

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

52ND Sitting

Friday, 19TH April, 2013

Assembly convened at 2.10 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Absence of Minister of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett

Mr. Speaker: By way of announcement, the Hon. Member, Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is excused from today's Sitting.

Presence of Guest from the International Press Institute

I would also like to announce that this afternoon we will be having three guests from the International Press Institute. I believe that some Members of the House have already met with this team.

The team comprises Ms. Alison McKenzie who is the Director of the International Press Institute; Mr. John Yearwood, member of the Executive of the Press Institute and World Editor for the Miami Herald; and Mr. Scott Gritton, a Communications Officer. They will be accompanied by Mr. Bert Wilkinson representing the Caribbean Association of Media Workers.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

For Written Reply

NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION PASSED AGAINST REO, REGION NO. 8

Mr. Bulkan: Could the Hon. Minister inform Members of the National Assembly what actions he has taken in relation to the No-Confidence Motion that was passed against REO Harsawack of Region No. 8?

PROTOCOL RELATING TO AN APPOINTED OFFICIAL OF A REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Bulkan: Could the Hon. Minister inform Members of the National Assembly what is the protocol relating to an appointed official of a Regional Administration committing the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development for the provision of goods and services and in particular, if Mr. Harsawack is empowered to commit the Region in the absence of approval of the RDC?

COMMUNITY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Mr. Bulkan: In 2006, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and Government of Guyana initiated the project named at the caption and which had as its purpose/objective, to prepare four communities for their upgrading to municipalities, these being, Bartica, Charity, Parika and Supenaam.

- (i) Could the Hon. Minister provide the relevant details for the Communities Services Enhancement Project, which was initiated in 2006 and give information on its current status?
- (ii) Could the Hon. Minister say which other communities have been added to the four previously identified and for similar upgrading in status, if any?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, as was stated yesterday, the answers to these questions, I have been assured, are being prepared and will be given within a reasonable time. So we will proceed. Thank you.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS

MOTION

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 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 provided 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 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 dollar (\$194,343,764,873), excluding fourteen billion, 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 under mentioned 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: Hon. Members, we will resume our consideration of the Budget Estimates for the year 2013. I would like to announce before we go into Committee of Supply that, as was stated yesterday, the Hon. Prime Minister is performing the duties of President and is, therefore, as a consequence not present today. So, of course he is excused from today's Sitting.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply

In Committee of Supply

Agency: 13 Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development

Current Expenditure

Programme: 131 – Main Office – \$96,650,000

Mr. Chairman: Minister, please indicate when you are ready to commence.

Minister of Local Government and Regional Development [Mr. G. Persaud]: I am ready Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, could I have your indulgence for two minutes? We need to do some seat repositioning. I am told that there is a rule that the Minister must be in his/her assigned seat - interesting rule. In many other jurisdictions, members go to any seat that is available and speak from there. So this is a good rule. *[Ministers relocated to original seats.]* The Minister is properly seated. Mr. Bulkan, you may proceed.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, if I may, I would like to avert the attention of the Minister to line item 6116 – Contracted Employees. Before I do so, however, I would appreciate if I can make a brief comment to the overall allocation for the entire Programme 131, where the budgetary proposal for 2013 is some \$96 million. I think it would not be unfair to describe this figure as a modest figure given the fact that this particular Ministry could be considered a mega Ministry or a super Ministry, having, as it does, two Ministers as well as many other special advisers, including former Ministers.

This particular Ministry has a wide mandate and it has country-wide responsibilities. It is responsible as it is for the supervision of the 65 NDCs, six Municipalities and the ten Administrative Regions. Having said that, what, in a sense, this proposal masks is the fact that there are two other programmes, Programme 132 and Programme 133, as well as the fact that when we come to the regional allocations, we will see that much of the expenses of this Ministry are, in a sense, masked in those ten Administrative Regions. One of the things that it does, Mr. Chairman...

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Hon. Members, in practice, we would ask questions. We appreciate the preamble, but I think we need to start...

Mr. Bulkan: I was going to suggest, if I can, that it *[inaudible]* in trying to decipher for purposes of accountability.

Mr. Chairman: Get into the question.

Mr. Bulkan: As I was saying, Mr. Chairman, I bring the Minister's attention to line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – where the proposed allocation for this year is some \$9 million more than last year and where it proposes an additional three staffing members. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to advise us what the categories are for these three new employees as well as the remuneration?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Permit me to commend the Hon. Member for giving the description that he gave of the portfolio of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. I know that the Hon. Member would seek to question the Estimates so as to determine whether the statement he would have made with regards to masked expenditure holds any water. I thank him very much for the question with regard to line item 6116 – Contracted Employees. The three additional employees are a Deputy Permanent Secretary at a salary of \$443,274; a Confidential Secretary to me at \$52,318 per month; and a Personal Assistant to the Hon. Minister within the Ministry at a monthly salary of \$110,250.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you, Hon. Minister.

Line item 6265 – Other Transport, Travel and Postage – there is a proposed budgetary allocation for some \$21 million. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide some further details with regards to this line item?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, line item 6265 – Other Transport, Travel and Postage – is that line item under which all aircraft and water transportation costs are met to facilitate the movement of the Ministers and the other officers who are listed under Programme 131.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you, Hon. Minister. I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman.

Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Harmon: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister provide us with the details of the organisational structure of his Ministry. We really would wish to know at what point in time

it became necessary for a Deputy Permanent Secretary to be appointed and if in fact there is an organisational structure which requires that appointment. We would like to know whether the Minister can lay over his organisational structure.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me commend the Hon. Member and say that we will provide the organisational structure as required.

Mr. Trotman: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I refer the Minister to line item 6116 – Contracted Employees. Can the Minister inform us about the five highest positions and emoluments and the five lowest positions and emoluments under this head?

Mr. G. Persaud: Let me thank the Hon. Member for asking the question. The five salaries ranking in descending order are Permanent Secretary at \$504,857; Deputy Permanent Secretary, as was stated before, at \$443,214; Hinterland Coordinator at \$380,901; Advisor to Minister at \$317,794 and Personal Assistant, as stated before, at \$110,250.

The five lowest as requested are Vehicle Driver at \$41,083; Confidential Secretary at \$52,318, and there are three of them; and Vehicle Driver at \$66,736.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Under line item 6133 – Benefits & Allowances – last year you spent \$50 million. I have noticed that for 2013 there is some \$174 million increase. Could you indicate to this House the reason for such an increase? Thank you.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, during last year we acquired the services of an Engineer and a System Development Officer. These two officers came in at different times during 2012 and so they were paid for part of that year when their services were engaged. This year, they are intended to be paid for the entire year. That is the reason for the increase.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you very much, Minister.

Deputy Speaker [Mrs. Backer]: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With your leave, recommittal to line item 6116 – Contracted Employees... Hon. Minister, though you Sir, could you indicate to this honourable House whether Mr. Harripersaud Nokta and Mr. Clinton

Collymore, both former Ministers of Local Government, are among the five highest paid employees in your Ministry presently.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Member would have recalled me sharing the top five salary positions. The Advisor was shared as a position and the Hinterland Coordinator as a position. Both of these officers are, therefore, accounted for in the top five.

Mrs. Backer: Mr. Chairman, I do not think I have received the answer. The question is very simple: is Mr. Harripersaud Nokta and Mr. Clinton Collymore, both former Ministers of Local Government, among those five top employees in terms of salaries?

Mr. G. Persaud: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. I did not quite get the question from the Hon. Member. Now that I have gotten it, the response is yes.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you very much. Further question please: Hon. Minister, through you, Sir, under line item 6112 – Senior Technical – there is one person on the permanent staff and line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled – there is one person again, and the same for line item 6114 – Clerical and Office Support. Could you indicate what positions these three people actually occupy together with their salaries?

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, can the Hon. Member please repeat the question?

Mrs. Backer: Line item 6112 – Senior Technical, line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled, and line item 6114 – Clerical and Office Support – we see that under the table for 2013 there is one person in each category. So, my question to you, Hon. Minister, is: what are the designations for each of the three persons together with their salaries and emoluments?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much. They are an Engineer at \$102,367; a Systems Development Officer at \$69,355; and a Confidential Secretary at \$53,218.

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister, is this a qualified engineer who is getting approximately \$100,000 per month?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, Hon. Member.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you. Hon. Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman, the two former Ministers who presently are on contracts within your Ministry, could you indicate the respective lengths of their contracts?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Both officers are on an annual contract, a one year contract.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you. Could you indicate, Sir, as a follow up, how long each of them have been actually serving as contracted workers?

Mr. G. Persaud: Both officers would have been serving on contract from 2007 to present.

Mrs. Backer: Last question, through you, Sir, on this line item: in addition to their salaries, Hon. Minister, what are the other benefits that these two former Ministers enjoy?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much. They are vacation allowance...

Mrs. Backer: Could I have the amounts please too?

Mr. G. Persaud: Vacation allowance is the same for all officers.

Mrs. Backer: What is it?

Mr. G. Persaud: It is a month's salary. They receive a monthly allowance for a maid and a monthly allowance for gardeners.

Mrs. Backer: The maid and the gardener, what are their allowances? We are just trying to get their complete package.

Mr. G. Persaud: It is \$25,000 per month each.

Mrs. Backer: So the maids are being paid, Hon. Minister, at less than the minimum wage.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, I think I must respond to the statement although it was not a question. This is an allowance; it is not the salary of an individual.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you very much for that clarification. Hon. Minister, could you indicate, in addition to these allowances, whether either or both of the former Ministers also have a 24-hour car assigned to them as part of their functions?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These officers - we do not have designations as former Ministers, so that is the reason I am responding "officers" - in order to execute their duties are provided with transportation.

Mrs. Backer: Am I further correct, Hon. Minister, in saying that the fuel, lubricants and all the costs concerned with the maintenance of these vehicles that the two employees have are also covered by your Ministry?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, Hon. Member.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6281 – Security Services – could the Hon. Minister state the location that security is provided for, costing \$10 million per annum?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, security under this Programme is provided for both Ministers at their place of residence, for the Advisors to the Ministers, for the Hinterland Coordinator at their places of residence and for the Permanent Secretary at his place of residence.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Therefore, in addition to the varying allowances that the former Ministers or Hinterland Coordinator and Advisor are getting is security coverage for their homes. The posts of Hinterland Coordinator and Advisor, are those public service posts?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, the position of Hinterland Coordinator is a position on the establishment of the Ministry.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was looking at the relevant page Appendix Q. Could the Minister so direct me as to where I can find that? In relation to the Advisor, is that a post in the public service?

Mr. G. Persaud: The position, as I said, is a position under the Ministry's inventory which can be verified by the Public Service Ministry because it controls the inventory.

Mr. Greenidge: Just a follow up on that point: I do not understand. There are charts at the back of the Estimates which indicate, on page 513, for example, the establishment. I do not know what an inventory of the Ministry means, especially when it involves human beings. I hope that the Minister can explain what that means.

As regards the Hinterland Coordinator, would the Minister please be good enough to tell us what the qualifications are since he is convinced that there is an establishment called inventory.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, let me repeat again please. The position of Hinterland Coordinator is a position on the Ministry's inventory. I am being directed to a page in the Estimates. The Estimates reflect those positions that are in the public service, but it does not reflect all the positions that are on the Ministry's inventory which is in the custody of the Ministry of Public Service.

Mr. Greenidge: Mr. Chairman, in that case, between the Minister of Public Service and the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, could they make available to us that list. What we are supposed to be looking at are the establishments of the entire Service. I do not understand how one of them could be apparently secret and the other one is provided to the public and to the House by way of being captured in the Estimates. All positions should be captured here. We went through this last year with a long exercise trying to ascertain from the Minister of the Public Service what the actual establishment was. You remember the whole question of semantics here on definition. Now we arrive at a situation in which we are being told somehow individual Ministries, by a process that is not clear, have officers that are not set out in an establishment and they may vary from Ministry to Ministry as far as I can see, and, perhaps, even within Ministries. What exactly is the status of this document to which the Minister refers and can we have a copy and know specifically what the legal standing is?

2.40 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the Hon. Member, Mr. Greenidge, is absolutely correct. We are perusing documents based on what is before us. If we are hearing, during question time, that there is another list, it does give rise to all kinds of thoughts. If there are two in one ministry, there can be 15 in another and we can be giving approval to something completely outside of what exists. It is capable of undermining confidence. At the moment, I think that the request

made is a fair one and we will presume that all is well although there may be some variances here and there. But I believe that this is a matter that must be addressed because what are we really giving approval for and to if, in fact, we discover that there is a different list or additions to what is placed in the Estimates. Minister, could you undertake to provide it sometime soon?

Mr. G. Persaud: I thought I undertook to do that before when I said that I will provide the organisational chart as requested.

I would like to say that I did not allude to another existing list. I spoke about an inventory that is with the Public Service Ministry (PSM).

Mr. Chairman: If there is a single person receiving a salary from moneys budgeted that this House has not approved...the House is not saying that it is not willing to approve, but certainly it has a right to know that if it is the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, it is 15. To know that there are 17 is a little worrying.

Mr. Greenidge is not saying that the House does not intend to, does not wish to, or does not want to give approval. He is rightfully saying that we need to know what is. What are we giving approval to? That is all.

Mr. Nagamootoo: I want to speak to this issue, if I may. It is very pertinent because I wanted to know if the qualification of being a former Minister of Local Government is all that is necessary. I may be interested in serving in one of those posts, Mr. Minister.

On a more serious note, I wish to ask the Minister whether he is aware that the Alliance For Change (AFC) has made as one of its proposal to His Excellency the President that the recruitment of contracted employees should be frozen and all public service employment should be channelled, in the future, to the Public Service Ministry...on the controversy which has arisen here, based on defined qualifications and principles of meritocracy.

Your Honour would have noticed that we have proposed amendments, reduction to the Estimates, for several ministries. On this occasion, I am asking the question but I wish to make a statement as well. Because of us having taken the issue to the level of the presidency, we would not, on this occasion, prosecute our cuts. Last year, we did fire a salvo across the bow. We did

cut but some of these cuts have been restored. We are placing on record that no one could say, when the next budget is prepared and presented, that we did not give adequate notice.

Mr. G. Persaud: Let me commend the Hon. Member for the observations that he has made and, also, for withdrawing the motion with regards to line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – for the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development.

The question with regards to whether I am aware of a position that was taken to His Excellency with regards to contract employees, I have heard the Hon. Member mention that before. Outside of that, I am not aware of any decision with regards to such a proposal.

Mr. Sharma: In relation to the Minister referring to the two posts of Hinterland Coordinator and Advisor as being on the list of inventory for the Ministry but not listed in Volume No. 1 of the 2013 Budget, is the Minister indicating that these positions are open to the public for persons to apply for the jobs? Every year these contracts are being renewed. What is the process of filling the vacancies as the year comes to an end?

Mr. G. Persaud: Let me assure the Hon. Member that whenever there is a vacancy, we will surely, as we often do, invite applicants. At this point in time, the positions are not vacant because they are presented here in the Estimates as being peopled and we are requesting resources to continue funding them.

Mr. Sharma: I do not agree with the argument put forward by the Hon. Minister. If the contract will be coming to an end at the end of the year – it is a 12 month contract – how is it renewed? Is it that the contracted employees – in this case the Advisor and Hinterland Coordinator – have to propose that they want to extend the contract? Why, then, are they not given a contract with a fixed term such as five years?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, the Minister said that when the contracts become due, he will move to give notice or advertisement. I heard that.

Mr. Greenidge: I want to ask the Minister, in light of even your explanation, whether for 2006 or 2007 he can provide us with the advertisements which were issued when these two persons took up these positions for the first time.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure about the circumstance in 2006 or 2007 when these two honourable officers were engaged. What I know now is the condition of engagement and how that engagement is being treated. I can provide the documentation with regards to the process of the present engagement.

Mr. Greenidge: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. Do you know the expression, “*The King is dead, long live the King!*”? The Minister’s name happens to be what is it but the position has been there prior to his arrival and a Ministry has been in existence, therefore the documentation should be with the Ministry and I would be grateful... [An. Hon. Member: Inaudible] No, as regards the advertisement, he said that he does not know anything about that. I just want it to be clear, in case I misunderstood, that we are going to get... [An. Hon. Member: Inaudible] Was there not? That cannot be. I just want it to be clear that we are asking for the terms and conditions of the former ministers as well as the advertisement and the media in which it was advertised.

Mr. Sharma: Are these two individuals – Hinterland Coordinator and Advisor – entitled to duty free vehicles?

Mr. G. Persaud: The response is no.

Mr. Sharma: Should these individuals be given three-year contracts and duty-free vehicles, the Government will save annually on fuel and on the maintenance of vehicles.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, the suggestion is that you enter into three-year contracts with these two persons and provide duty-free concessions for them.

Mr. G. Persaud: Noted, Mr. Chairman.

Programme: 131 – Main Office - \$96,650,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 132 – Ministry Administration - \$44,832,000

Mr. Bulkan: I would like to draw the Minister’s attention to line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: the proposed allocation for this year is \$12 million and the staffing component is a total of 14 persons. Would the Minister be kind enough to provide the details of the five highest paid employees under this head, their designations and emoluments?

