

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 71<sup>ST</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**  
**SESSION (2012-2014) OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 2.00 P.M.**  
**ON MONDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2014**  
**IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,**  
**BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN.**

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)**

**Speaker (1)**

The Hon Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

**MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (34)**

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

Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, O.E., M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

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

Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P., Minister of Agriculture

Hon. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica),  
Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Absent)

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

Hon. Dr. Ashni K. Singh, M.P., Minister of Finance

Hon. Robert M. Persaud, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne),  
Minister of Natural Resources and Environment

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

2.

Hon. Dr. Bheri S. Ramsarran, M.P., Minister of Health

Hon. Mohamed I. Alli, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

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

Hon. Brindley H.R. Benn, M.P., Minister of Public Works

Hon. Priya D. Manickchand, M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice),  
Minister of Education

Hon. Jennifer I.M. Webster, M.P., Minister of Human Services  
and Social Security

Hon. Pauline Campbell-Sukhai, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

\*Hon. Dr. Nanda K. Gopaul, M.P., Minister of Labour

Hon. Alli Baksh, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam),  
Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture

Hon. Norman A. Whittaker, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini),  
Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development

Hon. Bishop Juan A. Edghill, M.S., J.P., M.P., Minister in the  
Ministry of Finance

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., Government Chief Whip

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

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

Mr. Ganga Persaud, M.P.

**\*Non-Elected Minister**

3.

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

Mr. Odinga Lumumba, M.P.

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

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

Dr. Vishwa D.B. Mahadeo, M.P.

Rev. Dr. Kwame A. Gilbert, M.P.

\*\*Mr. Joseph Hamilton, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Health

Dr. Vindhya Vasini Persaud, M.S., M.P.

Mr. Cornel Damon, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam)

Mr. Faizal M. Jafarally, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

**Members of the Opposition (33)**

**(ii) Members of A Partnership for National Unity(26)**

Brigadier (Ret'd) David A. Granger, M.S.S., M.P., Leader of the Opposition

Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, M.P.

Ms Amna Ally, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Deputy Speaker  
of the National Assembly

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Dr. George Norton, M.P.

**\*\*Non-Elected Member**

4.

Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret'd) Joseph F. Harmon, M.S.M., M.P.

Mr. Ronald A. Bulkan, M.P.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Dawn Hastings-Williams, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr. Winston Felix, D.S.M., M.P.

Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P.

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

Mr. Sydney Allicock, M.S., M.P.

Ms Africo Selman, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Desmond Trotman, M.P.

Mr. James A. Bond, M.P.

Mr. Jaipaul Sharma, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

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

Mrs. Mabel Baveghems, M.P.

Mr. John Adams, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Mr. Christopher A. Jones, M.P.

Mr. Renis Morian, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

Ms Rennita L. Williams, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

Miss Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

**(iii)Members of The Alliance For Change (7)**

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

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

Mrs. Catherine Hughes, M.P.

Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P.

Dr. Veersammy Ramayya, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Ms June Eula Marcello, M.P. (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)

Mr. Trevor Williams, M.P.

**OFFICERS**

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

Ms Hermina Gilgeours, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly (a.g.)

**COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING**

The Sitting commenced at 2.28 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk read the prayers.

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### **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**

The Speaker made the following announcements:

#### **(1) Death of Mrs. Deborah J. Backer**

“Hon. Members, it is with very deep regret and sorrow that I wish to inform you formally of the passing of Mrs. Deborah Jan Osman-Backer, former Deputy Speaker and Member of this House, who passed on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2014, at her residence after a prolonged illness. At the time of her demise, Mrs. Backer was 54 years old.

Mrs. Backer first became a parliamentarian in the month of January of 1998, that being the Seventh Parliament of Guyana following the elections on 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1997. She was one of the 25 Members of the People’s National Congress whose names were extracted from their list of candidates. Due to circumstances that were prevailing at the time did not, like the rest of us, take up her seat until 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1998. Mrs. Backer went on to serve, as well in the Eighth Parliament from 4<sup>th</sup> May 2001, until that Eighth Parliament was dissolved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2006.

She returned to the House as a Member again to serve in the Ninth Parliament serving from 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 until that Parliament was dissolved on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2011. Again, Mrs. Backer returned for this Tenth Parliament when it was first convened on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2012, and on that date, we would all recall that Mrs. Backer was elected as Deputy Speaker of this House.

