: That covers, for example, an increase in the computerised tomography (CT) scans that Ministry had to support. It also covers the airfare for the for the Chinese medical team in Guyana and the Cuban medical *brigade* in Guyana, those who were attached to the hospital, poor burial, for example, attendant services, there is a significant slice on that, some advertisement, some legal fees, freight charges and such things.

Mr. Greenidge: It is to secure from the Minister when he intends to send us a copy of the contract.

Dr. Ramsaran: Those contracts would not now be available because we are now in the process... but I think as soon as possible...

Mr. Greenidge: No. The years 2010 and 2012 would have, of course.

Dr. Ramsaran: I do not see any problem with that. I think my Permanent Secretary, who is here with me, will make an expeditious effort to get that done.

Mr. Greenidge: Is it a week, a month, two weeks?

Dr. Ramsaran: We will give the Member it probably within a week or two.

Ms. Baveghems: Line item 6283 – Cleaning and Extermination Services: In the year 2011 it was \$35 million. In the year 2012 it was \$36 million. Revised in the year 2012 it was \$40 million and in the year 2013 it is \$45 million. Would the Minister tell us if our hospitals are generating generation so much termites per year?

Dr. Ramsaran: Now if the heading is looked at properly, for line item 6283, it is cleaning and exterminating services. My dear, I definitely hope that we do not have so many termites. Definitely it is not only termites extermination but there are vermin and general cleaning and those take up quite a lot of the moneys. We have it how it is broken down. For example, it might includes some of the facilities which are provided for our female staff as given by such companies as *sanitac*. It is a fairly wide range of things to keep in certain aspects of housekeeping and keeping the surrounding clean.

Ms. Baveghems: Could the Minister give us, by details, the breakdown of those things?

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes. We could do that for the Member. This is the funds which support the cleaning of the hospital generally, especially the maternity wing, the new in-patient building. It includes pest control *sanitac* services and weeding and cleaning of the compound. It should be known that there are several health centres and the Enmore Poly Clinic which are also directly supervised or operated by the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation. There is a breakdown of the companies too, if the Member needs that: Pestex Pest Control - \$4.76 million, Pestex Sanitac - \$3.61 million, Service plus masters \$22.69 million, Cevons Waste Management - \$8.15 million, Orkon Construction - \$2.4 million. It does weeding and cleaning, and so on, with special equipment. This would, of course, include things such as builders' waste and, from time to time, the removal of bees.

Ms. Baveghems: Mr. Chairman, I do not get it, as you know. I do not think that all of that the Minister said was for cleaning and termination.

6.43 p.m.

Dr. Ramsaran: I can tell you, Hon. Member, that one company, for example, Cevons Waste Management, which is quite known, alone was budgeted at \$12.27 million. Running a hospital and keeping it clean is a particularly difficult job and we try to maintain certain standards. I can assure you that this is quite a task. You need to have the resources to execute it.

Ms. Baveghems: Through you, Mr. Chairman, to the Hon. Minister, does the hospital not have roaches, bugs, rats and so on?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I recognise in the following order: Dr. Ramayya, the Hon. Member Mr. Scott, and then Ms. Selman.

Dr. Ramayya: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to do a follow up question from Mr. Greenidge's. If it is a common practice to pay for the drugs in advance, I would like to know if the lifespan is expired, what happens to the Ministry. I can recall reading in the newspaper at one time that millions of dollars of drugs were expired in the bond. That is my question to the Minister: if we buy a certain amount of drugs and they expire, what happens?

Dr. Ramsaran: As I said, we do not buy expired drugs. Drugs have to be delivered with a certain....

Dr. Ramayya: Mr. Chairman, I did not say that the Minister is buying expired drugs, but if you buy a quantity of drugs and it is not being used then it will expire. So, I asked the question of what will happen then.

Dr. Ramsaran: Okay. Well, as I said in my previous intervention, Hon. Member, we need to manage our resources better and hopefully with the new bond, with a better system of first-in-first-out, which is one of the key elements of good warehousing, we will have that. In the past, we found there were things that were bought at a particular time were sometimes still on stock, while goods which were bought after them, but similar in nature, might be going out. So it is a first-in-first-out system. Indeed, if those drugs expire, unfortunately, they have to be condemned.

There is a process of condemning them. The food and drug department, for example, makes regular inspection visits and there is a certain way of documenting those drugs that have expired and then they have to be destroyed.

As I understand it, after that stage, it is now under the purview of the Food and Drug Department. They are supposed to document it for accountability and destroy it. That is why sometimes, I am told, there is an accumulation and it can stretch over a period of time. When calculated, it looks like a huge number or a huge amount of money involved.

Dr. Ramayya: Mr. Chairman, I have another question for the Hon. Minister please. Line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – there is an increase here. I would like to know if there are additional vehicles in this department and if so how many vehicles were obtained.

Dr. Ramsaran: Okay. This is, indeed, a correct and appropriate question. I thank the Member for it. We have, now, a vehicle which is called a biohazard waste vehicle which is specially attached to the Hydroclave, which is a special piece of equipment which generated some interests in the last Budget debate and which generated also some interests in the media. That piece of equipment is supposed to destroy biohazardous hospital waste in a particular fashion before it is released in a particular fashion again into the environment so that it could not or cannot be dangerous or hazardous to human health. There is a fairly large, specially constructed vehicle which goes about to the health centres. The service is now up and running.

This truck not only takes care of the waste of the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation's operations, but the health centres which are operated by the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation in Georgetown. There are two such health centres. It also takes similar waste from private hospitals. That waste is processed at the Hydroclave in the compound of the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, neutralised, and then trucked away for safe disposal. Further to that, there are additional ambulances which we need to fuel. So, those are some of the things that we now do. I think that is the answer.

Mr. Scott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I understand that the elevator that is set aside for public use in the new wing closer to Lamaha Street is not working. Could you say, under line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings – whether money has been set aside to effect repairs to the elevator?

Dr. Ramsaran: Line item 6282.

Mr. Scott: Yes, Sir.

Dr. Ramsaran: Okay, for equipment maintenance, we will be, this year, looking at the x-ray monitors, the steam plant and boilers, laundry equipment, the generator set, the elevators, the air-conditioning units, the mortuary freezers and the kitchen appliances like the stove, fridges and other equipment and, of course, office equipment. So, I think this heading does capture and does address your concerns.

Ms. Ferguson: It is not a question, Mr. Chairman; it is more or less for line item 6241 – Rental of Buildings. The Minister indicated that he is going to supply the House with the necessary information. I would just like to find out from him when this information will be provided. Thank you.

Dr. Ramsaran: Okay. I think that is fairly easy to do. It is for the building to house the Cuban doctors and the CEO and any building that is rented. I think we can undertake to get it within a week to you.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6224 – Print and Non-Print Materials – I notice a \$1.2 million increase here. Can the Hon. Minister explain why the increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: Okay. Well, as I indicated, there has been a significant increase, first of all, in training activities. We are supporting several postgraduate programmes and, of course, we will have to provide additional stationery and other support to the faculty members and to the students for the purposes of teaching. Of course, we have to be doing in-house printing of all forms, medical and nonmedical - the cards, the patient charts, and some books for medical and administrative use. There has been a slight price increase over the past few months.

Programme: 461 – Public Hospital – \$4,917,960,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 461 – Public Hospital – \$280,560,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, under project code 1209900 – Buildings – could the Hon. Minister say what the provisions for the inpatient facility of the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation are and what they include?

Dr. Ramsaran: These moneys will be going for the new inpatient facility. We are hoping to have a ward for probably another 80 beds or so for patients so that we can have better delivery of services. It will be a basic ward, an open ward. I think that is the information you might be interested in.

Dr. Norton: No, I am interesting in finding out if this provision is for the repair of the roof which is falling in, for the elevator which is not working, for the electrical output that is not giving electricity, and for the ventilation problems which we have at that inpatient facility. Is this provision for that?

Dr. Ramsaran: No, Mr. Chairman. This is to construct wards themselves, those are, male wards, female wards, male medical and male surgical wards so as to increase the bed capacity and to reduce some the pressures we have. There are unfortunate pressures sometimes where there is the report of doubling up.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, one second. By saying that the money is not for the things listed by the Hon. Member, you are conceding that that list of ills, if I can describe them as that, no pun intended, do exist at the Hospital.

Dr. Ramsaran: No, I probably should have been frontal by saying that...

Mr. Chairman: They do not give us a good, comfortable feeling at all.

Dr. Ramsaran: I agree, Mr. Chairman, that I need to clarify that. Those things that he would have referred to, and I do not think it is in the condition that he has given to you, that is going to be done under the recurrent budget, that is another line item where such issues would be addressed. Mr. Chairman, I think you are correct; I should clarify this. The Hon. Member is painting a really unfair and bleak picture of the institution. As a matter of fact, a walk around would show you that although there are some housekeeping issues that need to be addressed, it is not that the roof is falling in or that the building is collapsing. Those issues will be addressed under another line item, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say what the plans are for the ground floor of the maternity building?

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes, Mr. Chairman. That is one of the three components of this provision. We will be... For example, if you were to visit it, you would see that the real estate is not optimally utilised, so there will be some reconfiguration of the sanitary block. Some would be shifted to another location so as to consolidate them so that spaces freed up by that move could be used for more productive purposes.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, this provision referred to as the provision for a fence, would it be for the whole Hospital or of that particular area of the maternity section?

Dr. Ramsaran: No, this is for another section of the compound, the fence near to the northern block where, I think, some damage was done during construction. So, this is not related to the previous number two, the maternity wing.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, under project code 4500203 – Equipment – Medical – is this anaesthetic machine which is provided for by this project code for the main operating theatre or for the maternity operating theatre?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is one of our efforts towards safe motherhood. This will be a standard piece of equipment which will be used in surgery in the maternity theatre which was recently rehabilitated in a significant way and put into effect.