Mr. G. Persaud: Expenditure Planning and Management Analyst (EPMA) II in the EPMU - \$166,910; telephonist - \$56,780; vehicle driver - \$55,820; accounts clerk II - \$55,819, and radio operator - \$53,406. Those are the top five in descending order. From the bottom: office assistant - \$37,657 and there are two such positions; radio operator - \$41,083; vehicle driver - \$41,083; and cleaner - \$42,983.

Mr. Bulkan: A follow up, Mr. Chairman: would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to explain to us what “EPMU II” is?

Mr. G. Persaud: That is an acronym for Expenditure Planning and Management Unit.

Mr. Bulkan: Would the Minister say if this is a solitary position or is there more than one person in this position?

Mr. G. Persaud: Presently, there is only one person in the unit. We are seeking to have an additional person in that unit.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: could the Hon. Minister explain which buildings are going to be maintained at the cost of \$5 million?

Mr. G. Persaud: It is the Ministry’s head office building.

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman, could you indicate whether your Ministry has a policy *vis-a-vis* contracted employees? I see there are 14. I think we all agree that age 55 is much too young for people to stop working. Does your Ministry have a policy as to an upper age when you would tend, rather than renew contracted employees’ contract, to look for younger persons? Is there an upward limit, an age limit?

Mr. G. Persaud: The response is no.

Mrs. Backer: In other words, an 85-year-old person can apply.

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, Hon. Member. Performance competence will be the guide, not necessarily age.

Mrs. Backer: Sir, I have to enquire because, as I indicated, I am getting to that age. Next year I will be retiring. I will be 55.

Ms. Teixeira: You can apply but you would not qualify.

Mrs. Backer: I am being told by Ms. Teixeira that I can apply but I would not qualify.

Ms. Shadick: Why would she not qualify?

Mrs. Backer: Thank you for that vote of confidence.

Line item 6111 – Administrative: we see that last year there were six. It has gone down by two and the number of contracted employees has gone up. It may be a coincidence but the question I want to ask under line item 6111 is: of the four persons in the permanent staff under Administrative, could you indicate, Hon. Minister, what are the positions occupied by those four permanent staff?

Mr. G. Persaud: Let me first assure you that the two vacant positions under line item 6111 – Administrative - were not filled by persons appointed under line item 6116 – Contracted Employees. The four positions occupied under line item 6111 are: Assistant Secretary (General), Chief Accountant, Accountant, and Senior Registry Supervisor.

Mrs. Backer: Did you say “Assistant Secretary (General)”?

Mr. G. Persaud: For assistant secretary, there are two – finance or general. This one is general.

Mr. Trotman: Line item 6281 – Security Services: I remember that some time last year the Minister came to the House and requested some additional moneys for increases in security services provided. Is the amount that he is asking for this year in anticipation of a further increase in security services for the year for the Ministry?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member, and I must commend you. You will recall at what time we came to the House last year and that was for part of last year. This year, because of that approval, we have to pay for the entire year. That is the reason there is the increase in cost.

Programme: 132 – Ministry Administration - \$44,832,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 132 – Ministry Administration - \$9,500,000

Mr. Bulkan: Project code 2400100 – Land Transport: there is a proposal of \$7 million for the purchase of a vehicle. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to inform us who this vehicle is to be used by?

Mr. G. Persaud: The vehicle is intended to be a double cab pickup and it is intended to be used by officers in the Ministry as part of the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) programme and the extension audit programme of the Ministry.

Mr. Bulkan: Under capital profile, reference 52, it informs us that this vehicle is assigned to Region 4, Demerara/Mahaica. My question to the Hon. Minister is: is he aware that the vehicle being used by the Regional Chairman of Region 4 is a vehicle that is 19 years old?

Mr. G. Persaud: The legend states Region 4. That is where the central Ministry is located. It is not for Regional Administration, Region 4. I am aware that the Regional Chairman of Region 4 has a vehicle that is aged. But like many of us who are aged, we are still good looking and functioning to the maximum.

Mr. Bulkan: Despite the attempt at reassurance by the Hon. Minister, I can assure him that this vehicle which is assigned to the Regional Chairman of Region 4 is far from being in a satisfactory or proper condition. The Minister may recall that last year this very issue was brought to his attention and we would have thought...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, what I would suggest is that you put the Minister on alert and when we get to Region 4 proper for the consideration of those amounts, he could defend them. This is Ministry Administration. Certainly, the point is well made but when we consider Region 4's budget, we could... In fact, only today I passed the Chairman and I was concerned about whether the vehicle that he had could have made it to the corner.

Mr. Bulkan: Thanks for bringing that to the attention of the House, Mr. Chairman.

Minister of Agriculture [Dr. Ramsammy]: Mr. Chairman, I could join with the lamentation of the Member because my vehicle is 13 years old and it is presently on Brickdam broken down?

Mr. Greenidge: Would the Minister be good enough to tell us whether the vehicle that he proposes to purchase is a replacement for a previous vehicle? In replacing any of the vehicles under the domain of the Ministry, is there a policy – either by way of age or performance – in replacing these vehicles? If so, could he tell us?

Mr. G. Persaud: The intention is not to replace, but it is an addition to the existing fleet.

Mr. Greenidge: I am still asking whether in replacing vehicles the Ministry has policy guidelines it provides for the agencies requesting the replacement of vehicles. If so, could he let us know what they are? Transparency is very important in ensuring that either the lack of political or other discrimination in the use of State resources...

Mr. G. Persaud: I do appreciate the question asked by the Hon. Member but, as I said, we are not replacing anything; we are adding to the fleet of vehicles. When we are doing anything related to replacement, I will research the issue and then would be able to bring something to share.

Mrs. Backer: May I repeat the question in a different way? I do not know if this will help. The question that is being asked is: does the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development have a policy in terms of how vehicles are bought? In other words, when they are looking, is it due to age or condition? What guides them in deciding when the request comes in which request will be given priority? Is it just willy-nilly which will then leave them open to questions about political discrimination? If we are provided with a policy, it may ease people's justifiable qualms about what is going on with some regions repeatedly getting new vehicles and other regions not getting any new vehicles.

Mr. G. Persaud: We will be purchasing vehicles here for the head office. Maybe, when we get to the ten Regions, Members can specifically identify in which regions those issues exist.

Programme: 132 – Ministry Administration - \$9,500,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 133 – Regional Development - \$159,729,000

Mr. Bulkan: I draw the Minister's attention to line item 6111 – Administrative - where the budgetary proposal is approximately \$16 million. We can see that the proposal is to increase the complement in this category by close to 300%. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to inform us of what the justification for this large increase is and provide details as to what these categories are as well as their emoluments?

Mr. G. Persaud: In our quest to strengthen our monitoring and also ensuring that our efficiency and effectiveness is enhanced to the satisfaction of the populace, we sought to strengthen our local government department at the central Ministry. So, the additional nine persons who were recruited via the public service process are: two senior regional development officers, six regional development officers, and one municipal service officer.

Mr. Bulkan: Would the Minister be kind enough to also give the emoluments?

Mr. G. Persaud: Sorry, Hon. Member, for my omission. The senior regional development officer's salary is at \$75,830 per month; regional development officers - \$67,185 per month; and municipal service officer I - \$67,185 per month.

3.10 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you Hon. Minister. Mr. Chairman, I have a comment to make. I notice that four of the new employees are for regional development. I will save that follow-up question for when we begin to discuss regional allocations.

Line item 6211 - a proposed allocation for some \$92 million. Would the Minister be kind enough to provide us with some details as to what constitutes these expenses?

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, expenses committed under line item 6211 are intended to meet expenditures for the payment of wages and salaries for our Regional Chairmen, our Regional Vice Chairmen our Regional Executive Officers, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Georgetown and New Amsterdam.

Mr. Bulkan: A follow-up question Mr. Chairman: would the Hon. Minister be in a position to disaggregate for us the respective figures for the various categories he provided?

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, if it pleases the Member I can share the salary of the posts because I do not have the accumulative totals for the various categories at this point in time.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, the Member will accept that.

Mr. G. Persaud: Regional Executive Officers, a salary of 259,902 per month; Regional Chairman, \$229,192 per month; Regional Vice Chairman \$171,894 per month; the Mayor of Georgetown a stipend of \$40,000 per month; Deputy Mayor, \$31,586; Mayor of New Amsterdam, a stipend of \$30,000 per month; Deputy Mayor, \$19,805 per month.

Mr. Bulkan: A follow-up please question Mr. Chairman: would the Hon. Minister kindly confirm for us that those are the only expenses provided for under this head?

Mr. G. Persaud: There are three rating officers who receive a stipend of \$4,000 per month. That completes the expenditure under this head.

Mr. Sharma: Can the Hon. Minister under line item 6116 list the designation and salary of the six employees?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Community Monitoring and Development Officer, \$270,581 per month; two Municipal Service Officers, \$132,107 per month; Regional Development Officer, \$72,657 per month; a Health Coordinator, \$61,765 per month; and an Education Coordinator, \$61,675 per month.

Mr. Sharma: The first designation the Minister alluded to, is this the designation of the individual that was once Deputy Mayor of Georgetown. Was that individual once the Deputy Mayor of Georgetown?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister was the individual once the Deputy Mayor of Georgetown?

Mr. G. Persaud: I would not know, Sir. The Hon. Member can be a little more specific.

Mr. Chairman: I thought we needed some more specificity – male or female and year.

Mr. G. Persaud: I would not want to misinform the House.

Mr. Sharma: Is this individual a senior executive member of the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/Civic)?

Mr. G. Persaud: I am sorry Mr. Chairman, I cannot help here again.

Mr. Sharma: Can the Hon. Member provide the name of the individual that holds that position? The first post he listed.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chair, let me allay the fear of the Hon. Member. This is a young vibrant Guyanese daughter who only last year came back with a master's degree from Australia, benefitting from a scholarship from the Government of Guyana. Her name is Alikia Dorris.

Ms. Selman: Mr. Chairman, line item 6302- Training Including Scholarships: could the Hon. Minister say what categories of persons are going to be trained and how many of them?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development this year in its institutional strengthening and capacity building programme will seek to add to our induction seminars held for all regional democratic councillors in 2012. We will also seek to continue our training and empowerment programme at the level of the Central Ministry staff, Regional Democratic Council staff and Neighbourhood Democratic Council staff. We will also seek to continue to offer training programmes to officers within the municipal service division at the Ministry and to the Municipalities.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6302 with regards to Training. How many training workshops per year do you hold in the different regions where the RDC council is? I see you have training every year so how many do you do per year for the regional councillors? And how many do you intend to do for this year?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member? For the year 2013 it is intended to bring the regional democratic councillors twice – once as a collective and on the other occasion as council members within their geographical area.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, line item 6284: can the Minister say what other goods and services he proposed to purchase under this head in 2013?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Under line item 6284 we pay for services provided to the management of the Lusignan solid waste site. We also use a small portion of this allocation as incentive to our staff based on performance based accomplishments.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, a follow-up question to line item 6302: would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to inform us of the \$10 million proposed allocation how much of it is budgeted for the training activity designed for Regional Democratic Council (RDC) councillors. Would he also be kind enough to inform us as to the when that proposed activity he refers to, the one designed as a collective for all the RDC councillors, is slated to take place and the venue?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the training for the RDC councillors as a collective is often done in clusters, that is Region Nos. 1, 2, and 7; Region Nos. 4, 8, 9 and 10; and Regions Nos.5 and 6. Those are the clusters. Those are intended between the months of July and August 2013. It is anticipated that \$3,550,000 would be spent for both RDC training activities this year.

Ms. Selman: Mr. Chairman, a follow up question to that. Could the Minister be so kind as to tell us what is the basis upon which they group them into clusters?

Mr. G. Persaud: Geography and transportation logistics Mr. Chair.

Mr. Bulkan: Through the Chair, Hon. Minister I do not know if it is an oversight but I cannot recall hearing you refer to Region No.3. Is Region No.3 not one of the regions...?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, it is; it is in cluster one.

Mr. Bulkan: Region Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 7.

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, sorry.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, line item 6312, a proposed allocation for \$5 million. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide some details as to what this allocation is for?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, we have some Neighbourhood Democratic Councils which are not rateable councils, that is, they do not collect rates and taxes.

So the allocation of \$5 million is intended to meet the administrative costs of these councils – the payment of wages and salaries to the employees and other utility charges.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, does the Hon. Minister have a list of the Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) that fall into this category?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mabaruma, Kumaka, and Hosororo Neighbourhood Democratic Councils; Ireng and Sawariwau Neighbourhood Democratic Council; Cane Grove Neighbourhood Democratic Council and the Kwakwani Neighbourhood Democratic Council.

Mr. Bulkan: Through the Chair, Hon. Minister is \$5 million sufficient to attend to the needs of those NDCs you just named?

Mr. G. Persaud: So far we have been successful in using the allocation to meet administrative costs for these NDCs.

Mr. B. Williams: A follow-up question Mr. Chairman: for the Kwakwani NDC are you talking about the current one where the people elected the IMC for themselves.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chair, I only know of one legitimate NDC management committee and that is the one I am referring to.

Mr. B. Williams: Mr. Chairman, could I ask the Hon. Minister is the Interim Management Committee (IMC) at Kwakwani disbanded because the residents elected their own democratic council in its place?

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chair, I am unaware of what the Hon. Member is seeking to guide me to. What I know is what I share with the House. There is a legitimate council that is functioning, managing the affairs of the Kwakwani Neighbourhood Democratic Council.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chair, under the same line item 6312 the Hon. Minister did allude to the fact that he is comfortable with \$5 million because it is sufficient, but in 2011 the actual expenditure was \$165,933,000. How does he explain that expenditure?

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chair, the Hon. Member is asking me to deal with the Estimates from 2011.

Mr. Chairman: The Hon. Member is saying that this year is \$5 million; in 2011 it was \$165 million. Certainly that demands an explanation, I think. How could \$5 million be adequate in 2013 when in 2011 it required over \$100 million. I think that is what he seeks an explanation for. Was it because of elections?

Mr. G. Persaud: I would not know Mr. Chair, but I can enquire.

Mr. Chairman: The figure is so stark, the difference is so stark. Five million dollars is deemed adequate this year and obviously it was also deemed adequate two years ago. Something must account for that disparity.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Mr. Chair. I hear you. As I said I thought we are dealing with 2013 and 2012. I can seek to have a response.

Mr. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, I am requesting that the Hon. Minister provide the information for 2011. The Hon. Minister did allude to the \$5 million being sufficient to deal with expenditure as far as he can remember when only in 2011 \$165 million was used. I do not know how far his memory would carry him.

Mr. Chairman: What I heard the Minister say is that the amount is considered adequate. He did not say as far as he could remember. He said in his view the amount was adequate.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you Mr. Chair. Could the information be provided for 2011 so we can make a comparison?

Mr. Chairman: We can ask. What information precisely are you requesting?

Mr. Sharma: A breakdown of the \$165 million. It has to have gone to some NDC for some purpose.

Mr. Chairman: Minister the Member is asking for the breakdown for sum spent in 2011.

Mr. G. Persaud: I will seek to do the research Mr. Chairman and provide.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Mrs. Marcello: Mr. Chair, I am focusing on line item 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies: what kind of medical supplies Hon. Minister do you intend to purchase under this head?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, the allocation of \$50,000 is intended to replenish supplies for our first aid and emergency kits as well as to provide support to officers who from time to time are required to perform duties in the field.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, I want to take the Minister back to line item 6302 – Training- I want to start by asking the Minister if he is saying in bringing clusters I am to assume that this means you are bringing these different things together, at the same time.

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes.

Mr. Trotman: Well, then is it not a logistical nightmare for you to attempt to bring Region Nos. 4, 8, 9 and 10 together for the purpose of training?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, no. As I said it is one of the considerations and if we follow our geography Region Nos. 9, 8 come to the city, Region No.10 the same thing and we are with Region No.4 here. It is about the simplest arrangements we have.

Mr. Trotman: I was looking for assurance from you Mr. Minister.

Programme 133 – Regional Development - \$159,729,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 133 – Regional Development - \$1,060,775,000

Ms. Selman: Project code 1900700: could the Hon. Minister be so kind as to provide a breakdown of what is proposed to be spent in each municipality and local community councils? And could he also identify the criteria for the allocations to the municipalities as well as the community councils.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, the allocation under this programme is intended to provide subventions to the municipalities and NDCs. Because we have had no change from the allocation in 2012 to what is proposed in 2013 the percentage for

allocation of the \$65 million dollars to the municipality remains the same – 30.8% of the allocation to the municipality of Georgetown; 15.4% each to New Amsterdam and Linden; 13.8% to Anna Region; 12.3% each to the municipalities of Rose Hall and Corriverton. That has been the consistent percentage in terms of determining the \$65 million. The NDCs will continue to receive the \$3 million allocation. And, as we are all aware, the select committee on Local Government is working assiduously ensuring that we can have a revised framework for subvention.

Mr. B. Williams: A follow-up question Mr. Chairman: I see in the profile local community councils. Are you calling NDCs local community councils? That is what the profile has.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chair, the Neighbourhood Democratic Councils have a fixed subvention of \$3 million each. From time to time there are projects and programmes the NDCs will bring up which may require additional support. So that additional support, if funds are available, comes from the \$5 million. We had discussed that under the current expenditure; some support will be provided there.