She has acted in various capacities at times as Opposition Chief Whip, in the absence of Mr. Carberry in the Eighth and Ninth Parliaments. She was also a Member of numerous Committees including the Committee of Privileges, the Committee on Appointments, the Parliamentary Management Committee, the Special Select Committee on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Amendment Bill.

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She has tabled, which is before us now, the Married Persons Property (Amendment) Bill, which we are led to believe will gain the support of Government as the Prime Minister had previously indicated. Only last Wednesday, Mrs. Backer wrote me indicating that the Hon. Member Volda Lawrence will take up the mantle of responsibility and pilot that Bill on her behalf.

During her tenure as a Member, Mrs. Backer laid six Motions in the National Assembly, some of which were endorsed by the House and some of which did not succeed. She has, as we know, been a Member up until 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2014, when she tendered her resignation owing to ill health.

Recently, Mrs. Backer along with some of our former colleagues who are present with us was honoured as being one of the outstanding female Members of Parliament for her long and distinguished service. Before I invite Members to stand in observance of one minute of silence, I would invite the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition and/or Mr. Ramjattan, if you so desire, to give very brief comments.”

Brig. (Ret'd) David Granger, M.S.S., M.P., Leader of the Opposition, Mrs. Catherine Hughes, M.P. and the Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs joined the Speaker in extending sympathy to the family of Mrs. Backer.

Thereafter, a Minute's silence was observed.

(2) **Seminar on Minority Governance**

“Hon. Members, I wish to announce that the National Assembly of the Parliament of Guyana in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), along with the British High Commission, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Parliament of Scotland proposed to hold a two-day seminar on the theme “Managing through Partnership”

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on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Attending are likely to be two Members of Parliament from Scotland, who are coming to speak on their experiences on working in a minority Government construct, along with Professor Robert Hazell of the University of London. Professor Hazell is considered the world's leading authority on governance and more particularly on minority governance. We have been working assiduously to put together a programme and that seminar is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Due notice will be sent to every Member as to the activities that will follow.”

(3) **Receipt of Revised Laws of Guyana**

“Hon Members, I wish to note as well that we have received three volumes of the revised Laws of Guyana in purple. We wish to thank the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs for that gesture to the House.”

(4) **Recognition of Birthdays**

“Hon. Members, we recognise that in the month of March we had several birthdays. They were for Dr. Vishwa Mahadeo, Mr. Jaipaul Sharma, Ms. Jennifer Wade and today of course Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe.”

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-**

(1) By the Minister of Finance:

Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of Guyana for the financial year 2014.

(Circulated)

(2) By the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment:

The Protected Areas (Board of Trustees Additional Members) Regulations 2014 – No. 3 of 2014.

(Circulated)



**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-****For Written Replies****1. CARIBBEAN AIRLINES – FLAGSHIP CARRIER STATUS****Member Asking:** Mr. Carl Greenidge, M.P.**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Public Works

On Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2014, Caribbean Airlines BW 483 landed on time and was due to leave Piarco Airport at 8.30 p.m. as part of a feeder from Miami and Washington. On arrival at Piarco, the passengers going on to Georgetown were told to stay on board. After all the other passengers had disembarked, Georgetown bound passengers were told to leave the plane and to wait at the top of the stairs in the terminal. Once in the terminal they were immediately shepherded into the waiting area room, movement in which was very restricted for over an hour.

In view of the 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2013 announcement by Minister Benn to the effect that the CAL has been granted flagship carrier status for Guyana, would the Minister be good enough to indicate:

- (i) Whether the negotiation of this status for CAL involved any requirement by the Government of Guyana and a matching commitment from the CAL management to eliminate discriminatory treatment imposed on Guyana bound and departing passengers on this route, one of the airline's most lucrative routes?
- (ii) If so, what quality and range of services, including arrangements for the transfer and checking-in of transit passengers at Piarco, has the Government of Guyana required CAL to fulfil and over what period of time?
- (iii) Whether the Government has in place any mechanism for monitoring the quality of services provided to passengers since January, 2013? If so, what have been the findings up to the end of the last review period?