Dr. Ramayya: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister a question under project code 4500203 – Equipment – Medical. I have seen an increase of approximately \$45 million. I would like to know, based upon what is already in the Hospital, how many more different pieces of equipment or the same have to be purchased by the extra \$45 million in this year's Budget.

Dr. Ramsaran: Thank you for that question. A perusal of the list of equipment to be purchased will see that there is only the repetition of the portable x-ray machine. The others are machines that are needed to replace pieces that have long past their time and in some cases to bring in new machines like the anaesthetic machines for example. If one looks at the portable x-ray machine, it is needed sometimes simultaneously in different areas of the Hospital. So, having more such pieces of equipment is only for the boon or the gain of the patient. So probably in the future one

might even see more and more portable x-ray machines being bought, less it be a recurring question. Of course, the other pieces of equipment which are fairly expensive, too, are only in this provision.

Programme: 461 – Public Hospital – \$280,560,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Agency: 47 Ministry of Health

Current Expenditure

Programme: 471 – Ministry Administration – \$786,336,000

Mr. Chairman: While the technical officers are taking their seats, I have just two announcements: one is that the staff found a designer pair of sunshades and, therefore... [Members: Anil Nandlall.] I actually thought that it might belong to the Hon. Attorney General. So, if there is any Member of the House who is missing it, please see the staff. I think we will have to set up a lost and found box or a little department.

The other announcement which Mr. Clerk is working on is that Ministers have made and given undertakings to provide information. All the Ministers who have given such undertakings have provided the information to the Clerk and he is getting up the list so that I can make the announcement properly.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – there is an increase of \$15 million for this year. Could the Hon. Minister say the salaries for the two highest paid employees and their designations?

Dr. Ramsaran: Okay. The information of the highest two paid employees as queried would be the Permanent Secretary... [Dr. Norton: And the band of course.] I am trying to locate that. Sorry, that would be the Principal Assistant Secretary General at \$151,634 and a Government Medical Officer at \$207,242; a Dental Surgeon at \$207,224. I have located the correct figure now for the Permanent Secretary; it is \$539,445. So you have gotten the first five highest paid workers there.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, under line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies – we had an increase of \$11 million. Could the Hon. Minister say if the donation that we have from Guyana Medical Relief organisation of nearly \$80 million did not, in any way, impact upon this increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: First of all, this money is to accommodate the Food and Drug Department which falls under Programme 471 of the Ministry of Health. Of course that is peculiar to the Food and Drug Department. The Food and Drug Department is, indeed, as you would know, tasked with doing certain tests for food safety and, at the same time, supporting the private sector so that it can reach certain international standards to be allowed to enter its products into overseas markets. This is what this particular line item refers to.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister, under line item 6272 – Electricity Charges – explain the increase by \$30 million for this year?

Dr. Ramsaran: As we said, in addressing a few concerns before, there is a new facility operated by the Ministry of Health. It is fairly large and fairly demanding of power, especially since it has a controlled climate environment, that is, the new medical and medical supplies warehouse. That has a total air-conditioned situation, huge compressors. It is a great demand, a great puller of power, from Guyana Power and Light (GPL). So this will account in the main for that increase.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say if that might be the account for the same reason under line item 6281 – Security Services – for there to be an increase of \$20 million?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is partially so. At the same time, I am advised that we were delinquent in paying Value-Added Tax (VAT) on these services last year. They did not charge us. In other words, there was some administrative glitch of some form which we will look into. I am advised by my finance personnel that that outstanding amount will be liquidated once and for all.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6112 – Senior Technical – I notice, Hon. Minister, that you have one less staff, yet in 2013 the figure has increased to \$3.335.

Dr. Ramsaran: There was one retirement in that category.

Programme: 471 – Ministry Administration – \$786,336,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 472 – Disease Control – \$659,383,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, once again, could the Hon. Minister give us the designations and salaries for the two highest paid contracted employees for this year?

Dr. Ramsaran: The two highest paid contracted employees are the Epidemiologist at \$361,594 and Epidemiologist at \$270,581.

Dr. Norton: On line item 6222 – Field Materials and Supplies – there is an increase of \$10 million as compared to last year. Could the Hon. Minister kindly explain this increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: You would have known that over the past few years the Ministry of Health has been procuring specially treated bed nets, that is, bed nets which are particularly effective in the fight against malaria. These are being procured in large numbers for distribution to malarial regions. This is a continuation of that process and those nets are fairly expensive.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say if there was a tender process for procurement of those nets?

Dr. Ramsaran: I think, as per other pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, there would have been a tender process.

Dr. Norton: Once again, under line item 6272 – Electricity Charges – you had an increase of \$13 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain this increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: We have the National Reference Laboratory and the National Care and Treatment Centre which are included in this provision.

Dr. Norton: As well as the increase in line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – which increased by \$15 million...

Dr. Ramsaran: What was the query?

Dr. Norton: The question is what does the training entail for the increase in the \$15 million from last year?

Dr. Ramsaran: As you would have known, there are several foreign-funded programmes which are being transited into the Government of Guyana (GoG) Budget, because some of these programmes are now maturing beyond the project stage and in some cases are exiting, but are needed to be handed over in a smooth and orderly fashion so that the gains achieved in the years while they existed are not lost. So a lot of these programmes, including the training programmes, now have to be accommodated in the regular Government of Guyana Budget. For example, the surveillance of chronic diseases and National AIDS Programme Secretariat (NAPS), which is a large and successful entity in the public health sector, some aspects of its work will have to be absorbed by the GoG Budget.

Dr. Norton: Lastly, could the Hon. Minister explain the \$52 million increase in line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies?

7.13 p.m.

Dr. Ramsaran: Well, Dr. Norton, this is similarly related to the fact that we are absorbing not only the training component and some aspects of the establishment, but we are also absorbing the specific medications that were previously procured under those arrangements. And some of these medications are extremely expensive.

Dr. Ramayya: For the rental of buildings, I see that the figure has doubled. Can the Minister give us the location of the additional buildings for rent and the cost for such rental?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is to accommodate the Cancer Registry, which was not previously provided for, and the location is in Queenstown.

Dr. Ramayya: I will accept that. Regarding the security services, there is an increase from \$16 million to \$9.9 million. I assume that because of the additional buildings which were obtained there is need for more security for one building.

Dr. Ramsaran: As I see it, Hon. Member, this is a reduction. You referred to an increase.

Dr. Ramayya: Yes, sorry. There is a reduction in cost of security but an additional building was obtained. What is the reason for this?

Dr. Ramsaran: I think you are referring to the fact that the laboratory was referred to in my previous answer, but that is in the territory of the hospital and it is, therefore, in a secure compound. It is in a compound that is already guarded and so that additional property will not be incurring security charges.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6324 – Print and Non-Print Materials. I notice, Hon. Minister, that there is an increase of \$5 million. Can you explain why?

Dr. Ramsaran: Again, this is linked to the previous two questions which referred to the transition of programmes and projects which were previously funded. These foreign-funded programmes now have to be transited into the GoG budget. I suppose that over the next few years, we will notice this tendency because this is an incremental process.

Mr. Felix: I would like the Minister to address line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) - the variation between 2012 and 2013. In 2012, \$30 million was budgeted and \$10 was spent. For 2013, some \$25 million is being requested. I would like to have an explanation for the variation.

Dr. Ramsaran: Again, this is related to the previous answers. A lot of the training is being transited. While we are given information that programmes would need to be transited, sometimes while that process is being contemplated, there is an extension and, therefore, GoG moneys for that particular project would be saved.

This year, there is no question about it. The writing is on the wall and a lot of these projects are definitely transiting. Any reserve for extensions that might have been observed in the past has been exhausted. This accounts for that transition of such programmes in the training component into the GoG budget.

Mr. Felix: Does the Minister have the same explanation for line item 6281 – Security Services?

Dr. Ramsaran: I am advised that this fluctuation depends on the number of guards and the rates that are being charged by the particular company which won the contract. This explains the fluctuations seen here.

Mr. Felix: Can you provide the information as to which company won the contract this year?

Dr. Ramsaran: I can provide that information. Strategic Action Security is the company which won it in 2012 and it is still on-site right now.

Ms. Marcello: Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies - I am looking at the allocation for this year. Would these drugs and medical supplies include the drugs for malaria, tuberculosis and other chronic diseases?

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes, it covers the complete spectre of diseases.

Programme: 472 – Diseases Control - \$659,383,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 472 – Diseases Control - \$19,418,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, under Capital Expenditure, did we look at Programme 471 – Ministry Administration?

Mr. Chairman: What I ought to do, my apologies, was to put the Capital Expenditure for Programme 471 – Ministry Administration, rather than go through the current expenditure. I am asking for a recommittal to page 440 for us to consider the sum stated for Programme 471 – Ministry Administration.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 471 – Ministry Administration - \$17,000,000

Dr. Norton: Project code 2404500 – Land and Water Transport: could the Hon. Minister say for the minibus to be purchased, where would it go and what will it be allocated for?

Dr. Ramsaran: This minibus will be attached to the new medical bond to do routine work. For example, it might need to go to the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA), other stakeholders, the airport, for example when sensitive goods are coming in, to uplift sensitive goods, especially those related to the cold chain and, of course, to do other housekeeping chores such as getting quotations and tracking down records for such a large facility.

Dr. Norton: Would a minivan not have been more suitable than a minibus for those purposes?

Dr. Ramsaran: The minibus has more space and it can be used for the transportation of personnel who can do those chores. We found that the minibus would be more appropriate for such use.