Mr. B. Williams: You have not answered my question. Mr. Chairman, when I look at the profile it has the project entails provision of capital subvention for municipalities and local community councils. You just said NDCs. I am asking if local community councils are what you are referring to as NDCs.

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, sir.

Mr. B. Williams: Now, let us get into figures; do not worry with percentages. How much does Georgetown get, how much does Corriverton get, how much does Anna Regina get? We want to know the breakdown for that first. We want the actual money.

Mr. G. Persaud: For Georgetown \$20 million; \$10 million for New Amsterdam; \$10 million for Linden; \$9 million for Anna Regina; \$8 million for Corriverton and \$8 million for Rose Hall.

Mr. B. Williams: Do you see why I am asking Mr. Chairman. For Georgetown, \$20 million, which virtually has the population of Guyana. The point I am making to you is that we have been doing violence to Georgetown over the years. How much does Anna Regina get again?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member could you repeat the list again.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chair, if I may thank the Hon. Member for raising the issue in the manner he raised it and just seek to remind him, because I am aware that he knows the figures...

Mr. Chairman: Is this a matter that has been discussed in the Select Committee on Local Government?

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chair, the population of Georgetown ranges between 25% to 28% of the national population. The allocation here is 38.8%.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members there are a number of other Members seeking to ask questions – Ms. Selman, Ms. Ferguson, Mr. Bulkan, Mr. Sharma, Mrs. Garrido-Lowe. We will go with those who have not asked and then come back. Ms. Selman.

Ms. Selman: Mr. Chairman, the very line item. Based on the actual amount provided by the Minister, \$65 for the municipality and \$3 million each for the 65 NDCs, that would total \$260 million. Could the Hon. Minister tell us how the outstanding \$22 million would be spent?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. The \$22 million is provided as support to communities that are outside of neighbourhood democratic councils or outside of municipalities across the country.

Ms. Ferguson: Project code 1900600 - Infrastructure Development - could the Hon. Minister indicate the amount for each facility, that is, the construction of sanitary facilities at Patentia, Buxton and Enmore? Where would these facilities be located? Perhaps you can provide us with a breakdown, the cost for each facility within the various areas.

3.40 p.m.

What I am saying is that based on profile No. 54, the description of projects is, one, the completion and extension of Mabaruma market tarmac; and, two, construction of sanitary facilities at Patentia, Buxton and Enmore. What I am asking of you Hon. Minister is to provide us with a breakdown for each facility that is at Patentia, Buxton and Enmore, and the cost for each facility. *[Interruption]* The breakdown of the cost for each facility and where these facilities will be located within the various areas.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member for the detailed explanation. Mr. Chair, because the three sanitary facilities have the same design the cost will be the same - \$2.5 million each, so \$7.5 million is the total for the three facilities. They will be constructed as it states on the market tarmac area. The remainder of \$31,275,000 would be to complete phase 1 as well as phase 1 of the Mabaruma market tarmac project.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members we had set aside one and one half hours for the consideration of this Ministry. We are quickly approaching that time so I would urge that we move along - Mr. Nagamootoo, Mr. Bulkan then Mr. Sharma. Please note, as I said, we have five minutes within which to complete all the questions for this Ministry.

Mr. Nagamootoo: Mr. Chairman, project code 3600100 – Solid Waste Disposal Programme: my question is can the Hon. Minister say what work is outstanding on this project.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. We will try to complete the outstanding work this year so they are all part of this year's profile. That is, to complete our institutional strengthening and supervisory consultancy across the 15 NDCs and the municipalities of Georgetown; complete the final phase of our public awareness programme which has commenced already; the purchase of the various vehicles and receptacles necessary for the solid waste programme. Those outstanding elements will be completed this year. Also the facility to deal with the hazardous waste project will be completed this year.

Mr. Nagamootoo: A follow-up question Mr. Chairman: does the Minister know how much money remains in this programme to complete all of this?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. I am advised that US \$6 million remaining on this project and we are seeking to expend US\$4 million of that sum of money this year.

Mr. Nagamootoo: The final follow-up question on this: I know this is a \$4.3 billion project but in the legend as I asked last year it is not clearly indicated whether it is a grant or a loan. I would like the Minister to indicate unequivocally whether it is a loan or a grant.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. I am advised it is a loan.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Project code 2601300 – Power Generation: Hon. Minister, can you say how many villages will be receiving solar panels? And how many solar panels will be distributed to each of these villages? What is the wattage of each solar panel?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development's power generation programme is never intended for households. As a matter of fact, panels are provided to health centres and school buildings. That is what we will continue to do this year. In Region No. 1 we will be providing solar panels with 135 watts, 245 amps batteries with 450 watt inverters to the Kwebanna Health Centre, the Assakata, Blackwater and St. Anselm Health Posts, to the St Margaret's, Hotoquai and White Water Primary Schools.

In Region No. 7, we will be providing panels and the accessories mentioned before to the health posts at Wax Creek, Wailing, Batavia and Kawau, and to the schools at Wax Creek, Wailing, Batavia and Kawau.

In Region No. 8 at Kopinang Health Centre and health post at Morowa, Waipa and Itabac. Schools at Monkey Mountain, nursery and primary; Kaibarupai, nursery and primary; Chieung Mouth, nursery and primary; and Sand Hills, nursery and primary.

In Region No. 9, health posts at Shea, Warimure, Quarry and Maranau; at the schools, Annai Primary, Sand Creek Primary and Aishalton Primary.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Hon. Minister. Can you please provide us with that list tomorrow?

Mr. G. Persaud: Will do Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: May I take the opportunity to welcome our guests, representatives of the International Press Institute. Just to let our guests know that we are in the process of approving the nation's budget which began on 2nd April. It is sometimes difficult going, sometimes enjoyable, but not as yet tending to what happens in the United States Congress. There is some tedium about it and, as I said, it is sometimes difficult. That is the process we are engaged in, the annual budget for the nation. So, welcome.

Hon. Members, as time approaches I really will have to limit questions. I noticed about five persons rising to speak even after I had said that we have gone past the time we had set ourselves by a motion and resolution of the House. I would ask Mr. Bulkan and then Mr. Williams says he has a follow up to your question, and that will be it Hon. Members.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, when we look at the overall budgetary allocation for 2012 we can see that some \$1,079,000,000 was provided for but the Ministry only spent some \$749 million, or \$330 million less. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide an explanation to us as to why the sum of \$330 million was not spent given the crying need for municipal services across the length and breadth of our country?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the \$300 plus million that were projected to have been spent on the Haags Bosch facility during 2012, we could not have completed the projects that would have caused those expenditures to have been made. So this year we have already accelerated our movement towards completing those projects so that citizens can benefit.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you very much for that explanation Mr. Minister. Project code 3600100 – Solid Waste Disposal Programme, project profile 57, could you inform us of the second activity, public awareness and community participation, how much money is budgeted for this particular activity.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, \$42 million.

Mr. Bulkan: Could you provide us some further details as to what these activities are?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the activities that will be undertaken by this phase of public awareness will be those that will target children of school age, businesses across the region, as well as householders in the municipality of Georgetown. Those activities include the distribution of fliers, posters, handbills, seminars, workshops, and demonstrations across the 15 NDCs and municipalities in Georgetown.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you Mr. Minister. A follow-up question Mr. Chairman: I have no doubt the Hon. Minister and in particular his junior, Hon. Minister Whittaker who is responsible for municipalities would be painfully aware of the proliferation of non-biodegradable materials, in

particular I refer to Styrofoam and plastics of all sorts – bottles and bags. My question to the Hon. Minister is does the Ministry have a policy on the use of the materials I just named and, if so, would he be kind enough to share it with us because we are all painfully aware of the environmental consequences of these materials. It leads to, among other things, health problems, clogging of drains and flooding. I myself am aware that right here in Parliament we contribute by the use of a lot of Styrofoam materials.

Mr. Chairman: Then it should be what our policy is. Minister is there a policy of the Government vis-à-vis the handling or disposal of these materials?

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, during the budget debate I would have shared with this House some projects and plans geared at handling non-biodegradable waste in our country. But I thought it would have been an issue then when we could have bought into it rather than waiting at Committee of Supply to make it an issue here.

Mr. Chairman: I do not know the Member is making it an issue. He says it is our concern and so he is asking for some guidance as to policy.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chair, I am not sure I have to enquire with regards to where we are on a definitive policy to deal with non-biodegradable materials.

Mr. Chairman: Certainly we need one. Mr. Bulkan, unfortunately we have to move on.

Mr. B. Williams: On the same project code 360100 – Solid Waste Disposal Programme: might I respectfully refer the Hon. Minister to the profile, item 3, Construction of Haags Bosch Sanitary Landfill. Might I point out to the Hon. Minister that to date they have spent around \$2.5 billion on this land site. What is there to construct presently Mr. Minister?

Mr. Chairman: Minister, what is the money going to be spent on in terms of construction.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, the project like any other one has different phases and in every construction, I think, we are very familiar it is stages and phases. Haags Bosch is no exception. There is consistent and constant need for the cells to be excavated then materials to be placed in it, compacted, and filled. That is a continuous process.

Mr. B. Williams: So it is never done.

Mr. G. Persaud: So construction with a land fill site, as the Hon. Member says, is a job that is never done. He is correct.

Mr. B. Williams: I notice it does not say completion.

Mr. Chairman: At least the Minister did say in the budget speech that the volume that is reaching the landfill site exceeds that which was anticipated. It would mean that continuous work has to be done to now meet that demand. Hon. Members with that I would like to put the question.

Programme 133 – Regional Development - \$1,060,775,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very minister and your technical officers. Hon. Members for the next hour we will be going through the Estimates for Region No. 1. Hopefully we will hear from Ms. Williams as she represents that region, replacing Mr. Allen. We will take a moment or two to allow the officers to take their seats.

Agency: 71 Region 1: Barima/Waini

Current Expenditure

Programme: 711 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$99,471,000

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Hon. Minister I notice that contracted employees for 2013 remain the same as 2012, however, we have an almost \$2 million more budgeted for 2013. Could you kindly explain why this is so? What are the positions of the employees and their emoluments?

Minister within the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development [Mr. Whittaker]: Mr. Chairman, I can make available the positions and the salaries of the 14 contracted employees if the Hon. Member so wishes. We have a Senior Personnel Officer enjoying a salary of \$102,141; a Regional Executive Officer (REO), Port Kaituma, \$1097,240; a Confidential Secretary, \$60,531; five Accounts Clerk II enjoying \$47,622 each; a Cleaner \$32,983; a Caretaker, \$41,083; a Registration Clerk, \$41,083; an Office Assistant and a Store Attendant each enjoy a salary of \$37,657; one Labourer \$42,983.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Hon. Minister. Just a quick clarification, did one or two of the employees have a raise in salary? What caused the increase?

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman in 2012 we would have had a senior personnel officer who retired and her emoluments would have been very high. And we have had the appointment of one Accounts Clerk II. That accounts for the reduction in the allocation.

Mr. Ramjattan: The allocation in 2012 was \$11 million for contracted employees and has now been increased to \$13 million yet we still have 14 contracted employees for last year and 14 for this year. What has caused that increase?

Mr. Whittaker: Sorry about that, I omitted to add the appointment of the AREO at Port Kaituma. That officer enjoys an emolument of \$107,240 per month.

Ms. Selman: Mr. Chairman, line item 6211: could the Hon. Minister indicate what is responsible for the increase though he may consider it minimal? And could he also outline what are the expenses specific to that agency?

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman, during 2013 there is expected to be a regional Toshaos conference which will be held in the region. This will see not only Toshaos but senior councillors and even leaders of Amerindian communities outside of the village council attending. Under this allocation there is also the payment of stipend to village Toshaos, to senior councillors, RDC councillors and others.

Mr. Chairman: When is that?

Mr. Whittaker: I am told by the REO that the conference is scheduled for May, 2013.
[Interruption] You will certainly be invited my dear.

Ms. Selman: A follow-up question Mr. Chairman: could the Hon. Minister say whether it is envisaged we are going to have an increase in the stipend for RDC councillors in 2013?

Mr. Whittaker: No it is not envisaged; it is not catered for in the 2013 Estimates.

Ms. Renita Williams: Hon. Minister under line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: in last year's Budget there was no money allocated and this year there is \$6 million. Which buildings are to be maintained?

Mr. Whittaker: Thank you very much Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, maintenance of buildings for this programme used to be catered for under public works. If you check under public works you will see that. As of this year maintenance of buildings is being placed under the specific programme. That is why you notice the \$6 million here.

Ms. Williams: Mr. Chairman, can the Hon. Minister identify the building.

Mr. Whittaker: Yes, it is the Regional Vice Chairman's Quarters at Mabaruma, the staff quarters at Mabaruma, and the guest house caretaker's quarters at Akwero, Moruka. Those are the three buildings.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants- can the Minister indicate to this House what is the number of vehicles he has at his disposal and can we have an idea of what kinds of vehicles they are?

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman, I am looking at a fleet of vehicles. Do you want the numbers?

Mr. Trotman: The amount.

Mr. Whittaker: There are seven 4 X 4; we also have a number of outboard engines and these are catered for under this item. There is a fleet of eight outboard engines. Also included under this item are two small generators, a 3.5 KVA Honda which is at Mabaruma and a 2.6 KVA generator at Moruka.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6261 – Local Travel and Subsistence - this year \$8 million has been allocated for this line item can the Hon. Minister explain why the increase.

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman, visits to villages and communities for the purpose of monitoring and engaging the residents, the frequency of such visits would be intensified during 2013.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: May I ask the Hon. Minister why it is being identified? Is there a particular programme and what is it?

4.10 p.m.

Mr. Whittaker: This is monitoring of projects. We have had some challenges with respect to some projects and you would be aware of that, especially in the Moruca sub-region, so we intend to intensify those visits; primarily to monitor projects and engage residents.

Mr. T. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Hon. Minister say, under line item 6291: what are some of the national and other events that are being budgeted for here?

Mr. Whittaker: Thank you. These include: Republic Anniversary celebrations, Independence Anniversary celebrations, Labour Day, Arrival Day, Moruca Expo, Port Kaituma day and, of course, Amerindian Heritage Month activities.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: A follow up on that question: Hon. Minister, how much money will be allocated for Moruca Day?

Mr. Whittaker: I am advised by the Regional Executive Officer that the breakdown is not available at this moment but it is going to be a significant sum.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Hon. Minister, if the breakdown is not available now, how did you arrive at this figure and can you please provide us, in the near future, like next week Monday? Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: What happens with some of these activities, for example Amerindian Heritage Month and Moruca Day, there are committees that run with these activities and we involve them and they prepare a budget and submit to us. Ours is not the only input into the activity also. I am not in a position...

Mr. Chairman: What the Hon. Members is saying is for you to come up with a figure it must have been based on something submitted to you. That is what, I believe, Mrs. Garrido-Lowe is trying to say; the figure could not have been just plucked from the atmosphere but it must have been based on what the committee sent forth to you, based upon its request.

Mr. Whittaker: I am informed that it would not be less than \$200,000.

Programme: 711 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$99,471,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 711 –Regional Administration and Finance - \$25,026,000

Programme: 711 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$25,026,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 712 – Public Works – \$191,572,000

Mr. Adams: Project Code 7121100200: can the Hon. Minister tell us where these bridges will be constructed and the cost?

Mr. Chairman: We are on “current” so I would proceed to put the question.

Programme: 712 – Public Works – \$191,572,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 712 – Public Works – \$123,620,000

Mr. Adams: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Project Code 7121100200: can the Hon. Minister tell us where these bridges will be constructed, if they will be wood or concrete and what is the cost for one of those bridges?

Mr. Whittaker: Thank you. There are three bridges. One will be constructed in the area known as the Wauna Stretch Road and, more specifically, it is referred to as the Number Four Bridge because there are several other bridges along this route. That is going to be of concrete. This bridge stretches across the Wauna Creek and is approximately 30 feet by 19 feet. The bridge gives access to a number of communities including Wauna, Kamwatta, White Water, Sugar Hill and Yarakita. Therefore we are talking about something like about 2,000 beneficiaries. The estimated cost is \$15.5 million.

The second bridge is within an Amerindian titled village called White Water. This bridge is 800 feet in length and the extensive work that has to be done will be done in two phases. Phase one will see a reinforced concrete bridge over the creek and 250 feet of revetment. In fact, there is an existing structure but it needs extensive work; it is almost like we are rebuilding. This bridge and the revetment will replace this existing 800-foot catwalk. It will be done, as I said, in two phases. This year's allocation of \$13 million would see us do 250 feet and in 2014 the remainder of the work will be done.

The third bridge is in the Matarkai Sub-region and this is construction of reinforced concrete in an area known as Citrus Grove. This is the only timber bridge on that road and due to heavy vehicular traffic occasioned by an upsurge in mining activities it has deteriorated, hence the need to do extensive work there. \$8.5 million has been allocated for that project.

Mr. Morian: Under line item 1400400 - Roads: I noticed "Completion and upgrading of roads". I got the distinct impression that 'completion' means that there are some roads that would have been started and then there is 'upgrading of roads'. Could the Hon. Minister say which roads which roads will be completed, the roads that will be upgraded and I would also like to know if they will be raising the carriageway of the roads in the process.