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- (iv) What has been the direct financial recompense and non-financial benefits, if any, the Government of Guyana has received in return for this grant of the route rights or national carrier status to CAL?
- (v) How does this compare with what was received before 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2013?  
**(Notice Paper No. 283 (Q 185 Opp. 183) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answers:**

- (i) “ The flag carrier status granted to Caribbean Airlines is route specific to operate direct services out of Georgetown; hence, there was no requirement for Caribbean Airlines in this regard to address discriminatory treatment of Guyanese at Piraco Airport. Notwithstanding this, the sore issue of Guyanese being subjected to harassment and discrimination was discussed with CAL and they promised to address the quality of their customer service, especially to Guyanese. It must be noted that there was no written agreement between Caribbean Airlines and the Government of Guyana.

Passengers transiting Piarco Airport and being subjected to Security Screening are not an airline issue, but a responsibility of the State to satisfy its international obligation under the International Civil Aviation Organisation and a requirement of the US Transportation Security Administration for all airlines operating into the United States.

- (ii) The issue of customer service was raised with CAL and they had promised to improve their quality of services to Guyanese passengers. Since November, 2013, United States bound passengers transiting Piarco Airport were allowed to remain onboard the aircraft providing it's the same equipment continuing the journey as opposed to

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- coming off and being re-screened. This practice was as a result of the US Transportation Security Administration approving the Alternate Procedure for CAL in November, 2013. Prior to this passengers were escorted from the aircraft through Security Check Point and into the waiting Lounge.
- (iii) The discussions held with CAL were done in good faith; there was no written commitment from both parties. CAL was the only operator providing air services to New York when the Government met with them.
  - (iv) There is no direct financial compensation for granting CAL the rights to operate direct services out of Guyana, however, there are numerous non-financial benefits which eliminate the hassle of transiting in Trinidad, convenience and time saving for travelers, more direct commerce and tourism opportunities between the United States, Canada and Guyana, etc.
  - (v) The action of the US DOT to deny CAL the right to fly direct between Guyana and New York resulted in passengers still needing to go through Trinidad. Based on my comments for question (ii), there is improvement in the customer service to passengers travelling through Trinidad.”

## 2. ELECTRICITY DISCOUNT FOR PENSIONERS

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Human Services and Social Security

Could the Hon. Minister tell this House:-

- (i) How many pensioners applied during 2013 for electricity discount?
- (ii) How many pensioners qualified and how many were disqualified?

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(iii) What was the major areas for disqualification?

(iv) Could the Minister provide the number of recipients by region?

**(Notice Paper No. 284 (Q 186 Opp. 184) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answers:**

(i) “7,283 pensioners applied during the year 2013, for the electricity subsidy.

(ii) Of the 7,283 pensioners who applied, 7,026 pensioners were eligible, while 257 pensioners did not qualify to receive the electricity subsidy.

(iii)The major areas for disqualification were:

(a) The name on the electricity account was notably different to the name on the pension book and the identification submitted. In such a case the pensioner was asked to support his/her application with an ‘Affidavit of Identity’.

(b) There were some instances where the electricity accounts were not active accounts i.e. monthly bills were not being generated as a result of a termination of service.

(c) Pensioners not being account holders of Guyana Power and Light Inc. meters

(iv)The number of recipients by region are listed below:

<b>Region</b>	<b>Number of Pensioners</b>
2	898
3	951
4	2,985
5	619
6	1,456
7	117

3. **FUNERAL ASSISTANCE**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Human Services and Social Security

Could the Hon. Minister provide this House with the number of applicants for funeral assistance for 2013, and how many received 100% and how many received partial assistance?

**(Notice Paper No. 285 (Q 187 Opp. 185) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answer:**

“There were 62 applicants for funeral assistance in the year 2013. 47 applicants were assisted with the \$30,000 funeral grant, 8 applicants received more than \$30,000, but not the entire amount of the sum requested, whilst 7 applicants received 100% assistance.”

4. **DRAINAGE WORKS DONE IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH OF GEORGETOWN DURING THE YEARS 2012 AND 2013**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Agriculture

Could the Hon. Minister inform this House of the following:-

- (i) What were the total amount expended for drainage works done in the North and South of Georgetown during the years 2012 and 2013, respectively, by the Drainage and Irrigation Authority?
- (ii) What were the main works done in both the South and North during 2012 and 2013?
- (iii) What was the cost for each project?