Dr. Norton: Project code 2502000 – Equipment: security cameras are supposed to be purchased under this equipment. Where is that going to be placed?

Dr. Ramsaran: This will be at the Ministry of Health’s central compound, the administration building and head office, generally.

Programme: 471 – Ministry Administration - \$17,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 472 – Diseases Control - \$19,418,000

Dr. Norton: Project code 1201700 – Ministry of Health – Buildings: could the Hon. Minister say of this \$5 million how much will go towards electrical works and for which building?

Dr. Ramsaran: The sum for those works will be \$4,651,419. This will be for the provision of services at the tuberculosis in-patient facility which would be located in the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) compound.

Dr. Norton: Project code 2501900 – Equipment – Medical: in which institutions will the microscopes to be purchased as medical equipment be used?

Dr. Ramsaran: These are to beef up the Veterinary Public Health Department. They will be used in that area.

Dr. Norton: Project code 2502000 – Equipment: it states that outboard motors will be purchased. Could the Hon. Minister say where these outboard motors will be used?

Dr. Ramsaran: These are for the malarias area in Region 7, Cuyuni/Mazaruni. Two engines will be going there.

Programme: 472 – Diseases Control - \$19,418,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 473 – Primary Health Care Services - \$539,923,000

Dr. Norton: Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: there is an increase of \$16 million as compared to last year. Could the Hon. Minister explain this increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: Again, part of the explanation is the transition. But additionally, catered for here are new vaccines. The Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine programme, as you know, has caught on and we are introducing it more and more as a new vaccine. Catered for also is the new Rotavirus vaccine.

There is an increase in dental services – more dental outreaches and more aggressive dental programmes – and this also explains the increase, because we have to get more dental supplies. You will see it linked later on in other aspects of the Capital Expenditure under which more dental chairs would be bought. Hopefully, you will join us in supporting provisions for dental buses and so on. The dental programme has taken off and it has taken a prophylactic aspect, especially in schools and in large communities that are hard to reach.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): is this other increase by \$15 million, again, attributed to the transition that you are referring to so often?

Dr. Ramsaran: That is part of the answer. We are going to be aggressively looking at the regional health officers. Their meetings will now have to be aggressive and more frequent so that the investment in the regional services is better managed. We will be having in-house upgrade of skills for healthcare providers, especially in maternal and child health so that we can address

issues of safe motherhood. And, there would be some emphasis on adolescent health and a troublesome area – drug abuse.

Programme: 473 – Primary Health Care Services - \$539,923,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 473 – Primary Health Care Services - \$155,165,000

Dr. Norton: Project code 4402100 – Nutrition Programme – Phase II: could the Hon. Minister explain what the Community Based Child Health Intervention entails for the \$150 million?

Dr. Ramsaran: This will entail training. It will also entail educational material being specially devised for roll-out in these areas. This programme, basically, is to fight anaemia in Guyana and it has been on for some time. At the same time, it is to fight such negative phenomenon as stunting in children and, generally, things that are related to malnutrition in certain groups in the country. That, basically, is the aim of the programme.

It would also see Sprinkles, for example. Sprinkles is a specially formulated powder which can be added to the meals of children. It does not change the taste or colour of the food and it fortifies the food. This is a way of providing them with iron and micronutrients.

Dr. Norton: Project code 2502500 – Equipment: once again, my question is: which areas are these security cameras allocated for?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is not a security camera. The surveillance that is referred to is nutrition surveillance. Nutrition surveillance is one of the sub-activities. It is not surveillance for security. It is for security of health. This camera might be used in the preparation of slides when persons go on trips in the field.

Programme: 473 – Primary Health Care Services - \$155,165,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 474 – Regional and Clinical Services - \$4,263,385,000

Dr. Norton: Line item 6117 – Temporary Employees: there is a decrease of one and an increase of \$28 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain this?

Dr. Ramsaran: This, basically, addresses the staff and there are 129 Cuban doctors predominantly at the diagnostic and treatment centres. Their stipend has been increased to US\$700 per month. It was stagnated at a lower level for a protracted period and there is a changed paradigm. They are getting a stipend now of US\$700 and other support from the Government.

Dr. Norton: Are the 129 Cubans being treated as one? Temporary Employees: how could you account for the \$28 million increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: Remember, they go back home after a short period of time and so the system classifies them as temporary employees. These are persons on a two-year rotation in the country.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6133 – Benefits & Allowances: could you kindly explain, Comrade Minister, the increase by \$30 million for these benefits and allowances?

Dr. Ramsaran: As you know, the Cubans who are attached in a certain fashion to the diagnostic and treatment centres were a result of the enhanced agreement which was hammered out in February, 2006. This refers to the traditional or older medical brigade who has been here for probably 30 or 40 years and it is included. They are paid under this category.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6284 – Other: there is an increase of \$35 million. What does this “Other” entail for the increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is provision for the airfares and incidental in travelling for the said Cubans who are working here. We are obliged to provide for them to go back home.

Programme: 474 – Regional and Clinical Services - \$4,263,385,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 474 – Regional & Clinical Services - \$1,404,485,000

Dr. Norton: Project code 1201700 –Ministry of Health – Buildings: could the Hon. Minister say of this \$85 million how much is going to each of these five projects?

Dr. Ramsaran: The first one is payment of retentions. There is, for example, the works at the West Demerara Regional Hospital (WDRH) and there is an outstanding amount of just over \$1 million. That is the retention fee which was calculated at 5% of the contracted sum.

Rehabilitation of the Diamond Diagnostic Centre: as I told you, Diamond is in need of more and more expansion and certain facilities were added, including the upgrade of the maternity or labour section. There is a retention fee for there of a nominal \$103,337.

Rehabilitation of the Skeldon Hospital Complex: there is retention of \$168,000. Rehabilitation works at the nurses' hostel at the West Demerara Regional Hospital: \$644,000. For the second aspect to the answer, there is a rollover which is the completion of the Acute Care Psychiatric Hospital. As you know, the National Psychiatry Hospital falls under Programme 474. It is treated as a national facility although it is located in a region. This is a rollover activity and the cost of that is \$20,139,000.

For the third aspect of the answer, there is construction of the Port Kaituma Hospital. Under this rubric, there is construction of septic tank at Wismar, construction of a septic tank for the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) office in the said Hospital, and the expansion of the Sophia Health Centre. This is related to dentistry because we are hoping to put a dental unit there and there is absolutely no real estate for that.

Dr. Norton: What are the costs?

Dr. Ramsaran: Construction of the Kaituma hospital - \$51,533,604; septic tank at Wismar - \$1.2 million; septic tank CMO office - \$1.2 million; extension of the Sophia Health Centre - \$3 million.

The fourth aspect of it is the rehabilitation and extension of facilities at the Kwakwani Complex in Region 10. That comes up to about \$6 million.

Dr. Norton: Project code 1207700 – Doctors' Quarters: of the \$15 million earmarked, how much would be for the living quarters at Port Mourant?

Dr. Ramsaran: Rehabilitation of the Port Mourant quarters: that is a fairly old building. If you know it, it houses several Cubans attached to that hospital. It will cost \$7.766 million.

Dr. Norton: Project code 1213000 – Specialty Hospital Project: could the Hon. Minister say how much of this \$1,250,000,000 how much is going towards design, construction and equipping of this hospital?

Dr. Ramsaran: For this year, we had allocated \$1.25 billion for the specific. For the local consultancy, it is another \$150... That goes for design fees, including geotechnical works, architectural designs, structural designs, mobilisation costs and drawings related. For this aspect of the work, that is a total of \$1.2 billion.

Dr. Norton: What is the actual construction cost?

7.43 p.m.

Dr. Ramsaran: The original contract sum was \$18.180.

Dr. Norton: Under project code 2501900 there is a series of equipment. Could you give us an idea which centre the equipment will be for?

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes, we could do that for you. These are surgical instruments for Regions 1 to 10 to the tune of \$10.3 million. There is an endoscopy machine, better described as an endoscopy apparatus, for the Diagnostic Centre in Region No.4, one for Diamond at \$1 million; a warmer for Linden, Region No.10, at \$1 million; dental chairs for Region Nos. 4 and 10, the Sophia Health Centre and the Linden Hospital. That is in keeping with the expansion of the Sophia Health Centre. That will cost \$6.6 million; cardiac monitors for Region Nos.3, 4 and 7, that is to say West Demerara Regional Hospital, Diamond and the CC Nicholson Hospital at \$1.5 million.

Dr. Norton: Region No.7?

Dr. Ramsaran: Region Nos.3, 4 and 10; West Demerara, Diamond and Dr. CC Nicholson Hospital located at Nabaclis; the dental unit at Kwakwani, \$1.2 million, related also to the capital works; the ventilators for Region Nos. 6 and 10, the New Amsterdam and Linden Hospitals, at \$2.188 million; foetal monitors for Region No. 5, Fort Wellington, and Region No. 10, the Linden Hospital, at \$450,000; spinal boards for Region Nos. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9 and 10. That is to say

Mahdia, Lethem, Aishalton, Mabaruma Matthews Ridge, Kamarang, Bartica, Linden and Suddie.

We continue on the medical equipment. We will be having units for the management of cervical cancer, Cryo units with the nitrous oxide tanks for Region Nos. 2, 4, 6 and 7. That is to say the West Demerara Regional Hospital, the Dorothy Bailey Centre, New Amsterdam, Suddie, Charity and Bartica Hospitals; \$450,000 per combination – the Cyro unit plus the nitrous oxide tank for Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid (VIA) and cervical cancer which has really taken off in Guyana; phlebotomy chair for the Kwakwani Hospital, at \$175,000; suction machines for Region Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 10, that is to say for the Suddie Hospital, the West Demerara Hospital, the Diamond Hospital, the Linden Hospital and the Kwakwani Hospital at \$425,000; monitors for Region Nos. 4, 9 and 10, that is to say the Regional Health Services - Diamond, Lethem, Linden and Kwakwani Hospitals - at \$362,000, giving a grand total of \$26 million.