Mr. Whittaker: This is a prior-year project and, in fact, the road works being done are in the Mabaruma Sub-region and in the Moruca Sub-region. They are primarily in those two areas but it is a rollover.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Project Code 2601400- Power Supply: can the Hon. Minister say if, for the situation that existed in sub-region Moruca and some other locations where they are generating electricity, the revenue collected was accounted for and placed in the Consolidated Fund.

Mr. Whittaker: My response is "yes".

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Hon. Minister say if the 300 electricity meters that were purchased over nine years ago were installed?

Mr. Chairman: The 300 "what", Sir?

Mr. Sharma: Electricity meters.

Mr. Chairman: The meters.

Mr. Whittaker: Those 300 meters have not been installed, but if you look you will see that this year we are doing an upgrade in the Mabaruma area and they definitely would be utilised this year.

Mr. Sharma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What prevented the Ministry and the Region from installing these meters that were paid for and supplied nine years ago?

Mr. Whittaker: I am advised that we were, that is the RDC, was awaiting the resources to do the upgrade.

Mr. Sharma: Nine years is a long time for such activity to take place. I do not know why funding was not provided if funding was the situation here. I hope that the people of Region No.1 receive this facility and the revenue is properly accounted for and brought to the Consolidated Fund. Thank you.

Ms. Williams: Power Supply - Project Code 2601400: can the Minister say how much electricity the residents of Mabaruma are currently enjoying?

Mr. Whittaker: The number of hours is six hours and fortnightly we increase that when the steamer is in the area so that they can work around the clock. Six hours per day.

Ms. Williams: A follow up question: Hon. Minister, through the Chairman. After the work is completed, how many hours will it be extended by?

Mr. Whittaker: The resources made available in this 2013 capital programme caters for an extension of electricity so that we can go into the Barabina area and the Bumbury Hill. It does not cater for extension of the number of hours to existing consumers but to extend the service to other areas.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Project Code 1400400- Roads: Hon. Minister, how much money will be allocated to each of the road projects? I see that it is an ongoing project. When do you hope to complete each project? Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: Under this programme the RDC has identified four specific projects. One has to do with the rehabilitation of the Haimaruni Road in the Moruca Sub-region – \$3 million has been allocated to that. A second has to do with rehabilitating of the road from the Digicel Area to Bumbury Junction; that is the Bumbury Village. For this there is an allocation of \$13.6 million. The third is half a mile of DBST road, 12 feet wide, with drains help with management of water; drains 18 inches by 24 inches. That is \$2.47 million. Then there is the completion of the Khan’s Gate to Wanaina Bridge. That road is in the Mabaruma Sub-region and that is \$4.5 million. The total is \$23.6 million.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Yes, Hon. Minister, but, since they are ongoing, when do you hope to complete each of them? Thank you”

Mr. Whittaker: I am informed that the expected completion date will be August, 2013.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, Project Code 1400400- Roads: would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to say to us at capital project 270, the rehabilitation of roads that is listed here as “Hymaronie Road”, if he can identify where that road is or should it be “Haimaruni”?

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman, may I ask the Hon. Members to repeat the question?

Mr. Bulkan: Capital project 270- item 2: it lists the rehabilitation of road at Hymaronie. I am asking if it should be “Haimaruni” or is that somewhere else in Region No. 1?

Mr. Whittaker: I am talking about a road in the Moruca Sub-region, H-Y-M-A-R-O-N-I-E. It is near the satellite community of Kabura in the Moruca Sub-region.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Project Code 1100200 - Bridges: Hon. Minister, you know that the Moruca Bridge has a problem, it has been halted. Will this be completed this year? How soon will you be able to complete it, revetment and all, since it was a capital project that rolled over? It was supposed to be, I think, completed in December. Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman, Members, this house would recall that there were some issues to do with the quality of work on this bridge, as a result the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development halted that work and caused an investigation to be done to confirm

whether indeed the work that was being done by the contractor was in keeping with what was set out clearly in the bills of quantity. We have gotten the benefits of the report. Of course the report has pointed out some serious flaws in terms of the work that was done so that is what we are presently looking at with a view to have the contractor take corrective measures.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Hon. Minister, do you have a timeline allotted to that? How soon will this be, or how late? Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: I understand the Hon. Member wants a timeline as to when this work would recommence and, obviously, finish. I am not in a position to say that right now but we assure that all efforts are being made to have the corrective measures taken but I am not in a position to give you that time that you are looking for.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Hon. Minister, is it that you have to get a new contract and a new engineer? Is that why you are not in a position? The bridge is there and people need to use it, they need to be safe and they have to know when you will start repairs. Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: We would have had the benefit of the report by the goodly gentlemen who was tasked with enquiring into the quality of the work done and we are still reviewing that report.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Hon. Minister, I am a bit worried because in the interior, in the hinterland, things tend to take long when one decides in Georgetown so I just need an idea so that I and Ms. Williams can go back to our Moruca brothers and sisters and tell them, “Hey, you know this bridge, the Minister or the Government is going to fix it next month or next two months or so”. Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman, we will make a determination within the fortnight.

Programme: 712 – Public Works – \$123,620,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 713 – Education Delivery - \$747,887,000

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, might I respectfully refer the Hon. Minister to line items 6252-6255- Maintenance of Infrastructure: would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide – it could be laid over – details of these proposed interventions, please?

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman, I can provide these right now, maintenance of bridges, drainage and infrastructure. Under “Bridges”, the RDC will be addressing defective piles, stringers, liners and curb will be replaced in the area of the St. John’s Primary School, which is in the Waini River, the Aruka Mouth Primary School, which is in Aruka and the Parakeese Nursery School Bridge, which is in the Moruca Sub-region.

In terms of maintenance of drainage and irrigation works, blocked and silted up trenches and thick vegetation will be cleared at school compounds in these areas: Sacred Heart Primary School, which is in the Aruka area, St. Peter and Paul Primary School, which is in the Barima River – some of you know it as Morawhanna – St. Mary’s Primary School in the Koriabo River, St. Anselm in the Barima and the Lower Waini Primary School.

Finally, maintenance of sea and river defence: Revetment will be done at school compounds in the Sacred Heart Primary, Kachicamo Primary and St. Peter and Paul. Thank you.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6231- Fuel and Lubricants: I see for 2013 there is a significant increase from \$18.990 million to \$23.950 million. Can the Hon. Minister explain why this is so? Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: Two Schools Welfare Officers have been appointed and I think we all know the nature of their duty, their responsibility, which is reaching out so more fuel would be utilised for these officer to visit schools and to supervise, etcetera. In addition, six riverine communities will receive fuel and this is due to the fact that under the Universal Secondary Education Programme, we have identified six schools will become... these are the “primary tops” where the Secondary Education Programme will be delivered. These are riverine communities and I want to name them. They will receive fuel for taking the children to and from. There is St. Dominic’s, St. Anselm, St. Anthony’s, St. Nicholas and these are all in the Aruka and Koriabo River. They will be taken to gain their secondary education at Hosororo, which is one of the “primary tops”. We have also Santa Cruz. That is in the Upper Waini River. Also there is monitoring of the “Hot Meal Programme” at Thirty-two Primary School.

Finally, as part of their responsibilities, the Schools Welfare Officers will be tasked with addressing the issue of truancy. In a nutshell it has to do with the appointment of two Schools Welfare Officers and, therefore, the intensifying of activities that have to do with home visits, visits to schools, etcetera, and also the fact that we have a number of ‘primary tops’ at Wauna, Hosororo, to which we will be bringing and taking back students daily.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Hon. Minister. Line item 6292- Dietary: for this year it is budgeted at \$37 million. Can you say how many schools and what type of food will be cooked there or produced?

Mr. Whittaker: This is a provision for expected additional intake at the three secondary schools at which dormitory facilities are provided at Mabaruma, Santa Rosa and Port Kaituma. In fact if one checks one will see that there is an extension of the Port Kaituma dormitory and I am informed that 40 additional students will be accommodated in the dormitory facility provided, hence the increase in the allocation.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Hon. Minister. With regard to line item 6302- Training (including Scholarships): there is \$16 million allocated here. Can you say what the training will entail? Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: Many of us would be aware of the Child Friendly Schools Initiative; a new initiative for Region No.1. A series of workshops will be held. In addition we will have professional development sessions, work-study programmes, cluster workshops, etcetera. It is a hype of education related activities.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: A follow up question on that: Hon. Minister. Where will these workshops be held? Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: The workshops will be held at Mabaruma.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Will all workshops be held at Mabaruma? If so, why are some not being held in Moruca or Port Kaituma? Thank you.

Mr. Whittaker: The workshops will be held in the three sub-regions.

Mr. Trotman: Line item 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings: can the Minister state which buildings are to be maintained in 2013 and can he, at the same time, tell us if any of those buildings were maintained in 2012 and, if so, what was the nature of the work that was done and the cost?

Mr. Whittaker: The buildings that I am about to identify did not have any work done during 2012. We have here Santa Rosa Nursery, Mabaruma Nursery, Hosororo Nursery. In terms of primary schools: St. Bede's Primary, Hotoquai Primary, Hotoquai teachers' quarters, Waramuri teachers' quarters, St. Anselm teachers' quarters, Sacred Heart teachers' quarters;

4.40 p.m.

Father's Beach teachers' quarters, Almond Beach teachers' quarters, Santa Rosa sanitary block, Santa Rosa male dorms, Santa Rosa Secondary School, North West Secondary School female dormitory and the teachers' quarters' at Mabaruma.

Mr. Trotman: The second part of the question: Was any work done on any of those buildings in the year 2012? If so, what was the nature of the work done?

Mr. Whittaker: I said, at the commencement, that it was no. None of the buildings was any work done during the year 2012.

Programme: 713 – Education Delivery - \$747,887,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 713 – Education Delivery - \$52,000,000

Programme: 713 – Education Delivery - \$52,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 714 – Health Services - \$317,597,000

Dr. Norton: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: There has been an increase by two. Could the Hon. Minister say the designations of the two and the salaries of the two highest paid contracted workers?

Mr. Whittaker: The new recruits are a Captain/Engineer, boat captain - \$46,434 per month and one Radio Operator - \$41,083 per month.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6241 – Rental of Buildings: Quite unlike the two years, which have passed, this year there is \$4 million allocated to this line item. Could the Hon. Minister identify the buildings and their purpose?

Mr. Whittaker: The buildings are being rented for an Environmental Health Assistant and additional Malaria staff that would be placed within the Matarkai's subregion. There has been a lot of focus in the mining areas of the region so additional accommodation had to be provided. Those persons are going to be stationed at Port Kaituma and then they will reach out into the various communities and villages across the subregion.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6272 – Electricity Charges: Could the Hon. Minister explain the increase in electricity charges?

Mr. Whittaker: At Port Kaituma, with the assistance of the Hon. Prime Minister, a power and light board has been installed there and no longer is there a situation where the region provides and pays the salaries of the staff and provides the fuel. It pays for power and light.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6281 – Security Services: There is also an increase there. Could the Minister kindly explain?

Mr. Whittaker: The increase caters for some additional health facilities at Pakera, Port Kaituma and Moruka.

I am also informed that in the Mabaruma area the number of hours of security service will be extended.

Dr. Norton: It is the number of hours. Could the Minister kindly explain this and the reason?

Mr. Whittaker: It is one addition guard and that translates to 24 hours more.

Dr. Norton: With the \$3 million that is allocated, at line item 6302, Training (including Scholarships), for training, could the Minister be specific as to what this training entails?

Mr. Whittaker: This training targets primarily community health workers in areas such as integrated management for childhood illness, basic identification of high risk conditions in pregnancies, nutritional programmes and other. It will be done by senior staff in the region and in some instances resource persons from the Ministry of Health will join.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: A follow-up on line item 6302. The community health workers, what is the duration of the training? I can tell the Minister that in remote areas, let us say Santa Crus and Warapoka, there are only community health workers to deliver babies. Are those community health workers trained enough to do such jobs?

Mr. Whittaker: We are aware that deliveries should be done by trained midwives, but the jobs of the community health workers have been enriching over the years. The Member may recall that when they started they were often referred to as dispensers of panadol and aspirin. They have gone way beyond that. Over the years that has been done and certain knowledge and skills were made available to them. Those were some that I just outlined.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Hon. Minister, what is the duration of the training?

Mr. Whittaker: I am advised that this would be on weekends.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: How many weekends?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Minister, on a question such as this you should get a lawyer.

If babies should only be delivered by midwives or persons trained, and for a Minister to say that their abilities have been enhancing over a weekend... [**Ms. Ally:** It is enriching.] ...enriching, you can find yourself with a lawsuit that you may not be able to handle. Please be careful because it is like me deciding I am going to dispense drugs. I may know a thing or two about some antibiotics but I do not think that qualifies me, in any shape or form, to venture down that road. Be very careful.

Mr. Whittaker: I want to repeat what I said earlier. I said that the training includes basic identification of high risk condition in pregnancies. The training is expected to give that kind of

knowledge and experience to community health workers. It is not for them to deliver babies. They will know that they would have to hustle to get a pregnant mother to Santa Rosa Hospital or to the Georgetown Public Hospital (GPHC). That is what it is about. Sorry, the Member did not hear me well.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you very much Minister. I have heard you now.

What happens when it appears to be a normal delivery? Who will deliver at this health centre when it is only the community health worker there, who trains on weekends?

Mr. Whittaker: We have been working over the years to increase the knowledge, the skills, the experience available, not only to the community health workers, many of whom, the Member is aware, have become single trained midwives, and many of them have successfully undergone that programme, but also the Medex. Some of the persons, who we called nannies, who have been delivering over the many years and decades have even been brought in to be part of that training, but it targets community health workers primarily and aims to give them, not for them to replace midwives, some additional knowledge and skills. One ounce of prevention is better than one pound of cure and so if those people have some additional knowledge and skills where they can identify and prevent a situation by taking pre-emptive measures, then, that would be very useful.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you for your answer Hon. Minister. From what I gather they will be better able to assist a midwife.

Why are midwives not at every health post across the interiors?

Long ago, when I as was small, there were qualified nurses and dispensers in remote areas assisting with delivery and they knew what they were about. The Ministry of Health boasts about training so many nurses every four years. Where are they and why are they not in the interior locations?

Mr. Whittaker: The only thing I can do is to seek to get a bit more clarity, and that is to say that this programme will target all of the health workers in the region. This programme will be in each of the three subregions and at the end of it there will acquire more skills, more confidence and be able to provide more services.

Ms. Williams: Line item 6242 - Maintenance of the Buildings: I notice that in last year's budget it was \$18 million and now in the year 2013 it is \$21 million. Could the Minister indicate to this Committee if some of that moneys will be spent on the housing for the Medex at the Kwabanna Health Centre?

Mr. Whittaker: I am happy to report that it is yes. The Medex living quarters at Kwabanna, \$2 million will be spent there.

Ms. Williams: Follow-up: Could the Hon. Minister say how soon would this work begin?

Mr. Whittaker: After we would have gone through this process and got the approval, go out to tendering, follow the procurement procedures, I would say in the second quarter.

Programme: 714 – Health Services - \$317,597,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 714 – Health Services - \$43,074,000

Dr. Norton: Project 1202400 – Buildings – Health: There are four projects earmarked for this \$25 million. Could the Hon. Minister say how much each one of those four projects will use from the \$25 million?

Mr. Whittaker: Could I ask that the Member repeat the question?

Dr. Norton: There is \$25 million for the four projects under this project. It is for the Medex/ community health worker quarters at Baramita, the nurses' hostel at Mabaruma, the Wauna Health Post and the Karaburi Health Post. Could the Hon. Minister say what each one of those projects will cost?

Mr. Whittaker: The allocations differ. The completion of the Medex/community health workers living quarters at Baramita - \$6.3 million, the rehabilitation of the Karaburi Health Hut in Moruka - \$3.5 million, the extension of the Wauna Health Post - \$3.5 million, the enclosure of the Mabaruma Nurses' Hostel, the ground floor - \$7.7 million.

Dr. Norton: Project 2401500 – Land and Water Transport: Could the Hon. Minister say the use of, location and the type of vehicle that will be purchased under this project?

Mr. Whittaker: It is for 4x4 double cab vehicle and it will be for use at the Port Kaituma Hospital.

Dr. Norton: Project – 2502800 – Furniture and equipment – Health: Could the Hon. Minister give us the cost particularly of equipment such as the recumbent bike, the electrocardiogram (ECG) equipment, the X-ray machine and the microscope that will be catered for in this approximately \$12 million allocation?

Mr. Whittaker: The recumbent bike, heavy-duty, the amount quoted is \$58,000; the electrical cast cutter - \$96,000, the X-ray machine with processor for the Kumaka District Hospital, Moruka - \$7,056,000. There are some microscopes, two spinal boards, costing \$60,000 each and a number of fans, fire extinguishers and refrigerators, all totalling \$12.1 million.

Mrs. Backer: Going back to the first project 1202400, Buildings – Health, completion, construction, extension and rehabilitation of health facilities, profile page number 277. At number 4, the Minister did give us the cost, “Enclosure of nurse’s hostel at Mabaruma.” How many nurses are presently stationed at Mabaruma Hospital?

Mr. Whittaker: I do not have that information, Hon. Member.

Mrs. Backer: Mr. Chairman, could I respectfully ask the Hon. Minister if he would be kind enough, within a specified time – he obviously will indicate to the House – to share that with the House. It is very good to be talking about these capital works, but if there are not any nurses or there is one nurse at Mabaruma we perhaps may need to spend the money in getting more nurses than in enclosing the nurses’ quarters.