**(Notice Paper No. 286 (Q 188 Opp. 186) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answers:**

“The responsibility for drainage and flood control in Georgetown is the responsibility of the Mayor and City Council of Georgetown. The National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA) provide support through Community Drainage & Irrigation Project (CDPI).

- (i) A total amount of G\$46,612,320 and G\$41,770,320 was expended for the years of 2012 and 2013, respectively for the cleaning of internal community drains.
- (ii) The works entail cleaning of internal drains in seventeen (17) areas in 2012 and 2013 as listed in appendix 1 and 2 (Attached).
- (iii) The cost for the cleaning of internal drains is given in appendix 1 and 2 (Attached).”

**5. THE FAMILY COURT**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Could the Hon. Minister inform this House what are the factors which have inhibited the Family Court from being operationalised in 2013, and whether the Guyanese people will benefit from its use in 2014?

**(Notice Paper No. 287 (Q 189 Opp. 187) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answer:**

“The major factors which inhibited the Family Court from coming into operation in 2013 were the difficulties encountered in acquiring specialized and custom-made furniture and furnishings for the Court. This process is now being concluded with the final set of furniture and furnishings being built presently.

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This process will be concluded within 3 months from the date hereof. When this is completed the building will be handed over to the Judiciary and it is the Judiciary that will determine when the Court will come into operation.

It is the expectation of the Executive that the Court will come into operation as soon as possible and certainly during 2014.”

**6. 2013 BUDGET ESTIMATES**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Finance

Could the Hon. Minister provide a list of persons and/organisations, amounts and projects for which monies were allocated for 2013 from budget estimates page 414, Line Item numbers 1900400 and 4400700, respectively?

**(Notice Paper No. 288 (Q 190 Opp. 188) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answer:**

**See Appendix (iii)**

**7. UPGRADING OF THE LINDEN TO LETHEM ROAD**

**Member Asking:** Mr. Sydney Allicock, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Public Works

- (i) What is the current National Plan for upgrading of the Linden to Lethem road?
- (ii) Is there a proper road alignment based on the original trail through Frenchman, which is shorter and less challenging to maintain?

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- (iii) Is there a plan to begin construction of proper steel and cement bridges before the rains in May, 2014?
- (iv) Is there a record with the estimated loss of lives, cargo and vehicles from 1992 to date, and if so, can this be shared?
- (v) What is the total cost of funds used on the Linden to Lethem road, bridges, culverts, etc., from 1992, to present?

**(Notice Paper No. 289 (Q 191 Opp. 189) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answers:**

- (i) “The Minister of Public Works annually maintains the Linden Lethem Roadway to ensure that it is safe for commuters to use throughout the year. Currently, there are plans to Asphalt this roadway. A feasibility study was done by SNC Lavalin which looked at the possibility of asphaltting this roadway and the benefits that would be derived from an improved road (data from studies are with the Ministry). The Ministry of Public Works is currently in consultation with the Government of Brazil reviewing the studies that were done to make a determination of how beneficial this road link would be for the two countries and the benefits it will derive for South America, Europe and the Caribbean.

The Government is reviewing two options:

- To have the road completed via a Private Public Partnership with the Government of Brazil; or
- Seek Funding from the IDB to have the road completed.

- (ii) The road alignment through Frenchman is indeed shorter, but is not the best alignment for this roadway. Section of this roadway is white sand that tends to get very swampy



during heavy torrential rainfall and this would affect commuters during this period and defeats the purpose of an all weather road.

There is no proper road construction material within close proximity of the Frenchman section of the alignment. However, there is the option of trucking the material into the area, but from calculation it is very uneconomical for such an operation. The current alignment being used has the advantage of the many lateritic pits along the route and the hauling distance is greatly reduced; this allows for regular maintenance at a much reduced cost.

(iii) These alternatives are being looked at, some proposals were put forward in the studies and would be considered if found to be feasible. It should be noted that there are 66 bridges located on this roadway therefore the cost of replacing these bridges would be significant; especially since there is a shortage of aggregates and the increasing cost of construction materials. However, it must be noted that the Ministry will continue with maintenance of the bridges; there are no plans to do any reconstruction before May, 2014.