Ms. Kissoon: Mr. Chair- project code 1201700 - could you be specific as to the nature of works to be done at the Kwakwani complex? And for project code 2501800- Purchase of Furniture and Equipment- could you give a breakdown by regions of the allocations and what will be purchased for Region No. 10?

Dr. Ramsaran: Let us first start with the equipment. Is the code 2501800?

Ms. Kissoon: Yes.

Dr. Ramsaran: That is Region No. 10, Cuban brigade Residence and Nursing Hostel, beds at \$630,000. Region No. 10- Cuban Brigade Residence and Nursing Hostel, Kwakwani, wardrobes at \$260,000. Again, Region No. 10, Cuban Brigade Residence and Nursing Hostel, Kwakwani, chest of drawers, quantity 4, at \$180,000; four stoves for the Cuban Brigade Residence and the Nursing Hostel at Kwakwani at \$180,000; four tables for the Cuban Brigade and Nursing Hostel at Kwakwani at \$140,000; ten chairs for health facilities in Region Nos. 1 to 10. I would not be able to exactly... but that is a small item, chairs; some will be in Region No. 10; filing cabinets will also be for Region No. 10; desks for the health facilities in Region Nos. 1 to 10; so we can check exactly... I think these are small items. Fans for health facilities in Region Nos. 1 to 10; stabilisers will not be for Region No. 10; that is about it for office furnishing and equipment.

Did you want to know something about Kwakwani? There is the construction of a triage area, to answer your question, specifically. I think we had made some reference to septic tanks.

Ms. Kissoon: I got that.

Ms. Ferguson: Project code 1213000- Construction of Specialty Hospital- according to the Estimates of 2012 under reference No. 192 total spent before 2012 was \$29.1 million; for 2013 amount spent before is \$846,659,000. My question to the Hon. Minister is: can you give a breakdown of works completed as of date and the total cost so far.

Dr. Ramsaran: There is the foreign company, \$746 million, the Surendra Company which usually comes under the heading “Specific” in your documents and the local company, G. Bovell Construction. To date, I think \$52.3 million; those amounts have been disbursed to those two companies.

Ms. Ferguson: Works done?

Dr. Ramsaran: Works done included preliminary site clearing, reinforced concrete culvert, reinforced concrete drain, rehabilitation of an existing eastern perimeter fence. There were some variations which amounted to a nominal \$4.3 million. So in total, we paid to Mr. G. Bovell’s Construction Company \$52,300,000.

Ms. Ferguson: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Member alluded to the amount of works done so far on this proposed site, but when I visited last Saturday no such works have been done or completed. I had the opportunity of engaging a worker, trying to get some information from him. The youngster said to me that as far as he is concerned G. Bovell construction... I think right now there is some dispute over the payment of moneys where G. Bovell Construction is concerned. The youngster further said to me that no works have been done on the fence. I think there are a few areas on the eastern fence where work is still to be done. What I recognise is that there is a wooden building being constructed on the site. When I asked the youngster he said that building is being constructed by a contractor, some Persaud, and that building is more or less being prepared for workers who will start operation on the proposed site. Hon. Minister you are claiming all these works have been done and based on my physical presence and inspection nothing of the sort. And, Mr. Chairman, let me further say I had the opportunity last Saturday

evening to engage Mr. Bovell himself and he said to me he will not pronounce on that project because there is a lot of dispute, as I said before, regarding payments. So Hon. Minister you need to come clear where this project is concerned. We cannot be taking moneys from the taxpayers and nothing is being done. Come clear Hon. Member.

Dr. Ramsaran: My dear Hon. Member, I notice the impertinence in your voice, but I will pass that. I think the Hon. Chair has noted it too. I do not know which youngster you are deferring authority to because I have visited the site too. I go *in cognito* and have spoken to watchmen too who would not have a clue, and are sometimes not executing their jobs properly too. I do not know which authority – and it is good the media and the wider audience is looking into this – which youngster you are referring to. Indeed, I cannot indulge in hearsay as to what Mr. Bovell is alleged to have said. I do not think that is the right way to go; he is not here. What I am saying is that there was an existing fence and it was not demolished deliberately to save cost. It was rehabilitated. There are exterior drains that are visible. And, yes, indeed the company called “G. Bovell Construction” is indeed having difficulties – timeline and other difficulties. There were continuous deferments and some note of lack of capacity. That is why, Mr. Chairman, you would recall last year we voted provisions here for \$97 million, but you would have noted that the measured works are far less than \$97 million. That was one of the sore points I pointed out on several occasions when the Hon. Member was apparently equating the voted provisions with the moneys that Mr. Bovell might have been paid. I am being very careful with the choice of my words.

Mr. Bovell was given a mobilisation advance and we had certain legal interventions by his creditors which created certain difficulties for the Ministry of Health. It is the first time I learnt of the word called “garnishing” and from then on the Ministry has been working with Mr. Bovell to maintain timelines. I am advised by my Permanent Secretary that we are now in the process of negotiating the way forward with that contract. Suffice it to say besides the mobilisation advance he was granted, that being 30% of the \$97 million which we voted last year, that voted provisions did not end up in Mr. Bovell’s bank account. The total number was the \$29 million for mobilisation and for additional works done, that is measurable works, he was given a sum which brought up the total to \$52,300,000 - a far cry from the \$97 million.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Government of Guyana being obliged on its part to provide site preparation, did so by having sand (you might have seen the sand there) to the value of the outstanding amount placed or bought/procured to be placed on the land because in the future this sand – and as a reasonable person I think you are following my argument – would be used to vie for that obligation that the Government of Guyana has to provide a decent site for the construction of the Hospital.

On the other hand the Surendra Company has continued their aspect of the design works which in part consists of drilling to effect what they refer to as the geo-technical survey. This took some time and the works could be done when the site would have been handed over to Surendra Engineering Corporation. This handing over was delayed by the presence of the site clearing contractor. Therefore, we noted that although the Surendra Company is not behind schedule the project itself might overall be, because of the presence of one contractor not having completed on time certain works. We are working with both contractors.

Two or three days back the Permanent Secretary got documents from the Surendra Engineering Corporation that were carbon copied to other senior members of the team. These documents were dated, 15th April, a few days ago, indicating a lot of intellectual desk work which comes out of the survey that took time and at the same time suffered from inclement weather. The survey is referred to as the geo-technical survey. The data apparently became available a few weeks back. The Company now has been able to do what they were contracted to do and have now presented to the employer, the Ministry of Health, their findings in keeping with their contractual obligations. So now the continuation of the design phase will continue. In other words, a lot of work has been going on and the Surendra Company has already presented preliminary designs and has several, what they call, annexures- A, B, C, D, F. That comes out with the report they have given with the geo-technical survey. I am told in their letter that they indicated this geo-technical survey is key and critical, it is expensive, it is time consuming as is the analysis of the date. But it is key and critical to getting information on the soil structure and other such details so as to be able to... Incidentally, another company was supposed to do that but for some reason was not available so the company that was contracted they did it.

Mr. Chairman I am trying to get over to you that when I made mention of this a few weeks back that the work is being done. The impression being given by shaking around a few pictures and

showing an apparently empty parking lot is unreasonable. As a matter of fact when I first entered parliament I was told we should avoid such demonstrations. I could be advised on that. So the picture that is being shown does not reflect physical works.

In concluding, this aspect of my submission I like to humbly advise you that the design phase is well advanced and the client or employer, the Ministry of Health, will now have to make certain pronouncements on the recommendations made so that the company can complete the design phase in such a way as to deliver a structure that is adapted to the territory it will be built upon based on the scientific data coming out of the geo-technical survey. This document was submitted to us on 15th April, 2013. Now the stages have to continue.

I would like to make it pellucidly clear that work has been done by Mr. G. Bovell Company and by the Surender Company and this is the result of their efforts. *[Raises a document.]* We need to move forward. Fortunately, the Surendra Company is so far keeping its timelines and, with interaction with the Ministry of Health, we can keep this project on line.

The company indicates that they are now at a stage where they have been able to present to us some payment schedules. That is payment schedules which would entail them having to be given certain sums in a structured fashion so they can proceed with this important transformational project. That is why I appeal to the Hon. Members over there, especially Ms. Ferguson, to understand the process. If these moneys are not voted it means the other steps cannot follow. For example, having ascertained the type of piles that can be used those will now have to be bought. To do that, moneys will have to be available. Further, having done the geo-technical surveys and learning about the compaction of the soil and the many things I am not qualified to pronounce upon, the Surendra Company has indicated that they would like to move forward by ordering the steel members, that is the steel columns and other pieces that are necessary now. That is why it is important... let me read this piece to you.

“Kindly note that your approval for the design... this document is required at the earliest possible... We need to finalise the orders for the fabrication of steel structures and drawings of the same are to be finished.”