Mr. Whittaker: I undertake to do that. It is either that the nurses are too many that we are taking some time to count them or... We will get that information to you for Monday.

Mr. Chairman: Minister, is the ambulance at Mabaruma Hospital, Port Kaituma, ever taken care of?

Mr. Whittaker: I am told that it is not operable, right now.

Mr. Chairman: Still?

Mr. Whittaker: It is not serviceable.

Mr. Chairman: It is about five years now and your predecessor had undertaken to get it to be done quickly.

Mr. Whittaker: I will certainly enquire.

Programme: 714 – Health Services - \$43,074,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Assembly resumed.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members we will now take the break for one hour precisely, resuming with Region 2 and 3.

Sitting suspended at 5.02 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 6.14 p.m.

In Committee of Supply

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, you will notice a bag of green vegetables at your desk, compliments of the Guyana School of Agriculture. I think both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Guyana School of Agriculture should be complimented as they explore new varieties that hitherto were imported. I think they deserve our compliments.

We did pass the budget for the Ministry of Agriculture. Did we?

Hon. Members: Yes.

Agency: 72 Region 2: Pomeroon/Supenaam

Current Expenditure

Programme: 721 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$130,884,000

Mr. Jones: Line item 6111 – Administrative: I notice an increase of two staff. Could the Hon. Minister please indicate the positions hold by the two individuals and their salaries?

Mr. G. Persaud: The two positions, additional to line item 6111, are one Deputy Regional Executive Officer - \$195,998 per month and an Assistant Regional Executive Officer - \$107,240 per month.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6112 – Senior Technical: There is an increase of two staff. Could the Minister please indicate the positions and their salaries?

Mr. G. Persaud: It is for one Senior Superintendant of Works - \$64,565 and one Superintendant of Works - \$69,355 per month.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6114 – Clerical and Office Support: One person is added. Could the Minister please state the position and the salary?

Mr. G. Persaud: It is one Accounts Clerk - \$53,406 per month.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6116 - Contracted Employees: Could the Minister please state the reason for the increase?

Mr. G. Persaud: The number of staff increased from 24 to 31. The positions are four Accounts Clerks at a salary of \$53,406 per month and they were intended to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness within the accounting system in the Regional Democratic Council. Two Typist Clerks, who are required to assist with the tender and administration process in the region, at a salary of \$53,406 and a cleaner at \$43,983.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6231- Fuel and Lubricants: I noted that requested in the year 2012 was \$7.5 million and the amount spent was \$7.5 million and we noticed an increase, requested this year of \$9 million. What has occasioned this request?

Mr. G. Persaud: For the year 2013, there are two new generators in the region. The new generators, which are located in the administration complex, will require the use of fuel. In addition to that, there are two outboard engines under this programme and one has a 200 horsepower engine, so that in itself uses a lot of fuel.

Mr. Jones: Could the Hon. Minister please indicate the reason for two generators at one building?

Mr. G. Persaud: I must thank the Hon. Member for asking that question because it gives me an opportunity to correct a bit of information I had just shared. Instead of two generators, it is a new generator. It is one generator. Sorry.

6. 20 p.m.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: Noted in the year 2012 there was zero request; there is now a request for \$2 million in the year 2013. Please explain.

Mr. G. Persaud: When we came to the House last year we were advised that we should make sure that budgeting is done and done in a proper manner. The buildings will be placed under administration. It is for that reason that those buildings are under the administration programme and properly catered for now in the year 2013.

Mr. Jones: Could the Minister please name those buildings?

Mr. G. Persaud: The Charity Amerindian Hostel, which is one of the buildings, and the other is the State House Annex at Anna Regina, A number 52.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6281 – Security Service: We notice a significant increase from \$242, 000 to \$9. 30 million, could the Minister please explain?

Mr. G. Persaud: Here, again, the security charges for administration, most of it was placed under the Ministry of Public Works, in Budget 2012, and in keeping with the need to ensure that expenditures are adequately and properly placed in the Estimate the region has sought to remove those security personnel and place them correctly under the administration programme, hence the increase.

Programme: 721 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$130,884,000 agreed to and ordered to stands part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 721 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$2,100,000

Programme: 721 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$2,100,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 722 – Agriculture - \$221,902,000

Mr. Jones: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: We notice an increase of 11 persons. Could the Hon. Minister explain the reason for the increase and could he please state the five highest paid persons and their salaries?

Mr. G. Persaud: The increase of 11 personnel include four Rangers at a salary of \$60,671 per month; six Sluice Attendants at a salary of \$52,544 per month and one Checker at a salary of \$41,083 per month. The highest paid employee under this programme is the Regional Engineer, \$159,053, followed by Sluice Attendants, five of them, \$57,765 per month. At the lower end of the salary scale is one Labourer - \$35,864 per month and there are a number of Sluice Attendants at \$49,945 per month.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6253 – Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works: Could the Hon. Minister please indicate if any of this money will be spent on the Aliko main canal?

Mr. G. Persaud: I will advise the Hon. Member to ask that question when we are dealing with Estimates for Region 3. Aliko is located in the Region 3.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you for the geography lesson.

Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Harmon: Could the Hon. Minister explain the increase, line item 6281, in the security service, which has been provided, and what are the locations that it is provided at?

Mr. G. Persaud: The locations are basically the pump stations, being an agriculture programme, so they are at Dawa, Perth, Saint Andrews, Lima, Suddie, Cozier, Charity, toll gate. Those are for fixed pumps. There are different occasions when pumps will be needed to move from one location to another and so depending on the hours of work the region will need to increase the hours of security coverage. That is catered for here in the Estimate.

Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Harmon: We recall last year there was some issues, in relation to security, in all of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development agencies. Could the Hon. Minister state the name of the security service here and whether in fact that company was awarded a contract? What are the conditions of that contract?

Mr. G. Persaud: The security company is Strategic Action Security Service. As you are aware, Mr. Chairman, the procurement process has commenced for security for the year 2013 and that process is evolving. The agency is at the stage of National Procurement and Tender Administration Board. There was an extension for this present security company and as soon as the procurement procedure is completed it will be able to commit to another contract. There is an existing contract with Strategic Action Security Company.

Mr. Trotman: Line item 6253 – Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works: I wonder if the Minister can give us an insight on the maintenance works that he has proposed to be doing under this head.

Mr. G. Persaud: It is intended to weed and clean main drainage trenches, canals, flood reefs and facades in areas such as Good Hope, Zorg en Vlygt, Three Friends, Mainstay, Anna Regina, Henrietta, Devonshire Castle, Walton Hall, Dartmouth, Bounty Hall, Saint Andrews, Better Hope, Somerset, Berks and Cozier, and in the Manikuru area. It is also intended to plough, grade and prepare access dams during rice harvesting season in the very areas mentioned earlier.

Mr. Bulkan: A follow-up to the same line item, 6253. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to lay a schedule of the works that are proposed to be funded under this heading, duly showing the costs as well?

Mr. G. Persaud: Will do, Mr. Chairman.

Programme: 722 – Agriculture - \$221,902,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme 722 – Agriculture - \$125,800,000

Programme 722 Agriculture \$125,800,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 723 – Public Works - \$79,493,000

Mr. Sharma: Before I ask this question, in relation to line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings, I just want to make a general observation, and for the Hon. Minister to respond. In this year's budget, under maintenance of building, there is a total sum of \$67,967,000 which has been allocated for the various programmes, under current expenditure. There is \$316 million allocated for capital works, all of these are in relation to contracts which will be issued. Generally, in Region 2, it is known by me and the other Members of the Public Accounts Committee that this particular region has a problem with over payment of contractors, serious overpayment. I would like the Hon. Minister to address, in relation to this line item, in which \$9.9 million is expected to be expended, the arrangement in place to prevent overpayment to contractors.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, I know you would agree with me that I should stick to the Estimates and I will seek to respond to the direct question raised, with regard to the line item 6242. I can assure the Hon. Member that the Ministry would have spent considerable time in the year 2012 in enhancing its monitoring and evaluation capacity and it is hoping that that would translate into better management of our projects. The issue overpayment will be something that would be deliberately and consciously addressed by the Ministry.

Mr. Sharma: I look forward for the improvement in the transparency of the spending of public funds.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6281 – Security Service: We noted the budget request of \$9.5 million in the year 2012 and the revised reflects a figure of \$11.686 million, but we noted request for the year 2013 is \$3.066 million. Could the Hon. Minister please explain?

Mr. G. Persaud: When we were dealing with programme one, the Hon. Member would have identified a significant increase in that programme, line item 6281, and the difference is because the agency would have shifted those security personnel from programme three and that should be under programme one.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads: Hon. Minister, I have noticed an increase of \$1.5 million. Could you say why there is the increase and which roads will be maintained with this money?

Mr. G. Persaud: I am happy that an increase has been able to be garnered on this line item, particularly so, since maintenance of the roads would have been an issue that is always on the front burner in whatever is done and so we welcome anytime we can have increased allocations under this line item. The list of roads to be maintained during this year, from this allocation, are as follows: those with crusher run surface are at Somerset, Berks, Dartmouth, Paradise, Devonshire Castle, Danielstown, Lima, Richmond, Henrietta, Anna Regina, Bush Lot, Aberdeen, Affiance, Queenstown, Golden Fleece, Suddie, Airy Hall, Supenaam; those in which white sand and clay mix are used to do maintenance works at Adventure, Johanna Cecelia, Golden Fleece, Cullen, Queenstown, Affiance, Reliance, Bush Lot, Henrietta, Richmond, Danielstown, Walton Hall; those which the region will seek to do maintenance work by way of Double Bituminous Surface Treatment (DBST) surfaces are Anna Regina, Henrietta, Lima, Sparta, Dartmouth, Charity, Cotton Field, Queenstown, Suddie, Adventure, Supenaam; and those for which it will seek to do maintenance work, because of asphaltic surface, would be those roads at Anna Regina, Henrietta, Lima, Sparta, Dartmouth, Charity, Cotton Field, Suddie, Adventure, and Supenaam.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Hon. Minister. It is heartened to hear that so many roads will be maintained. How many contractors will be hired to do this job? I see a lot of work here.

Mr. G. Persaud: The procurement process will certainly be the only mechanism through which contractors will be recruited to undertake these jobs.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Minister, you cannot say if the Ministry intends to hire one, two, three or four contractors for this job.

Mr. G. Persaud: I would not be able to say that, the tender process will throw up. It should be noted too Hon. Member that the regions, particularly in the *coastland* regions, over the past years have been seeking to build capacity to take on some of these works by way of force contracts, which is re-establishing, in some instances and strengthening in other instances the capacity of Ministry's Works Department in the various regions.

Programme: 723 – Public Works - \$79,493,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 723 - Public Works - \$91,800,000

Mr. Trotman: I refer the Minister to project 1100300 – Bridges. I will like the Minister to indicate if those bridges, which are proposed to be built, are wooden bridges or concrete bridges. What are the dimensions and the specific cost per bridge?

Mr. G. Persaud: The two bridges, one would be La Belle Alliance, Ivan Street, and the other would be at the Richmond *sideling*, that is the bridge connecting Henrietta to Richmond. The cost for both bridges is estimated to be \$7.5 million and the dimension for the first bridge at La Belle Alliance is 27 x 16. The dimension for the bridge at Richmond is 26 x 16. Both bridges would be reinforced concrete structures.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Hon. Minister, project 1400500 – Roads: “Upgrading of community roads”. Could you say what cost per project is?

Mr. G. Persaud: West Street, Dryshore, is estimated at \$4.2 million; Cemetery Road, Hibernia, is estimated at \$2.5 million; the Old Market Street, at Supenaam, is estimated at \$7.5 million; Hospital Road, Suddie, is estimated at \$5 million; Dew Street, Affiance, is estimated at \$7.5 million; Cow Dam, Pomona, is estimated at \$4 million, Curry Road, Perseverance, is estimated at \$9 million and Health Centre Road, Dartmouth, is estimated at \$7.1 million, an overall cost of \$46.8 million.

Mr. Trotman: I want to refer the Minister to project 1901200 – Land Development: “Upgrading of housing schemes.” The legend speaks about upgrading of roads, such as Richmond, Lima and Coffee Grove. I wonder if the Minister can indicate to us specifically which roads are going to be upgraded and, more importantly, what lengths of those roads are to be upgraded?

Mr. G. Persaud: In Anna Regina, it will be Cross Street and New Market Street, it will be a crusher run surface, 400 feet to be upgraded at a cost of \$3.5 million. Backdam, Richmond, it is a DBST surface there, 1,800 x 11 at a cost of \$8.5 million; Ravie “D” Street at Lima, 740 feet

by 10 feet, \$4 million, DBST surface, Old Road, Coffee Grove, 1,100 feet by 11 feet at a cost of \$6.5 million, BDST surface.

Mr. Jones: Project 2401600 – Land and Water Transport: Could the Hon. Minister please indicate the type of vehicle to be purchased?

Mr. G. Persaud: It would be 4 x 4 open back pickup and the intent is to assist with the movement of workers from office to worksite, and also to enhance the monitoring and evaluation capacity of the Public Works Department in the region.

Programme: 723 - Public Works - \$91,800,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 724 – Education Delivery – \$1,193,959,000

Mr. Jones: Line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants: Could the Hon. Minister please indicate whether or not fuel and lubricants will be used to transport students from the Lower and Upper Pomeroon River?

Mr. G. Persaud: The response is no.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: Could the Hon. Minister please indicate what are those infrastructure to be maintained?

Mr. G. Persaud: The following education infrastructures would be receiving attention based on allocation in Budget 2013: repairs to fence at Reliance Nursery School, rehabilitation sanitary block at Lima Nursery School, repairs to apron and walkway at the Fisher Nursery School, repairs to water trestle at Anna Regina Nursery School, existing septic tank, which is defective, at the Queenstown Nursery School and that would be fixed during this year, repairs to the perimeter fence at Anna Regina Nursery School, repairs to the fence at Jacklow Nursery School, repairs to the fence at Acme Nursery School, rehabilitation to sanitary block at Wakapau Secondary School, rehabilitation to sanitary block at Anna Regina Secondary School.

Mr. Jones: Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to lay the cost for each project that he just outlined?

Mr. G. Persaud: I should have predicted this second question but age as you know.

Mr. Jones: Sorry, I am requesting it in writing, rather than having the Minister going through that long list. It is if he can just...

Mr. G. Persaud: Are you sure?

Mr. Chairman: The Minister gets a chance to speak about what he is doing.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Reliance Nursery School - \$1.2 million, Lima Nursery School sanitary block - \$1 million, Fisher Nursery School, walkway, land filling - \$1 million;

6.50 p.m.

Anna Regina Nursery \$600,000 for repairs to the water trestle; Queenstown Nursery - repairs to the sanitary facility - \$600,000; \$800,000 would be expended to repair the fence at Anna Regina Nursery; Jacoba Nursery's fence - \$1.3 million; Hackney Nursery - repairs to fence - \$1.4 million; rehabilitation of sanitary block at Wakapau Secondary, six units, three for males and three for females - \$2.9 million; rehabilitation of sanitary block at Anna Regina Secondary School - \$2 million.

Mr. Jones: Thank you. Minister would you be kind enough to furnish me with a copy of that, please?

Mr. G. Persaud: Will do, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Jones: Comrade Chairman, line item 6273 – Water Charges – I notice the revised for 2012 is \$31.238 million and a request of this year of \$39 million. Could the Hon. Minister please explain?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the Guyana Water Inc. is keeping its commitment to modernise our water distribution system and to make sure that there is a high degree of accountability and transparency in doing what it is doing. So, we are now metred in the

education sector in Region 2. Because of that, our charges would have increased based on our metre reading.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6292 – Dietary – could the Hon. Minister please explain the request for an additional \$14 million?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, as it is recognised, the dormitory facilities at Charity are now up and running. We have 60 students who will be part of that dorms family. Also, our numbers at the Aurora dormitory have increased and similar situation at the Wakapau dormitory. With that increase in intake, Mr. Chairman, we have that increase reflected.

Mr. Jones: Thank you. Line item 6284 – Other – could the Hon. Minister please explain the request for \$27.77 million?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, line item 6284 – Other – is where the education sector in Region 2 seeks to make use of services to clean our education buildings across the Region. Persons are hired on a temporary basis to provide cleaning services from the head. Apart from that too, Mr. Chairman, all our examination supervisors are paid from this head. With the increase in secondary school facilities, particularly in the Pomeroun, it means, therefore, that we have more centres and more supervisors. Thank you.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A follow up question to line item 6292 – Dietary: the Hon. Minister made reference to the Aurora dorms. Would he be kind enough to provide what is the catchment area for the Aurora dorms and how many students are provided for at this location?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the Aurora dormitory facilities cater for students from the riverine community, particularly in the Essequibo River, Supenaam River and the areas such as Bethany, Mashabo and so on. The number of students at the dorm presently is 64. That is what we have presently.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you.

Programme: 724 – Education Delivery – \$1,193,959,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 724 – Education Delivery – \$66,366,000

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister to look at project code 1202800 – Buildings - Education – this is a multifaceted programme. There are some general things that are proposed to be done, but I think that the House would like to be informed about the specifics of the programme. So, my question to the Hon. Minister is if it is that he can put in writing the specifics about this project so that all of us here can have a kind of record of what is being proposed here. Specifically in relation to one of the proposals, Completion of Buildings, I would like the Minister, in his explanation, to lay out for us what aspects of those buildings are going to be completed. I assume that work has already started and you are attempting to complete the works. I would like, for the benefit of myself and the House, to know what aspects of the works are to be completed as you proceed.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the programme this year will seek to do the following things: construction of phase two at Wakapau Secondary School at a cost of \$7.283 million, which would be completing a building with dimensions 60×25 and works include painting, installation of handrails, ceilings, gutters and fittings. At Ulele Primary School, phase two, it is projected that \$7.67 million will be spent. The dimension of the building is 60×25 and the scope of work will include painting, installation of handrails and ceilings, guttering and other additional finishing. At Martindale Annex, there will be the construction of teachers' quarters. The sum of \$7.2 million is projected to be expended. It is intended to complete a building 40×22. That building, when completed, will be able to cater for two families. The extension of Mainstay Lake Primary at an estimated cost of \$9.4 million would result in a 40×25 building being completed. There will be construction of teachers' quarters at Akawini Annex to the sum of \$3.79 million. This document would be circulated, Mr. Chairman, as requested.

Programme: 724 – Education Delivery – \$66,366,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 725 – Health Services – \$435,280,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled – there is an increase of \$8.5 million from last year. Could the Hon. Minister say what are the designations and emoluments of the two highest paid employees here?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. The increase is as a result of an additional seven staff. The two highest paid as requested are a Staff Nurse Midwife at \$69,355 per month and a Dentist Extender at \$68,456 per month.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister explain the increase in line item 6272 – Electricity Charges?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, we have now fully completed the air-conditioning system at the Suddie Hospital. Now the repair work is completed; that would have accounted for the projected increase in electricity consumption.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, while I can understand the allocation in 2012 and 2013 being the same for line items like 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure – the explanation that was given to us when we questioned the current expenditure for Region 1 for line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – could the Hon. Minister say why would there not be an increase if they intend to train the same number of persons doing the same thing they did last year in terms of improving the health services?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, because of the proximity of Region 2 to the Ministry of Health in Georgetown, quite a number of training interventions, upgrading and empowerment activities are conducted in the city to which health officials from Region 2 are invited and participate in. The costs that the Region would have to bear are basically those of travelling and, in some instances, subsistence allowance. The training programmes that are scheduled for the Region this year are visual inspection with acetic acid (VIA) screening, diabetic foot care, quality assurance training, food handler's seminar, food hygiene seminars and workshops. Those are some of the training programmes that are identified to be done locally in the Region this year.

Programme: 725 – Health Services – \$435,280,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimate.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 725 – Health Services – \$80,641,000

Ms. Selman: Mr. Chairman, project code 2401600 – Land and Water Transport – could the Hon. Minister be specific as to whether it is a land ambulance or a water ambulance?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. It is a land ambulance.

Ms. Selman: Thank you.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, project code 2601600 – Furniture and Equipment - Health – could the Hon. Minister say particularly where these equipment are earmarked for and their costs, particularly because we see it is only \$14.7 million? I am referring particularly to the ultrasound machine, the cardiac monitor, the defibrillator, the electrolyte blood-gas analyser, the foetal monitor, portable x-ray, laryngoscope set. Where is these equipment earmarked for and what are their costs?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the ultrasound machine is projected to cost \$410,000. It is intended for the physiotherapy department at Suddie. The cardiac monitor will cost \$330,000 and is intended for Suddie Hospital as well. The Defibrillator will cost \$910,000 and is for the Suddie Hospital. The blood-gas analyser will cost \$4.9 million and is for the lab at Suddie Hospital. The autoclave will cost \$400,000 and is for the Suddie Hospital. The stimulators, one is for Suddie and one is for Charity at a cost of \$28,000. The portable oxygen canisters are projected at a cost of \$70,000 and are for the ambulance at Suddie Hospital. The ultrasound machine is projected to cost \$2.5 million and is for Suddie Hospital.

Dr. Norton: A follow up, Mr. Chairman: could the Minister answer in that same manner with respect to the portable x-ray machine?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member, and sorry for the omission. That is projected to cost \$2.6 million and it is intended for the Suddie Hospital.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, project code 1202700 – Buildings - Health – in the project profile, it states “Sanitary block at Capoey”. Is this for the village or for any particular health institution that might be localised there?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. It is for the health centre in the village of Capoey?

Dr. Norton: On the same project code, the extension of the lab at the Suddie Hospital, does this entail only construction or does it entail the acquisition of equipment that will be used at this lab?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. This is basically dealing with the infrastructural side and its construction, out as well as internal, shelves and...

Programme: 725 – Health Services – \$80,641,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Agency: 73 Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara

Current Expenditure

Programme: 731 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$152,211,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, under line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled – we had other technical and craft skilled staffing details increased by one, but there was an increase in \$5 million allocated for this line item. Could the Minister kindly explain?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. We have had the appointment of an assistant accountant to this programme. That would have resulted in the increase.

Dr. Norton: Increase by \$5 million... Minister, could you kindly give the salary?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, there would have been internal movement of three staff from the Public Works Department, which is Programme 733, to Programme 731, which would have resulted in the increase.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say what were the designations of those three staff before their movement?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. They were equipment operators, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings – while there were no allocations in 2011 and 2012, we have \$8 million for this 2013. Could the Hon. Minister say which buildings?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, in seeking to ensure that the project budgeting is done in the manner that it ought to, we would have brought those buildings from Public Works that were Administration buildings and we would have placed them under Administration. That is the reason for the allocation in 2013.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure – could the Hon. Minister say what other infrastructure constitutes the sum of \$2 million?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. It is the fence around the Administration compound.

Mr. Adams: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to go back to line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings. I would be happy if the Hon. Minister can list the buildings to be maintained under that head.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. The buildings are the RDC Administration Office, Vreed-en-Hoop; the sub-Region Administration Office, Leguan; the Administration Office at Wakenaam; the guard hut of Leguan and the Regional Development Officer (RDO) quarters at La Grange.

Mr. Adams: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – can the Hon. Minister say who in the region will be benefiting from this training?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, this allocation is intended to benefit the administration and accounts staff in Programme 731. Training activities such as information technology training and upgrading as well as training in the procurement regulation, an act, would be done as part of the 2013 programme.

Mr. Adams: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – there is an increase by 10. Can the Hon. Minister give me the three top positions in that 10 and their emoluments?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you, Hon. Member. The three top positions are Assistant Regional Executive Officer at \$102,367; Confidential Secretary at \$60,529; and a Clerk II General at \$55,819.

7.20 p.m.

Mr. Adams: Line item 6281 – Security Services: I note that there is a great increase in the Budget for 2013. Can you say which the security firm is?

Mr. G. Persaud: Strategic Action Security is the security firm. As I said earlier, the procurement process is at the level of the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB).

Programme: 731 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$152,211,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 731 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$10,500,000

Mr. Adams: Project code 2401700 – Land and Water Transport: can the Hon. Minister say what type of vehicle will be purchased and for whom or which department?

Mr. G. Persaud: It will be a 4x4 pickup and it is intended to be an addition to the regional administration's pool.

Mr. Adams: I am happy that it is not for the Regional Chairman, Sir.

Programme: 731 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$10,500,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 732 – Agriculture - \$235,834,000

Mr. Adams: Line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled: we notice that there are two employees in this section. Can we get the emoluments and designations of these two?

Mr. G. Persaud: They are equipment operator and labourer.

Mr. Adams: Line item 6253 – Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works: could the Hon. Minister be kind enough to list the areas where these works are to be completed and say if Aliki is included in the list of those areas?

Mr. G. Persaud: Aliki is indeed part of the works and it is \$3.2 million. Weeding and cleaning of Georgia Collector Dam - \$2.2 million; New Line irrigation channel at Vreed-en-Hoop - \$1 million; Bora sideline dam at Vreed-en-Hoop - \$1 million, Windsor Forest, Vreed-en-Hoop collector drain - \$1.5 million; Ruby main drain - \$1.5 million; Parika back main drain - \$2.1 million; Tuschen west and cross sideline dam - \$800,000; Tuschen east sideline dam - \$800,000; Tuschen middle walk dam - \$600,000; La Jalousie west sideline dam - \$1.5 million; Windsor Forest middle walk dam - \$2 million; Zeelugt east sideline dam - \$1.1 million; ‘A’ line main drain - \$1.8 million; centre line main drain - \$1.2 million; ‘B’ line tail wall to conservancy - \$1.5 million; Ruby Boerasirie Distributory - \$2 million; Kashmir middle walk - \$1 million; ‘B’ line tail line to river sluice - \$600,000; Naamryck escape channel - \$1.4 million; Parika Hydronie crown dam - \$300,000; Ruby, K16 to K18 - \$500,000; Parika west irrigation - \$2.8 million; Bonasika trench - \$3.2 million; Aliki drainage canal - \$3.2 million; Windsor Forest east sideline - \$2.4 million; La Jalousie east sideline - \$2.5 million; Nismes middle walk - \$2.3 million; Kamoni Potosi, SD 8 - \$700,000, Kamoni Potosi, SD 6 and 9 - \$700,000 each; Georgia escape channel - \$800,000; Kamoni Potosi, SD 10, 5, and 4 - \$800,000 each; Nismes sideline north - \$500,000; Nismes sideline south - \$500,000; La Retraite north No. 1 - \$400,000; La Retraite north No. 2 - \$400,000; La Retraite south - \$400,000; Cameron to Jabar - \$320,000; Kashmir sideline - \$700,000; Parika look out facade - \$610,000; Windsor Forest west sideline - \$720,000.

Should I continue, Sir?

Mr. Adams: Mr. Chairman, I would prefer if the Hon. Minister would lay that list over so that I would be able to follow the works that are happening in Region 3.

Mr. Chairman: What we will have is both. I believe that one year the Minister had said that people look forward to hearing the names of their places called. How many more do you have, Minister? Please share it.

Mr. G. Persaud: I have 87, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Where are you now?

Mr. G. Persaud: I have called about 25, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. If it is that you are at number 25, I think we get the drift and people know that you will get to Ruby backdam and elsewhere.

Mr. G. Persaud: I have not gone to the islands and so as yet, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: I think it would suffice the House if it is laid over. We appreciate, in fact, that things are happening in that region.

Mr. G. Persaud: Very well, Sir. I will bow to your guidance.

Mr. Chairman: It would be good to share copies with the Press as well because they have a right to know.

Lt. Col (Ret'd) Harmon: A follow-up question in the allocation of \$3.2 million for drainage at Aliko: could the Hon. Minister state what the scope of work envisaged for the sum of that money is?

Mr. G. Persaud: I do not have that information in my possession, save and except that it is weeding and cleaning. I am advised that it is 3,168 rods – weeding and cleaning.

Lt. Col (Ret'd) Harmon: A further follow-up, Mr. Chairman: could the Hon. Minister state what the position with the contract which was awarded to a company for the construction of a koker at Aliko which remains unserviceable and inoperable up to now is?

Mr. G. Persaud: If that had formed part of any of the Estimates, I certainly would have done my research. Unfortunately, it is not part of the Estimates and so I am sorry to disappoint the Hon. Member. But I will surely enquire and seek to provide my findings to the Hon. Member.

Lt. Col (Ret'd) Harmon: I think that is a very unsatisfactory position for the Minister to take because the Minister and the Regional Administration of Region 3 are well aware that a substantial contract was awarded for a koker at Aliko and all that is there, after over a year, is a slab of concrete which cannot be used.

Mr. G. Persaud: It is unfortunate that the Hon. Member seems to have control of even my thought process and my knowledge base. I have said what I know of this matter. I have given a commitment and it is unfortunate that I cannot do what the Hon. Member is asking me to do because I believe that we should be responsible in what we say.

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman, line item 6115 – Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled: could you say whether sluice attendants are catered for under that line item?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, sluice attendants are catered for under this line item.

Mrs. Backer: Could you indicate whether there is any sluice/koker attendant for Aliko on your payroll?

Mr. G. Persaud: The response is no.

Mrs. Backer: Could you say if during 2012 there was a koker attendant for Aliko on your payroll?

Mr. G. Persaud: I am afraid that I cannot provide you with that response now but I can check and get the answer back to you.

Mrs. Backer: Could we have a commitment from you, Sir - because this would not be outside the scope of the questions; it is part of the staffing details for 2012 – as to when you will provide us with that answer?

Mr. G. Persaud: I will do so by Tuesday of the new week.

Mrs. Backer: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: 34 of 73, 50% of the staff: could you indicate, Hon. Minister, the three highest paid employees and could you also indicate what the length of contracts of those three employees are?

Mr. G. Persaud: The 34 employees are placed in the following categories: sluice...

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister, I asked you for the top three please.

Mr. G. Persaud: I heard you, Hon. Member. Sluice attendants, rangers and labourers are the three categories of the 34 employees. The sluice attendants' salary is \$60,681; rangers - \$52,442; and labourers - \$41,083.

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister, you had indicated that line item 6115...I had asked you if the sluice attendants came under that head and you had said, yes. Of course, we are now finding out that some are also under "Contracted Employees". Could you indicate, Hon. Minister, what is the total number of koker attendants who are in the employment of Region 3?

Mr. G. Persaud: Twenty-one are under "Contracted Employees" and 12 under line item 6115 – Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled.

Mr. Adams: Line item 6255 – Maintenance of other Infrastructure: can the Hon. Minister indicate the other infrastructure to be maintained under that head?

Mr. G. Persaud: Under this head, it is intended that repairs and servicing to the river sluice at La Jalousie, Georgia, Strik en Heuvel and Tuschen will be done. I should give the cost as well. At La Jalousie, it is \$1 million; at Georgia, it is \$1.2 million; at Strik en Heuvel, it is \$1.2 million; and at Tuschen, it is \$1million.

Repairs to river sluice doors and servicing of winches and pulleys at Vergenoegen - \$900,000; servicing and repair to river sluice doors, winches and pulleys at La Retraite - \$800,000; similar activity at 'B' Line, West Bank Demerara (WBD) - \$600,000; servicing of river sluice doors, winches and pulleys to the second door at Maripa river sluice - \$800,000, repairs to river sluice, servicing to winches and pulleys at Salem, East Bank Essequibo - \$400,000; and repairs to river sluice door and servicing of winches and pulleys at Zeelugt - \$400,000.

Programme: 732 – Agriculture - \$235,834,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 732 – Agriculture - \$57,850,000

Mrs. Backer: Under this head, there is a sum of \$57.850 million and when we look at reference 295 we see four areas identified. Could the Hon. Minister share with us the sums of money which have been dedicated to each of these areas?

Mr. G. Persaud: Purchase of HDPE tubes - \$7 million; purchase of pulleys and wire ropes - \$6 million; purchase of five-tonne and three-tonne winches - \$8 million; construction of RC koker at Hog Island - \$8.85 million; construction of RC structure at Hyde Park - \$5 million; construction of river sluice door at Pouderoyen - \$2 million; construction of RC structure at Kashmir/Middle Walk - \$5.5 million; construction of RC structure at Nismes Middle Walk - \$5.5 million; construction of RC structure at La Jalousie - \$5 million; and construction of ramp and landing at Hubu - \$5 million.

Programme: 732 – Agriculture - \$57,850,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 733 – Public Works - \$78,374,000

Mrs. Backer: Line item 6281 – Security Services: Hon. Minister, could you share with us the name of the company that has been awarded this contract?

Mr. G. Persaud: It is Strategic Action Security.

Mrs. Backer: A follow-up question: Hon. Minister, could you indicate whether Strategic Action Security is the only security company which put in bid for securing the premises?

Mr. G. Persaud: As you are aware, for the advertisement for 2012/2013, a number of companies bid and those were: Roshan Khan (RK) Security Service, Brans Security Service, Home Safe Security Service, and Strategic Action Security.

In 2013, we went out to tender and, as I said, we are awaiting the decision of the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board. There were a number of companies which submitted their bids and those were: Roshan Khan (RK) Security Services, MMC Group

Guyana, Home Safe Security Service, Strategic Action Security, and Amazon and Investigation Service.

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister, could you indicate which buildings are being guarded by the Security Service?

Mr. G. Persaud: The Crane compound, Leguan Regional Democratic Council (RDC) Sub-Office, Wakenaam RDC Sub-Office, the Works compound at Plantain Walk, as well as when our machines are in the field, they benefit from the security presence.

Mr. Adams: Line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads: can the Hon. Minister list the roads which are going to be maintained under this head and what type of roads?

Mr. G. Persaud: The roads identified for maintenance under this line item are: Unity to Present Hope – Double Bituminous Surface Treatment (DBST) surface, 3,000 feet and it is estimated that \$5 million would be spent on that; roads in the Ocean View Housing Scheme – DBST surface, 3,000 feet and it is expected that \$5 million would be expended there; roads in the Tuschen area, Lally dam to be specific, DBST surface, 400 feet - \$1.8 million; and Zeelugt New Housing Scheme area, DBST surface, 2,500 feet - \$2.3 million to be expended.