In other words, there are timelines and the company has reasonably submitted their payment schedule to keep on time. The Ministry of Health has considered these and decided that the

optimal way would be to provide the \$1.2 billion that we have applied for in the provision. That is the \$1.25 billion. It is with this aim that I stand here to explain transparently the process and indicate that this project is needed. In spite of the pronouncements of juniors or youngsters we need to seriously and sympathetically consider what the \$1.2 billion dollars is aimed at. [**Mrs. Backer:** After you insult everybody.] I have insulted no one. I spoke straight-up. I have given the process as it is. What I would like to say is that we need not to look at me as the messenger but at the message.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

MOTION

AMENDMENTS TO BE MOVED IN THE COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2013

[See Appendix]

Mr. Greenidge: Mr. Chairman, the Minister sells this as a very important project and yet in response to questions from this side of the House a Member is accused of being impertinent, and we are being told that a picture is unreasonable, and this by a Minister who spent a considerable amount of time the last time he discussed this listing and reading for us the names of the employees of Bovell Construction Company who now appear not to be in favour and they cannot pay. The thing that has characterised this problem has always been the contracts and the problem of lack of dialogue and lack of regard for others rights to ask questions about the way the project is managed.

Mr. Chairman in view of that I would like to refer you to a motion standing in my name which refers to this particular item and there is a proposal for the amount to be amended to \$1. I ask that this question be put.

Mr. Chairman: Before you do so, I notice Mrs. Garrido-Lowe was very anxious to ask some questions.

Before that, Mr. Greenidge you have raised the issue of the motion in your name. In keeping with my ruling yesterday and just for my own purposed you have stated three reasons: the tone, I believe, of the Minister, the fact that questions asked about this project have not been answered, and I think the third had to do with the employment of the contracting company.

Mr. Greenidge: Mr. Chairman, may I? The issue here is that I was responding to the tone and the behaviour of the Minister tonight.

Mr. Chairman: Then you said as a result you would like to go to the motion.

Mr. Greenidge: No, because of course you know before the Minister's tone became evident, before he even spoke, the motion was before the House.

Mr. Chairman: That is so.

Mr. Greenidge: The motion is before the House based upon considerations we have long exercised our minds over. I do not know we have to give reasons at this stage.

Mr. Chairman: I am not saying you have to give reasons. I am just saying in keeping with my own ruling yesterday...

Mr. Greenidge: I am sorry, please remind me.

Mr. Chairman: I will circulate it to you and you can read it. Mrs. Garrido-Lowe please go ahead.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Mr. Chairman- Project code 1213000- I would like to ask the Hon. Minister if this specialty hospital is going to be open to the public. Can the ordinary man go and get service? Is it free like the public hospital with more than that since it is specialty? I have a follow-up question after that.

Dr. Ramsaran: This facility will indeed be open to the public. We will have to work out cost recovery methods for example like the Caribbean Heart Institute (CHI), but indeed it will be open to the public. It is going to be a costly intervention and we have to find methods of making sure the public is given free service.

8.12 p.m.

Mr. Ramjattan: Surendra Engineering that was awarded the contract for the specialty hospital, has it anywhere in the world, as against the other company Fedders Lloyd, built any specialty hospital?

Dr. Ramsarran: I am advised that this might be answered in the positive and that information could be provided – I am advised by my engineer.

Mr. Ramjattan: You cannot just mislead the House...

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Ramjattan, take it easy.

Mr. Ramjattan: Are you in agreement that Fedders Lloyd has built 40 specialty hospitals all across the world and did not win this contract? This one has no experience.

Dr. Ramsarran: Mr. Chairman, I crave your indulgence. I am constrained to keep my answers within the limits so that I do not seem to offend. Let me say this, this contract was evaluated by technical people to get this done, so that was their jobs.

Mr. Ramjattan: I want to ask a further question. I notice here that under the contracts awarded, the EXIM Bank of India was supposed to release moneys. Has the EXIM Bank of India release any moneys thus far?

Dr. Ramsarran: Indeed, yes. The Mobilisation Fund was released to the company using their mechanisms. That was some time in December, I think.

Mr. Ramjattan: Was it 2012?

Dr. Ramsarran: Yes.

Mr. Ramjattan: What was the amount?

Dr. Ramsarran: The amount was \$746 million.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Was the moneys released from India a loan or grant?

Dr. Ramsarran: This was a loan from the Indian government through the bank. It was the first installment, as I just mentioned, of \$746 million, which was given to the company by the bank

that is closely associated with the Indian government, after of course, they would have done due diligence with the company.

Mr. Greenidge: First of all, the issue here that is being raised by Mr. Ramjattan coincides with the one I was making earlier about the confusion and unsatisfactory nature of all the contracts. This is what underlies all of this.

Secondly, I have seen your note, I heard it yesterday. We have a motion and are asking that the motion be put. But, just as a question of information, a line of credit issued by the government of India or made available by the government of India to Guyana has, according to the Minister, funded the mobilisation, in relation to this project.

The mobilisation was an undertaking by the G. Bovell Construction... *[Interruption]*
[Members: No!] Well you are using the same word for different activities... *[Interruption]*
Mr. Chairman, I remind you...

Mr. Chairman: Please allow Mr. Greenidge to speak.

Mr. Greenidge: I remind you that this House had a very serious debate about mobilisation on the last occasion, which triggered all sorts of comments in the newspapers, even by the previous speaker. Mobilisation at that time constituted a problem because it was then used to include both the preparation of the land and other elements. I do not want to have to refer to the Hansard, but we went through this at great length. It was then followed that when the Financial Paper was submitted and for the first set of Financial Papers we had a long explanation on it.

In what sense is mobilisation being used? Because certainly, I would be surprised if the line of credit from India funded what I regard to have been mobilisation, as explained by the Minister. It would normally fund anything like that; it would fund the purchase of equipment and payment of Indian contractors. I did not know it could have paid Mr. Bovell.

Mr. Chairman, in the light of that continued confusion I would suggest that the question be put.

Mr. Hinds: Mr. Chairman and Hon. Members, if we are to be earnest about what we are doing here and there is some confusion, I would think that we would want the confusion clarified so that the position we take would be an earnest one.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, under Standing Order No.33, “Moving of Motions”, having the Hon. Member Mr. Greenidge move the motion, we can debate the motion, which is allowed by Standing Order No.33; before the question has been put. I ask you to look at Standing Order No.33 (1).

Mr. Chairman: I did not know that we had an objection.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, I am asking you to consider Standing Order No.33 (1), which allows for debate on a motion. It is for an amendment; it allows for it.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, in fact, the Committee of Supply says:

“A debate shall ensue...”

We have had the practice of questions, but there is nothing wrong with having a discussion. These are serious matters; very serious matters.

Ms. Teixeira: This is a motion tabled and an amendment to that motion.

Mr. Chairman: There is a motion for consideration and there is a motion for an amendment. I believe that for the purposes of getting all the facts, distilling and at one time I was even considering that we do a site visit. If it was early we would have gone up there with our lights on and cars and seen for ourselves what was happening because... *[Interruption]* **[Mrs. Backer:** No, that does not help.] I am just saying what I thought in my mind.

Mr. Nagamootoo: We would support that!

Mr. Chairman: The Clerk reminds me of course, that the debate on every amendment shall be confined to the item of the subheads, but the operative word is debate.

Dr. Ramsarran: Mr. Chairman, I crave you indulgence. I would hasten to try to amend matters. There are two contracts; one for the site clearing, which Mr. Bovell, I think the company G. Bovell won that contract, that is referred to in the documents as local. Therefore, moneys from India cannot go to pay him. That is what happened and that is how he is being paid from local Government of Guyana (GOG) funds. Then there is a design, build and equip contract. I just explained the design stage is now tedious and it is in progress. That is another contract. That

contract was won by the Surenda Engineering Corporation Limited. Therefore, we are speaking about the mobilisation for two different contracts. I thought I was using a standard term, in the jargon for two different contracts. I beg your indulgence to accept that explanation of two different contracts with the same term used in a standard fashion.

Mr. Nagamootoo: Mr. Chairman, first of all if you would kindly permit me to make an observation on your ruling yesterday, I am speaking on project 1213000 – Specialty Hospital Project- I did not know there was another issue before us. Any amendment to the Estimates would have to be exercised judiciously, I agree with that, and must be done in keeping with, carefully and international interest as well.

I have said that much that there would be, on the Alliance For Change's (AFC) side, a protocol with regards to any amendment. We are keeping to that protocol that we would ask questions, even if they are hard questions and we would require that we be given very clear cogent answers and explanations. I say this as a background because I share your concern that this is a very serious matter and we are not here to do any amendment willy nilly, capriciously or to do so in an irresponsible manner.

This ultimately has to do with people's money. This is project, a loan that has been contracted in the sum of \$4,245,659,000 from the EXIM Bank of India. It is not a grant or it is not a gift, it is a loan. Because of that, it requires fiscal responsibility, not only on this side, but on that side it has to be demonstrated that this is not fiscal mismanagement.

Last year I came here with photographs. My good friend, Minister Ramsarran, has always been my good friend alluded that it will be inadmissible. I saw what appeared to be 12 heaps of grass and mud - I call it the "dirty dozen" – last year. When I asked these questions that \$150 million was voted for that project, I was told no. The Hon. Minister of Finance was very careful to say that it has not been used. On to this moment, we do not know where the \$150 million have gone. But, a Supplementary Estimate was brought here by way of money to be drawn or spent, having been spent from the Contingencies in the sum of \$29 million. We were told that the \$29 million was to do land preparation. It was going toward G. Bovell Construction Company.

Today, we are hearing \$52 million, but in these regions we have already spent in 2011, \$29.1 million locally and in 2012, \$71.5 million. Far exceeding the explanation we had of \$52 million

which the Hon. Minister has told us. This is in writing, moneys spent before 2013. We do not control this, this came from the Ministry of Finance - \$100,659,000. We are now told \$52 million. Which to believe? Are we to believe what is written here or are we to believe what the Hon. Minister has just told us? We are in a state of doubt. There is a state of contradiction in relation to what is presented as verifiable documents and what is being explained.

Our concern is about the people's purse. I have said that this country had already spent \$1.5 trillion since 2000 and we are near to \$400 billion in debt. This is another debt with which we will stand in the future.