Mr. Greenidge: May I ask of the Minister whether he will be good enough to give us an idea of the number of vehicles associated with line item 6264 – Vehicle Spares and Service in 2012 and 2013?

Mr. G. Persaud: Under line item 6264 – Vehicle Spares and Service, the following vehicles and equipment are part of this Programme: Toyota car PDD 4893 and that car is 20 years old; a backhoe which is 19 years old; a Caterpillar which is 18 years old; a Caterpillar Skid Steer Loader which is five years old; Skid Steer trailer which is five years old; motorcycle CC 2588 which is 15 years old, motorcycle CF 5096 which is two years old; motorcycle CF 5097 which is two years old; Nissan pickup PDD 1146 which is 22 years old; a Slasher that is five years old; a Slasher that is four years old; a Slasher that is one year old; Nissan pickup PEE 1547 that is 21 years old, Nissan pickup PDD 1145 which is 22 years old; Caterpillar bulldozer D4 which is 20 years old; and Caterpillar bulldozer D6 which is 20 years old.

Mr. Greenidge: Would you like to give us the average age of the equipment since you have given us all of those details?

Mr. G. Persaud: I like the banter at this hour.

Mr. Adams: Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: can the Hon. Minister say which buildings are to be maintained under this line item?

Mr. G. Persaud: The two buildings would be: WD 21 at Pouderoyen and WD 117 at Vergenoegen.

Ms. Selman: Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: could the Hon. Minister advise us on the other infrastructure identified for maintenance and their estimated costs?

Mr. G. Persaud: Repairs to wooden trestle WD 117 at Vergenoegen at a cost of \$1.4 million; repairs to fence, change posts, latches, chain link, mesh at WD 110 Tuschen at an estimated cost of \$2 million; repairs to fence, change posts, latches, chain link, mesh at WD 21 at Pouderoyen at a projected cost of \$2 million; and supply and delivery of posts, mud boards, chain link, mesh et cetera to the stores at Crane at a cost of \$100,000.

Mr. Adams: Is WD 117 the one at Vergenoegen?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Adams: Can you share with us which of the officers occupy that building at Vergenoegen?

Mr. G. Persaud: I am advised that it is the Accountant, Ms. Fraser.

Mr. Greenidge: Could the Minister tell us what has really happened to justify the movement that we have seen in line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings? The amount has moved from \$20 million in 2011 to \$15 million in 2012, \$15 million in the revised amount for 2012, and now \$5 million is being requested. Is it that you have changed your stock of buildings or you have forgotten to provide for them?

7.50 p.m.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. In presenting Programme 1, I would have identified the increase of \$8 million. That \$8 million would have been taken from Programme 3 to go with the administrative buildings that were removed from Programme 3 and properly placed under Programme 1.

Programme: 733 – Public Works – 78,374,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 733 – Public Works - \$107,000,000

Mr. Adams: Project code 1100400: Mr. Chairman. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to list the bridges being rehabilitated and the areas?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, rehabilitation of the bridges at Palmyra, No. 1 Main Road, Wakenaam at a cost of \$6.5 million; that would be reinforced concrete. The bridge at Zeelugt, Fisher Dam, \$5.5 million; heavy duty greenheart bridge at Sisters Village, \$4.5 million; footpath bridge at Bell West, No. 2 Canal, \$1.5 million; construction of a heavy duty reinforced concrete bridge at Bell West, Canal No. 2, \$7 million.

Mrs. Backer: Mr. Chair, through you, item 1400600 – Roads - completion, construction and rehabilitation of community roads. When we look at the reference 297 Hon. Minister we see completion of roads and also rehabilitation. Number 2 is fairly elaborate. It says, “construction and rehabilitation of roads in areas such as Canal, et cetera”. Number 1 just has completion of roads. Could you share with us in which areas these roads will be completed?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. It is Canal No. 1 where the road is to be completed.

Mrs. Backer: Could you share with us the cost please, Sir.

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, Hon. Member; \$3.541 million.

Mrs. Backer: So the balance of the \$52 million will go into what I would call sub-project two which is the construction and rehabilitation roads in those areas you mentioned.

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, Hon. Member, you are correct.

Mrs. Backer: Land and Water Transport - project code 2401700 - Purchase of Vehicle. The reference just says purchase of a vehicle. Could you indicate the type of vehicle and what is the primary function?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. It would be a 4 x 4 pickup intended for the Public Works Department to assist with project monitoring, evaluation and also monitoring and supervision generally.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you very much. Hon. Minister, through you Mr. Chair, project code 1901300 – Land Development- a sum of \$20 million. The project profile at 298 tells us that it includes the construction, rehabilitation of roads in housing schemes such as Greenwich Park, Zeelugt and Canal No. 1. The first question: are those the only three areas or will there be other areas in addition to the three listed? The second part of the question would be could you give us a breakdown of the \$20 million? Which areas will get what amount of money for rehabilitation of their roads?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. Rehabilitation at Greenwich Park will be \$6 million; Zeelugt will be \$7 million; Canal No. 1, \$7 million.

Mrs. Backer: So then Hon. Minister when you say housing schemes “such as” really those are the three?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes. Hon. Member.

Programme: 733 – Public Works - \$107,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I propose, as we did on previous evenings, not to take a formal recess. But Members are reminded that there are refreshments. Now that the monitor is in the lounge you may be able to observe what is happening in your absence, and the bell, of course, will always bring you back if there is a requirement for you to vote.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 734 – Education Delivery - \$1,664,220,000

Mr. Adams: Line item 6281 – Security Services: there is \$75.5 million for education. Is this telling us Hon. Minister, through you Mr. Chairman, that all the schools will have 24-hour security?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the response is, no.

Mrs. Backer: Could you indicate, Sir, how many will benefit from 24-hour security and how many will not be in a position to benefit from that? And those that do not have 24-hour what part of the day they will be covered by security.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, 29 nursery schools will have 8-hour service; 42 primary schools have 16-hour service; 15 secondary schools have 24-hour service; a total of 86 schools.

Mr. Adams: The 15 secondary schools would be all the secondary schools in Region 3.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member, you are correct.

Mr. Adams: Mr. Chairman, National and Other Events – line item 6291: in 2011 budgeted was \$5.4 million; in 2012 budgeted was \$5.7 million but revised was \$9.4 million; in 2013 I notice only \$6.7 million. For national and other events in Region 3, especially when it comes to the National Athletics Championships (Nationals), there is always some confusion. Can the Hon. Minister tell us why the decrease in 2013?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, there is an increase in Budget 2013 proposed as against what was allocated in 2012. However, I think the concern of the Hon. Member is the amount that was spent in 2012 as revised expenditure as against what is requested in 2013. We would have received from the Department of Education, Region 3, with regards to National Athletics and Swimming Championship a request for \$3 million to take care of that activity. They have given us a breakdown of the \$6,074,000 as provided in the Budget.

Mr. Greenidge: Mr. Chairman, on this very item, the question of National and Other Events, the amount budgeted in 2012 was exceeded by a significant amount in the year. But we see in 2013 the request is substantially less than the amount spent last year. Is the activity under this item

going to change? Have you taken into account what gave rise to the increase on the last occasion?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. I am advised that there were a number of activities, a number of fairs and so on, that required the participation of the Region in 2012, including a larger contingent to the Nationals. That would have contributed to the increased expenditure in 2012. I am advised at this point in time the administration sees the allocation as adequate, and if that is found to be incorrect we know we can come back to the Assembly.

Mr. Greenidge: No, that is why the question is being put.

Mrs. Backer: I do not think ideally that is how it should be done, Sir. But through you, Hon. Minister could you indicate to us what figure was submitted, or that you came to the House to seek approval for, in terms of the National Athletics Championships last year? In other words what part of this \$6.07 million is allocated this year for the National Athletics Championships? What was asked for last year, what was spent, and what are you putting in this year based on the knowledge you gained from last year?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, last year we came to the House requesting \$5,775,000 of which we requested \$2.5 million for Nationals. This year we are asking approval for \$6,074,000 of which \$3 million we are requesting for the National Athletics Championships.

Mrs. Backer: And the revised budget, just remind me, please, I think I may have missed it. The revised for last year is \$9.48 million. How much of that was for the National Athletics Championship?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman that information is not available here with me but I can provide it.

Mrs. Backer: I am a bit at a loss. You budgeted \$5.7 million, it came up to \$9.48 million and when asked what led to the increase you indicated that the moneys spent for the National Athletics Championship was one of the primary reasons for the increase. You said you budgeted for \$2.5 million in that allocation of \$5.7 million. What was the actual figure spent under the revised 2012 amount. You indicated that is what primarily led to the increase.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the emphasis of “primarily” is that of the Hon. Member. I did not say primarily, I said a number of variables would have contributed to the increase in expenditure in 2013. From the Department of Education and the administration I am assured that the expenditure of \$6,074,000 will meet their demands and their work programme for the year 2013.

Mrs. Backer: Just one follow-up question: could you Hon. Minister undertake to provide the House with what was the actual cost of the National Athletics Championships in this figure of \$9.482 million, your revised 2012 figure? You said you cannot do it today. Could you indicate when you can share with us what it actually cost?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, by next Tuesday.

Mr. Greenidge: Can I ask of the Minister in relation to line item 6134, which is National Insurance, what is the reason for the increase from \$87 million to \$101 million?

Mr. G. Persaud: Our staff increase would have been from 1,266 to 1,318.

Mr. Greenidge: Does that account for the entire National Insurance Scheme (NIS) increase?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, Sir.

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister, through you Sir, line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: we see 2 members of staff. Could you share with us the positions these two contracted employees hold together with their emoluments?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. A Typist Clerk I, \$41,083; a Sweeper/Cleaner, \$37,657.

Mrs. Backer: Is the sweeper/cleaner full-time, Sir.

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, this is a sweeper/cleaner based at an office.

Mrs. Backer: Could you share with us Hon. Minister what is the Government’s minimum wage?

Mr. G. Persaud: I am not sure I have that figure here with me.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you. Line item 6117 – Temporary Employees – five persons: could you indicate what positions these temporary employees hold and their salary?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. They are volunteer teachers and who get a stipend of \$30,000 per month.

Mrs. Backer: So in Region No. 3 there are only five volunteer teachers?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes.

Mrs. Backer: Could you indicate the stipend, Sir.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thirty thousand dollars.

Mrs. Backer: Nearly as much as the cleaner.

Mr. Adams: Would the Hon. Minister be willing to tell me at which schools we will find those volunteer teachers?

Mr. G. Persaud: The teachers are at Western Hogg Island Primary, Two Brothers Primary, Nismes Primary, Karia Karia Primary and Morasi Primary.

Programme: 734 – Education Delivery - \$1,664,220 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 734 – Education Delivery - \$71,580,000

Mrs. Backer: Mr. Chair, through you, project code 1203000 – Buildings – Education: the legend says, construction, rehabilitation and extension of schools, quarters and sanitary blocks. When we look at profile page 301 we see five sub-heads, as I would want to call them. Hon. Minister could you share with us the breakdown in terms of the money that will be allocated to each of these five heads because there is a total amount of \$53 million.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Construction of concrete/wooden nursery school at Zeelugt, 75 X 37, \$8.9 million; construction of concrete/wooden nursery school, Sisters Village, 75 X 37, \$8.9 million; extension of southern section Vreed-en-Hoop/No. 1 Nursery, 35 X 15,

\$4.5 million; extension of Anna Catherina Nursery, 20 X 35, \$4.5; major rehabilitation work at Merville Primary, general repairs to a two story building 30 X 170, \$8.7 million; rehabilitation of pre-vocational building at Vergenoegen, \$7.5 million; construction of concrete wooden head teachers quarters at Morasi, 24 X 30, \$6 million; construction of sanitary block at Noitgedacht Nursery School, Wakenaam, \$4 million.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you very much. Land and Water Transport, purchase of vehicle, reference 302 – the project code is 2401700. We see there the purchase of an enclosed truck. Hon. Minister could you indicate to the House what will be the main function?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, this is an enclosed canter and the intention is to assist in the movement of exercise books, school feeding supplies, and teaching/learning materials.

Programme: 734 – Education Delivery - \$71,580,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 735 – Health Services - \$620,010,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skills: there is an increase of \$5 million as compared to last year. Could the Hon. Minister give us the emoluments and the designation of the two highest paid employees?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. That is due to an increase in six staff members. The two highest paid employees are a Midwife at \$72, 656 and a staff nurse at \$68,435.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: with an increase by 11. Could the Hon. Minister again give us the salaries and designation of the two highest paid employees?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, Government Medical Officer \$310,408 and a Medical Officer \$217,571.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister differentiate between the Government Medical Officer and the Medical Officer in more detail?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, I am advised that the salary differential between the two medical officers is as a result of what salary they were transferred with from the central Ministry of Health to the regional administration.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chair, line item 6134 – National Insurance- could the Hon. Minister explain the increase for 2013?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, an increase by 32 staff members would have resulted in the increase in NIS.

Dr. Norton: Again in line item 6273 – Electricity Charges: could the Hon. Minister explain the increase for the year 2013?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, we would have had in the year 2012 a number of pieces of equipment installed and made operable at a number of health institutions across the region, including the setting up of the x-ray machine at Leguan and also other pieces of equipment in the lab at West Demerara and Leonora.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6281 – Security Services: there is an increase by \$3 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain this?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, the increase is because we have moved to increase the number of guards at the West Demerara and Leonora Hospitals, and we have also sought to extend the hours at some of our health centres.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6282 – Equipment Maintenance: there is \$14 million allotted this year under this line item. Could the Hon. Minister explain to us what equipment maintenance entails?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, the 69 air condition units, five generators, seven freezers, 54 refrigerators, two telephone intercom systems, two water pressure systems, five brush cutters, 20 televisions, 10 computers and printers, and one Risograph.

Mr. Adams: The last one line item 6113 - Benefits and Allowances. Would this be for overtime payment for the nurses Hon. Minister?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman, it is for midwives, staff nurses, rehab assistants, medical lab technicians, dental extenders, community health workers, nursing assistants.

8.20 p.m.

Programme: 735 – Health Services - \$620,010,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 735 – Health Services - \$50,400,000

Dr. Norton: Project code 1203100 – Buildings – Health: In the Legend there is, “Construction, rehabilitation, extension and upgrading of health facilities.” which includes six projects. Could the Hon. Minister say of this \$30.4 million that is allocated to this project code, what each of the six projects will entail?

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you very much Hon. Member. Mr. Chairman: Rehabilitation of the building at the West Demerara Regional Hospital that will be \$7 million; extension of the clinic building at the West Demerara Regional Hospital, 20x20, \$4 million; construction of a furnace at the Lenora Diagnostic Centre, \$4 million; extension of Karia Karia Health Post, 15x15, \$3 million; extension of the Met en Meerzorg Health Centre to accommodate a dressing room and waiting area, 15x12, \$4 million; electrical installation at St. Lawrence Health Post, \$1.4 million; construction of sanitary block at Canal No. 2 Health Centre, 4x12, \$2 million; construction at sanitary block at Karia Karia Health Post, 4x10, \$2 million and; construction of trestle and nurses’ hostel at the West Demerara Regional Hospital, 5x10x20, \$3 million.

Dr. Norton: Project code 2503100 – Equipment – Health: Could the Hon. Minister say where these equipment are earmarked for and their cost, in which \$20 million is allotted for this?

Mr. G. Persaud: Double beds: Wakenaam District Hospital - one, Leguan District Hospital - two, West Demerara Regional Hospital - one, at a total cost of \$170,000. Mattresses: Wakenaam

District Hospital - one, Leguan District Hospital - two, West Demerara Regional Hospital - one, at a cost of \$20,000 each, total cost \$80,000. Mattresses – single beds: West Demerara Regional Hospital – 24, at a cost of \$15,000 each totalling \$360,000. Refrigerators: West Demerara Regional Hospital - two, Leguan District Hospital – one; Wakenaam District Hospital - one; Lenora District Hospital - two, at a cost of \$80,000 each, total cost \$480,000. Adult wheelchairs: West Demerara Regional Hospital - two, Lenora District Hospital - one, at a cost of \$40,000 each, total \$120,000. Operating table: West Demerara Regional Hospital \$1.2 million. Dressing trays: two each for Lenora District Hospital, Leguan District Hospital and Wakenaam District Hospital, \$80,000 each, total cost \$480,000. Filing cabinets – four drawers, metal: West Demerara Regional Hospital – three, Lenora District Hospital – two, Leguan District Hospital – one, Wakenaam District Hospital - two, at a cost of \$50,000 each, total cost \$300,000. Six industrial stand fans: West Demerara Regional Hospital - two, Lenora District Hospital - two, Leguan District Hospital – one, Wakenaam District Hospital – one, at a cost of \$50,000 each, total cost \$300,000. Air condition units, 36,000 BTU: West Demerara Regional Hospital – one and the other at Leguan, \$400,000 each, total cost \$800,000. Cardiac monitors: West Demerara Regional Hospital, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) - two, \$360,000. EKG machines: West Demerara Regional Hospital ICU - two, at a cost of \$200,000, total cost \$400,000. Suction machines: two for the West Demerara Regional Hospital at a cost of \$902,000 each, total cost \$1.8 million. Incubators: West Demerara Regional Hospital – two, \$1.5 million each, total \$3 million. Infusion pumps: West Demerara Regional Hospital - two, \$60,000 each, \$120,000 total. Stethoscope: six for the West Demerara Regional Hospital (Outpatient), \$15,000 each, total cost \$90,000. Film hatch West Demerara Regional Hospital, X-ray department, \$300,000; film hopper West Demerara Regional Hospital \$90,000...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, how many more do you have to go there? Some of this information can be shared.

Mr. G. Persaud: Two pages more.

Mr. Chairman: No. Dr. Norton, with the greatest of respect, would you agreed to having this document pass to you in printed form?

Dr. Norton: Sure Sir.

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes Sir, as requested.

Mr. Chairman: I would urge that from the Members on both sides.

Mr. G. Persaud: Sir, thank you very much, if that pleases the Hon. Member, I will so do.

Mr. Chairman: I hope it does.

Programme: 735 – Health Services - \$50,400,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, thank you. We will be having a recess from the regions, as we consider the important matter of National Security. We will resume consideration of the regions on Monday. Thank you, officers, for your kind assistance.

Agency: 51 Ministry of Home Affairs

Current Expenditure

Programme: 511 – Secretariat Services - \$448,071,000

Mr. Ramjattan: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Hon. Minister I noticed that there has been a, almost, 33% increase here from 62 to 94 contracted employees and a \$50 million increase in salaries. Could you state what the designations are of the Contracted Employees, generally?

Minister of Home Affairs [Mr. Rohee]: Thank you Mr. Chairman. The Contracted Employees, starting with the Permanent Secretary, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Michael Atherly...

Mr. Ramjattan: I do not want all their names.

Mr. Rohee: Oh sorry. Coordinator of the Hinterland and Border Security, the Coordinator of the Task force on Fuel and Smuggling and Contraband, the Head of the Immigration Support Services, the Coordinator of the Stray Catcher Programme, the Treaty Officer, a Personal Assistant to the Minister, the Head of the Sophia Holding Centre...

Mr. Ramjattan: If I may intervene, if it is going to be a long list, could we be provided with that list?

Mr. Rohee: Sure.

Mr. Ramjattan: Thank you very much. I notice in line item 6292 – Dietary: Expenses have jumped from zero to \$13 million. Could you state why that jump?

Mr. Rohee: This increase has to do with the increased allocation to feed inmates at the Juvenile Holding Centre, in Sophia. We have there on an average of 40 inmates at that holding centre.

Mr. Ramjattan: The line item almost immediately below that, 6294 – Other: It is rather vague there. I notice a jump of almost \$12 million. What is that “Other” supposed to mean and why that jump?

Mr. Rohee: We have established the Computer Incidence Response Team which is to address incidences of the hacking of computers and other Information Technology (IT) related issues. This is also to cater for community policing, the Stray Catchers Programme, the Juvenile Holding Centre and the Secretariat.

Mr. Ramjattan: What in relations to that makes it “Other”. What are the sums for really; expenses for what?

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with line item 6294.

Mr. Ramjattan: Yes, but what are the expenses there for?

Mr. Rohee: Community Policing, Stray Catchers, Intelligence, Juvenile Holding Centre, the Secretariat...

Mr. Ramjattan: Is it payments for those people.

Mr. Rohee: Yes.

Mr. Ramjattan: Okay thanks.

Mr. Rohee: As well as the activities.

Mr. Ramjattan: Line item 6321 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations: I notice there is also a massive jump from \$85 million to \$134 million and I notice at page 402, Local

Organisations, a substantial jump made of Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit (CANU). Could you explain why that jump of some \$45 million?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, you would recall that in last year's Budget there were certain issues with respect to CANU and where it was located. CANU now falls under this line item 6321. In addition to CANU, we have the recently established Gaming Authority, the Parole Board, the National Commission for Law and Order and the National Road Safety Council, as well as a subvention to the Guyana's Legion. These are contributions as well as activities related to these bodies.

Mr. Ramjattan: Yes, well it has been placed under the proper Ministry, but what will be the expenditures of an extra 40 and plus million for CANU? That is the question; from \$63 million to 100 and something million.

Mr. Rohee: CANU was paid only for eight months in 2012 from the Ministry of Home Affairs. No we are catering for the entire budget for CANU. In addition to that, we have the Gaming Authority, which falls under the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Gambling Act.

Mr. Nadir: Under that same head, line item 6321 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations: This is a lot of money we are sending to CANU, would the Minister kindly say what has been the progress or successes that CANU has seen, especially last year and similarly, for the National Commission on Law and Order?

Mr. Chairman: Do you want to mention only the successes or its failures too?

Mr. Nadir: Some of the challenges too.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, the challenges have been more than the successes. The challenges will always be more than the successes in the fight against the trafficking of narcotics. CANU has however, over the past year scored significant successes which I think was widely publicised in the media. If the Hon. Member wishes to have a score sheet so to speak of the challenges and successes of CANU, we are certainly willing to provide that.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, do you know this House has a Committee known as the National Security Sector Committee, which needs to get going to receive reports in camera of this nature and so forth, but Members do not seem to be anxious about this Committee.

Mr. Nadir: Mr. Chairman, I want to take you back to line item 6134 – National Insurance: The staffing complement increased by 28, but the NIS actually will decrease from the actual of last year. Is there an anomaly there; is there a special explanation for that? We do not want workers not to get their benefits.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that the workers will certainly get their benefits. The Contracted Employees are paid under a separate line item; the NIS benefits are paid under a separate line item. In addition to that the explanation lies in the fact that a certain amount of officers retired, as well as resigned from the staff.

Programme: 511 – Secretariat Services - \$448,071,001 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 511 – Secretariat Services - \$693,938,000

Mr. Ramjattan: Project code 1208500 - Citizen Security - \$643,052,000: The Citizen Security Programme, I understand it is a pretty lengthy document. Could that document be shared with...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member that document was shared some time ago in this House. It is also available on a number of websites, but it was shared I believe in the Ninth Parliament. It is a very public document. *[Interruption]* But I am sure that the Minister, nonetheless, will still oblige by providing the Member with a copy of the Citizen Security Document.

Mr. Ramjattan: Can I have back a copy? I understand it was circulated in the Ninth Parliament.

Mr. Chairman: Not for the entire House.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, certainly.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Mr. Ramjattan: In relations to the vehicles, I notice in project code 2400500 Land Transport: Purchase of vehicles, how many vehicles will be purchased here and to whom will they be designated?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, the two vehicles are to be bought here, one for the Minister, who does not have a vehicle and never had one. He has been using the police vehicle; he does not know to drive in fact; he never learned to drive. The other vehicle is for the Ministry.

Mr. Ramjattan: Project code 2600800 Office Equipment and Furniture – Home Affairs: Sir, will this also be for your Ministry?

Mr. Rohee: As well as the holding centre.

Mr. Ramjattan: Will it also be for the juvenile centre?

Mr. Rohee: The Juvenile Holding Centre.

Mr. Ramjattan: Where is that again?

Mr. Rohee: Sophia.

Mr. Chairman: Minister, while Mr. Ramjattan searches, what about the facilities for women? I have always been concerned about the one at East La Penitence Police Station. I do not think that it meets international standards. Something really should be done to lift women and the custody of women. I think we need to do something better along those lines.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, I fully agree with that. We have noted all the criticisms that have been made about the East La Penitence Police Station lock up for women. It is my intention to have that matter addressed in 2013.

Mr. Chairman: I hope so. Thank you.

Mr. Lumumba: Mr. Chairman, line item 1208500 - Citizen Security: Can the Minister tell this Hon. House whether the structures that have been constructed under the Citizens Security Programme are accessible to the citizens of the community and if he can name a few of them?

Mr. Rohee: These would include the Rapid Impact Projects that have been built in Region Nos. 4 and 6. Most of them would be play fields, basketball courts and facilities for mainly sporting activities and computer centres in both of these regions. I do not have the specific villages, I know where some of them are located or where most of them are located. But again here, that information can be provided to the House.

Mr. Nadir: Under that same line item, I heard an announcement by the Minister some time ago about places in communities; I forgot what he called them, where citizens can go to access a number of services. I want to know under this line item, if some of those facilities are catered for here and in which communities will the first set be operational?

Mr. Rohee: I believe the Hon. Member is referring to the Houses of Justice, which are to be established primarily, in the first instance, in Region Nos. 2 and 3. The villages have been identified on the Essequibo Coast and the Pomeroon, as well as on the West Coast of Demerara. These facilities are aimed at providing services to persons after 4.00 p.m. where they can deal with issues such as NIS, birth certificates, electricity bills and matters which are of great interest to many citizens.

Mr. Chairman: Such as? The name House of Justice does connote that one can find justice there. In other words, the demand placed on the facility maybe greater than it could provide because persons may get the sense that they can go there for justice by its very name. I hope you can keep it under review.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, if I may. This concept was taken from a number of Latin American countries, for example, Columbia, where citizens need this kind of service, in terms of conflict resolution. There may be issues that persons have that the police needs to help them to resolve and so forth.

Mr. Chairman, if I may. In the view of many persons, justice for them does not mean going to a court, it means getting their business done where they are entitled to. Thank you.

Question put

Ms. Teixeira: Division!

Mr. Chairman: Officers you will have to withdraw momentarily for a few minutes please.

Bell rang.

Mr. Ramjattan: I had a motion in which I had proposed a cut; I am not prosecuting that motion.

8.50 p.m.

Committee divided: Abstained 6, Ayes 25, Noes 30, as follows:

Abstained

Mr. T. Williams

Ms. Marcello

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe

Mrs. Hughes

Mr. Nagamootoo

Mr. Ramjattan

Noes

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

Mr. Greenidge

Mrs. Backer

Dr. Norton

Mr. B. Williams

Ms. Ally

Dr. Roopnarine

Brigadier (Ret'd) Granger

Ayes

Mr. Jaffarally

Mr. Damon

Dr. Persaud

Rev. Dr. Gilbert

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. Sukhai

Ms. Webster

Mr. G. Persaud

Ms. Manickchand

Mr. Benn

Dr. Anthony

Mr. Ali

Dr. Ramsaran

Dr. Westford

Mr. R. Persaud

Dr. Singh

Mr. Nandlall

Dr. Ramsammy

Mr. Rohee

Motion carried

Programme: 511 – Secretariat Services - \$693,938,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 512 – Guyana Police Force - \$6,194,429,000

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6131 - Other Direct Labour Costs: Hon. Minister, can you explain the increase of so many millions? It has gone up from \$208 million to \$219 million. Can you explain how you are going to spend these moneys?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, this has to do with salary-related allowances for new recruits to the Guyana Police Force.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Salary increases. Hon. Minister, are every one of them getting salary increases and how much? Thank you.

Mr. Rohee: The answer to that is “yes”.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Is it 5%, 10%? How much is the increase?

Mr. Nadir: Mr. Chairman, under line item 6302- Training: there is almost a 50% increase from \$27.8 million to \$56 million. Can the Minister just give us an indication of what new innovative training is going to be provided to the Guyana Police Force in 2013?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, this increase has to do with the new thrust to provide training to the ranks of the Guyana Police Force. This comprises of internal training courses where 300 ranks are to be trained in internal courses. Then there are internal seminars where a total of 546 ranks are to be trained. There are overseas training courses where 115 ranks are to be sent abroad for training. This brings us to a total of 1,783 ranks that are to be trained locally and overseas in 2013.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Mr. Chairman, I had asked just now what percentage the rise in salaries would be. I did not get an answer. Thank you.

Mr. Rohee: This is a fixed allowance which the ranks receive and it has nothing to do with a percentage of an allowance that is given to them. It is a fixed allowance.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Hon. Minister, can you give us an idea of this allowance, please? Thank you.

Mr. Rohee: There is a Commuters Allowance which the ranks receive on becoming a member of the Force and that is to the tune of \$4,400.

Ms. Marcello: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am looking at line item 6284- Other: can the Hon. Minister indicate what some of the things he is catering for under this line item, Other, are?

Mr. Rohee: This cost has to do with rental of radio sets and the payment for internet services.

Ms. Marcello: Thank you, Minister. Line item 6242- Maintenance of Buildings: can you tell this House which buildings you are maintaining under this line item, please?

Mr. Rohee: There are a number of buildings: Head Quarters, including the living quarters for members of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) as well as for the senior ranks, living quarters; the Administrative Building of the Felix Austin Police Training College, the Mess as well as the Ruimveldt Living Quarters, the Brickdam Lockups, living quarters for the Blairmont Police Station ranks; two living quarters, Compound 1 and Compound 2; the living quarter for the officer in charge of Springlands; the living quarters at No. 51 Police Station, two living quarters at the two compounds; living quarters at Cove and John; living quarters for the

Commander of the division at Leonora; living quarters at Leonora as well and the Police Station at Charity.

Programme: 512 – Guyana Police Force - \$6,194,429,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 512 – Guyana Police Force - \$685,500,000

Mr. Nadir: Under Project Code 2600100: if I may direct the Hon. Minister’s attention to page 231 of volume 3. I note there that it says purchase of a whole lot of things including narcotics. Is that a misprint or do we actually buy narcotics for testing and things like that?

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with equipment; not actual narcotics but equipment to test narcotics.

Mr. Nadir: Hence, Mr. Chairman, could we then advise that it be properly reflected because it looks here as... It says “communications, narcotics,...”

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, would the Minister say if the word “narcotics” listed here is the narcotics bought for the sniffer dogs that work at the airport because that has to be done from time to time?

Mr. Chairman: Equipment?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, the equipment has to do with digital scales as well as day-vision binoculars. Those are the two pieces of equipment for that purpose.

Ms. Marcello: Programme Code 2400400 - Land and Water Transport: I am looking at the purchase of vehicles. How many vehicles are intended to be purchased this year and if Mahdia Police Station would be a beneficiary of one of these vehicles?

Mr. Rohee: There are a number of vehicles – one 26-seater minibus, eight 4x4 double cab pickups, one canter truck (long base), one cater truck (short base), two All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and most likely these ATVs are to be used in the interior of the country; there are also crash trucks as well as motor cars with flashing lights and sirens.

Ms. Marcello: Mr. Chairman, through you, can any of these vehicles from this fleet of vehicles be assigned to Mahdia Police Station, please?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, the Minister really does not have command over vehicles. When the Minister hands over the vehicles to the Commissioner the Commissioner would then determine, on the basis of the request from the various Commanders, who gets what but the Minister is not involved in those matters, as such.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Programme Code 1200700 - Police Station and Buildings: I see here, Hon. Minister, you have four different heads. Can you please say how much money is being allocated to each head? Thank you.

Mr. Rohee: Would the Hon. Members be kind enough to repeat the question, please. I was somewhat distracted.

Mr. Chairman: Could you repeat the question?

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Police Stations and Buildings: For the description of project you have four Heads; you are asking for \$200,000. How much money is going to be allocated to each head? Thank you.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of projects that are ongoing from 2012. The retention cost for ten projects which will roll over to 2013 is \$35.7 million and the new buildings for 2013, which amount to 11, will amount to \$136.1 million.

Programme: 512 – Guyana Police Force - \$685,500,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 513 – Guyana Prison Service - \$1,049,145,000

Programme: 513 – Guyana Prison Service - \$1,049,145,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 513 – Guyana Prison Service - \$191,407,000

Programme: 513 – Guyana Prison Service - \$191,407,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 514 – Police Complaints Authority - \$29,794,000

Mr. Nadir: Mr. Chairman, I am just checking the Estimates. Under 2012 I see “Administration” at zero, but under the “actual” we have spent \$524,000 under that item. This is line item 6111-Administrative: I am just finding out if there actually was a person in 2012 and may that person may have worked a part of 2012.

Mr. Rohee: The Hon. Members is quite correct. The person did work part of 2012, so now we have one officer there.

Programme: 514 – Police Complaints Authority - \$29,794,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 514 – Police Complaints Authority - \$520,000

Programme: 514 – Police Complaints Authority - \$520,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 515 – Guyana Fire Service - \$620,683,000

Programme: 515 – Guyana Fire Service - \$620,683,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 515 – Guyana Fire Service - \$182,977,000

Programme: 515 – Guyana Fire Service - \$182,977,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 516 – General Register Offices - \$110,890,000

Programme: 516 – General Register Offices - \$110,890,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Is it the word “register” or “registrar’s”? “Register”?

Mr. Rohee: “General Register” that is where the register of all the births and deaths are kept.

Mr. Chairman: It sounds a little funny.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 516 – General Register Offices - \$7,000,000

Programme: 516 – General Register Offices - \$7,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, this concludes our business for today. I wish you all a very good weekend. Officers of the Ministry of Home Affairs, thank you for your time. I wish everyone a quiet weekend. For those who are interested the suspect in Boston has been captured alive. See you all on... Members do not forget that your vegetables as a gift from the Guyana School of Agriculture. Hon. Members, we have not adjourned formally. The officers may... I know it is the weekend but please. We resume in Assembly, please, and, Hon. Minister Rohee, could you move the requisite motion for us to adjourn to Monday? The Hon. Deputy Speaker may be taking us through the paces on Monday. I will have to discuss with her.

Assembly resumed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Speaker, I wish to move that the honourable House stand adjourned until Monday at 2.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, we stand adjourned until Monday, 2.00 p.m., when we will resume consideration of the regional budgets. Have a good weekend everyone and good night. Thank you.

Adjourned accordingly at 9.14 p.m.