I want to just point out here that this project is a project that should have been started in January 2011 and concluded in the 2014, December. What we have now on this side are several loads of white sand. It paints an imagery of the white image with a building up there, nothing else. I live next door to this project.

Sir, I am asking a question. When was it that this Government decided it would give Surendra Engineering, moneys in excess of \$746 million for a project for which the land preparation we have not had a report that it had been done or it had been completed although we spent \$100 million on a company that just had been thrown out of the Amaila Road Project for failure to complete its contract. This is a very controversial issue and we cannot, in clear conscious, vote any money for it, until we have answers that could satisfy us in this House.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, what I would like to note is ...Mr. Greenidge, will you formally move you motion? I was about to put the question that we adopt the Estimates standing in the Capital and you would have to formally put your motion and then we can take it from there. I note your motion and I am not shutting anyone out, I am just formally having the motion, where I sense is where we have to be.

Mr. Greenidge: Thank you Sir. The answer to your question is yes, I would like the motion to be put right away in keeping with the Standing Orders.

Mr. Chairman: Go ahead Mr. Finance Minister. The motion is on the floor.

Minister of Finance [Dr. Singh]: Mr. Chairman, if I may with your permission Sir, offer a clarification or an elaboration, partly in response to what was said by colleague, the Minister of

Health and in particular, to respond to the most recent contribution by the Hon. Member Mr. Nagamootoo.

If I may, first of all, go back to the clarification which was sought by Mr. Greenidge. We need to be careful not to confuse the fact that we are speaking of more than one contracts here. There was a contract for the preparation of the site, which was the contract that was originally awarded to Mr. Bovell and which contract, was to be funded from local resources. Indeed, that latter observation is particularly relevant to some of what Mr. Nagamootoo said because at the time that we sought Parliamentary approval for the local resources to pay the mobilisation advance on Mr. Bovell's contract for site preparation, the question was asked why was the \$150 million, budgeted in Estimates, not utilised for this purpose and had it not been utilised, why were we seeking a supplementary to pay the mobilisation for Mr. Bovell? I pointed out at the time, the records I trust will reflect, that the reason why the originally voted provision could not have been utilised to pay Mr. Bovell, was because the originally voted provision was voted under what is called Specific Funding, which essentially is a label attached to Foreign Financing. So, while \$150 million had been budgeted, it was budgeted under Specific Funding. That is to say the proceeds of the loan that was to be granted and would subsequently be granted by the Indian EXIM Bank to the Government of Guyana. It is for that reason that, whilst the EXIM Bank loan was going to cover the construction of the hospital, preliminary works, such as site preparation had to have been funded by local resources. That explanation was offered at the time that we sought approval for the local resources to commence the site preparation, as the reason why, and that remains the reason why, the Specific or Foreign Funding that had been budgeted at the time could not have been utilised for the purposes of paying for this local contract. That was a contract for site preparation. *[Interruption]* No, that explanation was offered **[Mrs. Backer: We got no explanation.]** I would beg to differ Sir.

I will say that in my characteristic manner, I listened very patiently to the contributions made by those on that side of the House, without interrupting them at all. I would appreciate an opportunity to offer this explanation, clarification or elaboration.

There was a site preparation contract which was locally funded, separate and distinct from the construction of the hospital contract, which was to be funded by a loan from India EXIM Bank. The local resources that were paid were paid at the time for mobilisation and commencement of

the site preparation contract. The question was asked today, have any resources been disbursed from the loan to the company. I believe that was the question asked. The answer to that question is a definitive yes.

India EXIM Bank has made a disbursement to the company that was awarded the contract, an amount of approximately, I have the figure here, US\$3.6 something million, equivalent to \$746 million. That disbursement was made by India EXIM Bank to the contractor for the construction of the Hospital, which like I said is a separate contract from the site preparation contract.

There really is no mystery in relations to this matter. That mobilisation advance having already been paid, the contractor is anticipated to commence his work in 2013 for which purpose and reason additional sums are now sought to be appropriated for the advancement of this project.

I maintain that there is no mystery surrounding this project; this is no mystery surrounding these matters. If the distinction between local and Specific Financing is perhaps not clear to some Members, I would be happy to spend some time, outside of the confines of the formal proceedings of this House to make that clarification.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Dr. Singh: That would be my clarification in response to the issue raised by Mr. Greenidge in relation to the site provision contract versus the construction contract. My elaboration in response to the question asked by Mr. Ramjattan, who asked specifically about payments, whether payments have been made to the contractor, I would be happy to elaborate further on this matter if it is required.

I do also have an observation or a question to ask in relation Mr. Greenidge's motion, in relation to the amendment to the Budget, but I will first of all resume my seat to allow an opportunity for request for any further clarification to what I have just said and endeavour to offer those to the best of my ability before I make my intervention in relation to Mr. Greenidge's motion. Sir, thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, if there are no other questions to be put on programme 474, I would wish to put it for the approval of the House, but I would first have to put the amendment and then go from there. I formally put the amendment before the House...

Dr. Singh: May I, Sir, with your permission, draw your attention to Standing Order No.76 (1), which reads as follows:

“No amendment shall be moved in the Committee of Supply under this Standing Order until one day after that on which it was published in the Notice Paper.”

May I, Sir, respectfully draw your attention to the fact that I first saw Notice Paper 184, very late last night in which Mr. Greenidge moves this particular amendment before this House. I would not myself pretend to be an authority on the Standing Orders and I would defer to your ultimate judgement on this matter.

May I, Sir, inquire whether this amendment would meet the requirements of Standing Orders 76 (1)? It would appear to me that it does not and that would be my submission, but like I said, I would defer to your ruling on the matter.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I am clarifying. The Clerk advises that the Notice Paper was circulated approximately after 9.00 p.m. last night. The Standing Orders says that until one day after that which it was published in the Notice Paper not received.

I am now seeking further clarifications and advice. It says publication which is different to time received.

Mr. Ramjattan: With all due respect, I have a motion that was published four or five days ago, so I hope that one will satisfy it too. But in any event, I am not indisposed of prosecuting the one that Mr. Carl Greenidge made.

Mr. Greenidge: Mr. Chairman, may I perhaps add by way of clarification that the Members may recall receiving two versions of the motion that the Clerk has announced was published sometime around 9.00 p.m. The first version, which is still in my hands, had to be modified, let me just say. It had to be clarified, it was circulated earlier and it had to be clarified only because, if you look at the heading on that version, if you still have it, it says, “Guyana dollars millions”. On the last page the amount that was proposed read, 0.001, which is \$1 if it is in Guyana dollar millions. But, in keeping with all of the other items published the advice was they should be done to the nearest dollar. So, you see that is the difference between them. There was an earlier version. It is not that the amount even was different; that was early in the evening. I do not

remember the exact time, but it was early in the evening. There was some time because of the back and forwarding. It was circulated, that is the point.

Mr. Chairman: The Table Clerk, Ms. West, advises that the difference in time between the first and second circulation was just about ten minutes.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, if you would indulge me. This issue of what one day after meant was an issue that came up in the Ninth Parliament. If you remember Sir, there was a ruling by, I believe the then Speaker because it was very hotly debated. The sentence reads that... because it is not an issue when it is received:

“No amendment shall be moved in the Committee of Supply, under this Standing Orders until one day after that on which it was published in the Notice Paper.”

It was published in the Notice Paper on the 16th, but it was one day after that. The interpretation at that time because it was raised by the Opposition, on an issue that they were not given sufficient time and the Speaker ruled on that occasion that whenever we talked about one day after, we were talking about an entire one full day, meaning a clear day - that was the correct word that was used.

8.43 p.m.

On the issue of Mr. Greenidge’s motion I have heard Mr. Ramjattan but his motion is not on the floor. The motion on the floor right now is Mr. Greenidge’s.

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, I would like your guidance and the Clerk’s, in terms of advising what this particular phrase means under Standing Order No.37. Standing Order No.37 (3) says:

“An amendment shall not be moved which has merely the effect of a negative [motion]”

And of course Standing Order No.37 (4) allows for an amendment to a motion and all the procedures, debate, putting the question and stuff like that, but I would like to have your advise on “An amendment shall not be moved which has merely the effect of a negative vote”. In fact further on the Standing Orders it talks about “negativising”. Remember that, in relation to motions, one cannot amend a motion to a point where one makes it nothing in the sense of content and everything. I could find that Standing Order, but I know that you would know it

better than I. I am seeking guidance that on the issue of the one day we have dealt with this already and it is one clear day, 24 hours.

Mr. B. Williams: Mr. Chairman, I do not know if this is the height of filibustering, but it appears to me to be a very simple matter. There is a presumption of regularity that you are well aware of and the Hon. Attorney General also understands that. We do not control what you do internally in this honourable House.

Mr. Chairman: The presumption of regularity is where there is a absence of precise information but if the information is that the notice was published after 9.00 it then brings us to the question: “Does that publication satisfy the requirement of a day?” That is what it comes down to. The Clerk is of the view that it may not suffice that is where he is, with a frowned brow about ‘a clear day’. He is telling me that if published last night, one clear day must pass before publication before consideration and I am minded to accept that interpretation.

Mr. B. Williams: I was hoping that you would give me a hearing before you purport that...

Mr. Chairman: Sorry. You did rise and you spoke a few moments ago so it is not to say that I have denied you a hearing.

Mr. B. Williams: I would hope that you would not be presumptive. This is a simple reading.

“No amendment shall be moved in the Committee of Supply under this Standing Order until one day after that on which was published in the Notice Paper”

Dr. Singh: May I, Sir, with your permission, simply draw your attention to the fact, I am sure that you would have noted it, that the clock is ticking and I trust that if 9.00 p.m. is going to be used as the benchmark...

Mr. Chairman: No. Let me say this. For me to do so would be for me to indulge in dishonesty because it has been brought to my notice and I would be patently dishonest if it has been brought to my notice before 9.00 p.m. and I allow the clock to run out. I cannot indulge in anything like. I must say that.

Dr. Singh: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: I cannot.

Dr. Singh: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: For me, the time has stopped at the time that the notice has been brought to me or the objection raised. Thank you.

Mr. B. Williams: These Standing Orders are really self explicit and we use a literal construction and interpretation in relation to them. If the framers of the Standing Orders wanted to say “one clear day...” In fact, our practice is not one clear day in this Hon. House and amendments have been laid over with the Parliament. We do not control neither could we tell you in your internal arrangements when to put this matter on the Notice Paper but if we give it to you within the 24 hours and you chose to put it on the Notice Paper the next 48 hours what are we to do? I do not understand that. Our duty is to give it to you and it cannot be one clear day in the sense that they are using it. These are procedural issues here. This issue of when one would publish a Notice Paper and all of that is procedural. I have always said that the Speaker has jurisdiction on procedure but we have jurisdiction on substance!

Mr. Chairman: Alright, take it easy. Mr. Williams, take it easy.

Mr. B. Williams: I am saying, Sir...

Mr. Chairman: I ruled last night that these rules are, in my opinion, written law. I have to give them literal interpretation.

Mr. B. Williams: I was just reiterating that.

Mr. Chairman: As the Speaker, advice has been sought from the Clerk on this matter and objection has been made.

Mr. B. Williams: Mr. Chairman, if I am allowed a hearing, as I am entitled to...

Mr. Chairman: Yes, but there was a remonstrance just now as if this is some place where we could go into who did what and beating on the chest...

Mr. B. Williams: No. I was responding to...

Mr. Chairman: Really and truly you are supposed to be addressing me, so I have to interpret that as having something coming my way.

Mr. B. Williams: I am speaking law. I am saying that we are the majority when we are voting here and the Speaker cannot take over our majority. If it is a matter of... *[Interruption]*

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I will... Mr. Williams...

Mr. B. Williams: Ours is a matter of substance.

Mr. Chairman: Very well.

Mr. B. Williams: The majority has the right to vote on a matter of substance.

Mr. Chairman: Agreed. Mr. Williams...

Mr. B. Williams: If it is a matter of procedure it is your jurisdiction.

Mr. Chairman: Yes. Mr. Williams, this is a matter of procedure as to whether “a day” is a “clear day” or not. It is a matter of procedure, not substance.

Mr. B. Williams: I said that what I am trying to tell you, Sir, is I do not know why you are doing that because we could vote against the motion, period.

Mr. Chairman: This is true.

Mr. B. Williams: We do not have to move any amendment so let them decide what they want to do.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the objection has been raised. The Clerk has advised that... I believe, as Speaker, that I would prefer to err on the side of caution and take the advice of the Clerk that there should be a clear day so I rule that the motion for the amendment of the programme does or did not qualify in terms of Standing Order No.76 (1) and that is my ruling.

MOTION

AMENDMENTS TO BE MOVED IN THE COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2013

[See Appendix]

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I have notice and we have notice of a motion in the name of Mr. Ramjattan which was received on Friday, being the 12th, more than adequately meets the time.

Motion seconded by Mrs. Hughes

Mr. Chairman: That motion is seconded. That motion is proposed. Mr. Ramjattan could you just, for the benefit of the record, precisely state the motion?

Mr. Ramjattan: My motion is on this line item, 121300- Specialty Hospital Project - what was provided for was a reduction in that entire sum, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: This would be... One second please, I am looking for it. I found it. This is the motion received on the 12th April, 2013, for Order Paper of the 15th April, 2013. The motion is that the sum of \$1,250,000,000 be reduced from the programme. That would be Programme 474, Regional and Clinical Services, Project Code 1213000- Specialty Hospital Project.

Question put.

Division sought by Ms. Teixeira

Committee divided: Ayes 33, Noes 32, as follows:

Ayes

Mr. T. Williams

Ms. Marcello

Dr. Ramayya

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe

Noes

Mr. Jaffarally

Mr. Damon

Dr. Persaud

Rev. Dr. Gilbert

Mrs. Hughes

Mr. Nagamootoo

Mr. Ramjattan

Ms. Ferguson

Mr. Morian

Ms. Williams

Mr. Jones

Mr. Adams

Ms. Baveghems

Mr. Sharma

Mr. Bulkan

Mr. Bond

Ms. Kissoon

Mr. Trotman

Ms. Selman

Mr. Allicock

Ms. Wade

Mr. Felix

Ms. Hastings

Mr. Scott

Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Harmon

Dr. Mahadeo

Mr. Seeraj

Mr. Neendkumar

Mr. Lumumba

Mr. Chand

Ms. Shadick

Mrs. Chandarpal

Mr. Nadir

Ms. Teixeira

Bishop Edghill

Mr. Whittaker

Mr. Baksh

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai

Ms. Webster

Mr. G. Persaud

Ms. Manickchand

Mr. Benn

Dr. Anthony

Mr. Ali

Dr. Ramsaran

Dr. Westford

Mr. Greenidge

Mr. R. Persaud

Mrs. Backer

Dr. Singh

Dr. Norton

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett

Mrs. Lawrence

Mr. Nandlall

Mr. B. Williams

Dr. Ramsammy

Ms. Ally

Mr. Rohee

Dr. Roopnarine

Mr. Hinds

Brigadier (Ret'd) Granger

Amendment carried.

Project 1213000 – Specialty Hospital Project - reduced to 0.

Programme: 474 – Regional and Clinical Service - \$154,485,000 as amended, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 475 – Health Sciences Education - \$470,103,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister, in line item 6116- Contracted Employees- explain how, with the reduction of Contracted Employees by nine, the budget allocation remains the same as that of last year?

Dr. Ramsarran: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The notes reflect that a driver resigned and that is form the staff of the Charles Roza Nursing School and then there was an increase. Increases had to be accommodated for the persons who would have stayed on the job and that accounts for the situation that we see; a 5% increase for the rest of workers who remain.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6281, Security Service: Here again we have an increase of \$7 million as compared to last year. Could the Hon. Minister explain this increase?

Dr. Ramsarran: Mr. Chairman, the explanation is as before. Apparently VAT was not being charged by the security companies and that increase is reflected in that sum now, in part. Indeed the companies were delinquent in passing on those charges to the Ministry and now the situation has been rectified.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister, explain in line item 6284, an increase of \$5 million, what “Other” entails?

Dr. Ramsarran: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have been putting more numerous adds, especially in response to the training programmes that we have been having and this, in part, explains this. We discovered that many persons do not know of the training programmes that we have and from our fan out campaigns and our interactions with the public we have decided that the action to take is to put more and more adds, both in the newspapers and on the television. This accounts for the increase.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Under line item 6241 Rental of Buildings- in 2012, we had a revised figure of \$3.720 million and now in 2013 there is a budgeted amount of \$4.860 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain the reason for this increase? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsarran: Mr. Chairman, the decrease happened because we had been utilising, in the previous year, Critchlow Labour College as a training centre, as I am told, and that incurred a certain cost. Last year were able to reduce that, eventually, because we left that premises and this year we are going to be renting other premises I am told. In New Amsterdam, for example, we will have to be renting additional places because those that we have are proving to be inadequate in terms of size and appropriateness for the exercises we carry on there for training so that accounts for, first of all, the slight dip and now we have gone back up to a more realistic figure for the New Amsterdam operations.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you very much, Hon. Minister. I know that you said, “additional buildings to be rented this year”. Can you say how many buildings you propose to rent in 2013? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsarran: There is one more building that we are renting now in New Amsterdam because of the crowded conditions in the previous building that we were renting experienced by the number of students who accommodate there.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, under line item 6261- Local Travel and Subsistence- I noticed that in 2012 \$3.43 million was budgeted for, however, \$962,000 was spent and I noticed in 2013 there is an increase of \$2 million. Could the Hon. Member explain the reason for such an increase? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsarran: There we have three schools and we usually execute visits to these schools we will need to be heightening or strengthening those visits due to some of the said things that we have discussed here – the need for better discipline, better monitoring and evaluation – so that the product coming out of these schools can be more acceptable among the nurses.

Ms. Wade: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6302- Training (including Scholarships)-Can the Minister say who will benefit and in what areas the training will take place.

Dr. Ramsarran: This basically will pay stipends to trainees and lecture fees for such programmes as the Community Health Worker Programme (CHW Programme).

Ms. Wade: Minister, how many persons.

Dr. Ramsarran: Currently we have – I am giving these approximate figures, we can refine them later – about 200 nurses who would be benefitting and the CHW Programme has approximately 35 to 38.

Programme: 475 – Health Science Education - \$470,103,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 475 – Health Sciences Education - \$30,000,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, project code 1201700, Ministry of Health Building: Could the Hon. Minister say how much of this sum is going to the extension of the Nursing School in East Street?

Dr. Ramsarran: Yes, we can definitely say that. This will be a roll over and it will be \$10.699 million.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, to the Hon. Minister, the original building of that Nursing School in East Street has three stories. The extension that you have is just two stories. Could you say, of those two stories, what they will be used for and would it not have been more economically viable for you to have continued with three stories rather than just putting on two?

Dr. Ramsarran: First of all, indeed it is a three story building, originally. We are building there according to our moneys and at the same time we intend to emphasise more and more on the annex in Kingston. There is a building in Kingston, the old GIWA building, and we have been investing some moneys there too. I think it is documented somewhere. Those will be used for classrooms – the two that you referred to, the extension – and think that we have exhausted the space so we needed to do that extension to get off some of the tensions on the system. We sat and decided on that and that would be having extensions for classrooms and hopefully now we would now be concentrating on better alternative which is more suitable for the learning environment in Kingston.

Dr. Norton: Line item 2502000- Equipment- could the Hon. Minister say, in the purchase of these equipments, what is going to Region No. 10 and what part of Region No. 10?

9.13 p.m.

Dr. Ramsaran: Basically this will be for Regions 4, 6 and 10 and it is for the nursing schools, beds and mattresses to replace those which are now not...

Ms. Ferguson: It is just a follow-up to the Hon. Member Dr. Norton's question. Hon. Minister, you said that equipment, such as bed and mattresses, will be going Region 10 nursery school. Could you provide a list of the nursery schools to which these items will be sent?

Dr. Ramsaran: My dear colleague Hon. Member Ms. Ferguson, the Ministry of Health does not deal with nursery schools. We said clearly that those were for the New Amsterdam Nursing School and the Charles Rosa School of Nursing. The New Amsterdam Nursing School is located in New Amsterdam and the Charles Rosa School of Nursing is located in Linden.

Ms. Ferguson: I think I misheard you. Thank you very much.

Dr. Ramsaran: You need to take some more nocturnal journeys to relieve the brain.

Programme: 475 – Health Sciences Education - \$30,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 476 – Standards and Technical Services - \$388,579,000

Dr. Norton: Line Item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: Could the Hon. Minister explain the \$40 million increase for this year?

Dr. Ramsaran: We definitely can give you an answer, Hon. Member. Here again the transition cost has to be taken up and coming under here, specific to standards and technical programme, which I am certain the Hon. Member does know, there will be a lot of reagents because this is the programme in the Ministry of Health which checks the lab facilities. The reagents are used to check the standards in the labs. They are used for testing, using the equipment themselves. A lot of these reagents and other medications, specific to this programme, will have to incrementally transit into the Government of Guyana budget and I advised that you might be seeing this continuing process over the next few years as we transit out of those foreign-funded programmes.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6282 – Equipment Maintenance: Could the Hon. Minister explain the maintenance of which equipment this \$11 million increase will entail?

Dr. Ramsaran: Nationally, those equipment, which were bought, now will have to be maintained. If the Hon. Member checks last year's budget the Ministry did invest significantly in lab equipment, in particular X-ray equipment and other smaller lab items for labs across the country. This is for the maintenance for those equipment, nationally.

Ms. Ferguson: Mr. Chairman, through you, could the Hon. Minister explain the reason for the increase, under line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships)? I have noticed that in the year 2012 an amount of \$8,252,000 was budgeted, however, \$3,180,000 was spent. I noticed that

in the year 2013, \$8,252,000 has been budgeted for. Could the Hon. Minister say how many persons will be trained and in which area or areas?

Dr. Ramsaran: This will be basically for training persons and holding workshops, at the technician level, for example the multipurpose lab technicians, pharmacy assistants, especially at the regional level. It will also be used to update guidelines for inspections.

The Ministry hopes to hold also evening classes for blood recruiters because it has been noted that there is additional pressure on the voluntary blood donor services and more blood recruiters trained need to be trained.

Ms. Ferguson: Line item 6283 – Cleaning and Extermination Services: \$508,000 was spent in the year 2012 and I have noticed that \$1,979,000 has been budgeted for. Could the Hon. Minister explain the reason for this increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: Some of these charges are for the National Reference Laboratory and the National Blood Transfusion Services which used to be absorbed by other agencies, but now the Ministry is taking those over too.

Mr. Sharma: Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: Throughout the various programmes, in the Ministry of Health, a total a sum of \$2,721,692,000 was spent. In this particular year, 2013, in excess of 200 million is to be spent. I would like to know if programme managers would deal with their own procurement or procurement would be done generally as per agency.

Dr. Ramsaran: The technical person, the technical heads, would submit their budget request based on the technical needs, but this all goes through a central procurement process. All of the items, be it consumables, be it reagents, be it medications, will have to be lodged in the warehouse and any withdrawal will have to be done according to a standard system for withdrawal so that it can be traced.

Mr. Sharma: Could the Minister commit that he would present the contracts in the sum of \$2.7 billion that was issued under the agency Ministry of Health, under line item 6221, for the year 2012?

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes. That can be done. As I understand it, it refers to the year 2012.

Programme: 476 – Standards and Technical Services - \$388,579,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 476 – Standards and Technical Services - \$8,400,000

Dr. Norton: Project 2501900 – Equipment – Medical: Could the Hon. Minister say what is the cost of the Haemoglobin (Hb) testing system and for which institution it is earmarked?

Dr. Ramsaran: The Haemoglobin testing system is for the National Reference Laboratory and it will cost \$5 million.

Ms. Ferguson: Project 2501800 – Office Furniture and Equipment: Could the Hon. Minister say where these items will be placed? I know it is Region 4, but where exactly will these items be placed?

Dr. Ramsaran: The binding machine will go to the Government Pharmacy Services; the scanners will go to the Government Regional Pharmacy Services; the fax machine will go to the Pharmacy Services; the projector screen will go to the Medical Laboratory Services, the chairs will go to the Medical Laboratory Services, there are only three chairs incidentally; the bookshelf will go to the Government Pharmacy Services, one shelf, and the cabinet will go to the Government Pharmacy Service, one shelf.

Programme: 476 – Standards and Technical Services - \$8,400,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 477 - Rehabilitation Services - \$244,284,000

Dr. Norton: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Could the Minister say, with an increase in \$4 million as compared to last year, what is the designation and salary of the one contracted employee, with increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: There is, under that rubric, the Rehabilitation Officer, that being the highest in that category - \$126,592. Then there is the physiotherapist - \$72,658.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6281- Security Services: Could the Hon. Minister kindly explain the increase by approximately \$5.5 million?

Dr. Ramsaran: The two security companies here are Brans Security Services and Strategic Action Security Services. This reflects the addition of Value Added Tax (VAT) and the number of guards per outpost.

Ms. Ferguson: Under line item 6294, Other, I have noticed that an amount of \$100,000 was budgeted for last year but none was spent. In the year 2013 I have noticed an increase by \$15,000. Could the Hon. Minister explain what constitutes “Other”?

Dr. Ramsaran: This small sum is expected to go towards activities, such as health fairs, which will be held under this specific programme and probably last year none was held or there was an alternative that this service would have joined with other programmes which would have been having stronger activities, such as World Health Day, and so on. Hopefully it will be somewhat more independent and more active this year with the \$115,000 to have its own public, social mass activities.

Programme: 477 - Rehabilitation Services - \$244,284,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 477 – Rehabilitation Services - \$3,786,000

Dr. Norton: Project 2501900 - Equipment – Medical: Could the Hon. Minister say where in Region 4 would those equipment go and the cost for the ultrasound machine?

Dr. Ramsaran: The ultrasound machines, which will be four in number, will go to the Physiotherapy Department at Moruka in Region 1, Charity in Region 2, Wakenaam in Region 3 and New Amsterdam in Region 6.

Dr. Norton: According to the project...

Dr. Ramsaran: Which number?

Dr. Norton: It is 2501900.

Dr. Ramsaran: It is “Purchase of medical equipment.”

Dr. Norton: Right. This is for Region 4. Which part of Region 4?

Dr. Ramsaran: The items under this rubric will be for Region 4. There is an audiometer, there is a tympanometer...

Dr. Norton: Which is the institution in Region 4 that they are going to? All are going to Region 4 according to the...

Dr. Ramsaran: Those will be for the Physiotherapy Department at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation.

Otoscopes will go to Regions 1 to 10.

Dr. Norton: No...

Mrs. Backer: It cannot go to Region 1 because the entire project code is for Region 4.

Dr. Ramsaran: Regions 1 to 10 will include Region 4.

Mrs. Backer: What are you saying?

Dr. Ramsaran: What is the question?

Dr. Norton: The question is under Rehabilitation Services, Programme 477, project 2501900, Equipment – Medical, the legend page is reference number 206, it states “Region 4 – Purchase of medical equipment.”

Dr. Ramsaran: The Rehabilitation Department had requested these things to strengthen its services, not only in Region 4. The leader of this service is very aggressive and wants to get equipment out to the various regions, so I suppose that this here... We might have to look at this because, as I understand it, the department is extending and some of these things need to go to the various regions, including Region 4.

Dr. Norton: Would the Hon. Minister say whether it is a typo or is it an oversight?

Dr. Ramsaran: I think, however the Hon. Member determines it, it is an obvious error, typo or oversight, but the legend that we have, the more detailed sheet, which is reflected of the discussions during the interaction with the department head, states that these equipment should be spread to the various regions, including Region 4, so that the services can go out to the periphery.

Dr. Norton: Well then I will accept the information, if you give me, to where they are earmarked, regardless of it is Region 4 or not.

Ms. Ferguson: Project 2502000 – Equipment: I have noticed, profile page number 207, it states here that the project entails purchasing or air conditioning unit and fans. Those are for Region 4. Could the Hon. Minister say exactly where those items will be placed?

Dr. Ramsaran: This goes to the Rehabilitation Department located at the GPHC, the air conditioning unit. Nine fans are also going to that department located there.

Programme: 477 – Rehabilitation Services - \$3,786,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we have come to the end of our slated business for the day. We will resume in the Assembly.

Assembly resumed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Speaker: I ask that the requisite motion be moved for our adjournment to tomorrow.

Mr. Hinds: I propose that the House be adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday the 18th, at 2 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the House stands adjourned to Thursday the 18th at 2 p.m.

Adjourned accordingly at 9.38 p.m.