(iv) There are no records in respect of the items listed in the Ministry. However, between 2012 and 2013 there were serious accidents that resulted in 6 fatalities. There were other accidents during this period with 1 being serious and 2 resulted in damage only. The figures stated are those accidents that were reported and recorded.

The Ministry of Public Works has placed several traffic signs along the Linden Lethem road which will assist commuters using the roadway. Signs are placed at dangerous curves, approaches to bridges and other points along the road for safer use of the road.

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(v)

	Road	Bridges
2008/2009	201M	97M
2010/2011	285M	30M
2012/2013	177M	30.5M
2014 to current	250M	65M

**8. TYPES OF INSECTICIDE AND FERTILIZER USED IN THE NORTH RUPUNUNI**

**Member Asking: Mr. Sydney Allicock, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Agriculture**

- (i) Can the Hon. Minister inform the National Assembly what type of insecticide and fertilizer was/is used on the Santa Fe Farm in the North Rupununi and has there been an environmental impact assessment?
- (ii) According to information, because of the soil type, triple use of fertilizer and insecticide which was used and which produces the same as the coastland. Can the Hon. Minister say whether this is true and would it not be a threat to the eco-system of the wetlands of the North Rupununi in the rainy season?

**(Notice Paper No. 290 (Q 192 Opp. 190) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answers:**

- (i) “Santa Fe Farms engaged the Environmental Protection Agency from the onset. They complied with all requirements of the EPA and Santa Fe Farms were provided with an Environmental Licence to proceed with the farm.

Santa Fe Farms do not at this time use any herbicide.

Santa Fe Farms use the following Chemicals for pest control:

Karate = 150ml/ha

Pronto = 50g/ha

Rates for the use of the above chemicals are established by the relevant agencies and are standard across Guyana. Use of lower amounts will not result in the pest control that is necessary and can lead to dangerous resistance against the particular chemical. We do not recommend use below the recommended amounts.

Santa Fe Farms use the following Fertilizers

Urea = 2.4 bags/acre

6:25:25 = 4 bags/acre

These rates are comparable to the range of rates use on coastal lands. Rates are dependent on soil type. The MOA has recommended that farmers test their soils and utilize rates in accordance with test results. The rates uses at Santa Fe Farms are consistent with the results of soil testing.

We are unaware of rates utilized at Santa Fe Farm that are outside of the recommended rates. We monitor use of fertilizers and our reports do not indicate abnormal use of fertilizers.

- (ii) The MOA, through our agencies, such as the Pesticide and Toxic Chemical Board, NAREI and GRDB have been monitoring the developments at Santa Fe.

We are satisfied that Santa Fe Farms are in compliance with good agriculture practices. We will continue to rigidly monitor the practices at Santa Fe Farms. We do not believe that the present practices in the use of fertilizers and chemicals for pest control represent a threat to the environment in Region 9.

The 6:25:25 refers to mixed fertilizers of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium. Some farmers on the coast prefer the use of single fertilizers, instead of mixed fertilizer blends. Mixed fertilizer blends have the advantage of slow release of nutrients to plants. Except for Nitrogen, the other nutrients are fixed in the soil and do not represent a threat.

Rice variety at Santa Fe is an upland variety. Like different varieties used on the coast, nutrient requirements vary. Thus, unlike chemicals used to control pests, rates of fertilizers used vary in range, depending on variety of rice used and on soil characteristics.

The Pesticide and Toxic Chemical Board, NAREI and GRDB monitor use of chemicals to ensure compliance with recommendations for fertilizers and pesticides. As far as we are aware, Santa Fe Farms are in compliance with these recommendations.

These chemicals do not persist in the environment. Guyana is a signatory of the Stockholm Convention and the Montreal Protocol which obligates Guyana to phase out Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) and Persistent Organic Pesticides (POP). These are approved chemicals and are not listed for phasing out by any of the global agreements Guyana has signed on to.”

**9. CONSTRUCTION OF THE PARAMAKATOI PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. June Marcello, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Education

- (i) Could the Hon. Minister tell this House why construction of the Paramakatoi Primary School, Region 8 that started in April, 2012, has not been completed?
- (ii) Could the Hon. Minister tell this House when construction of the Paramakatoi Primary School would be completed?

**(Notice Paper No. 293 (Q 195 Opp. 193) published on 2014-02-13)**

The Minister of Education did not pass copies of the answer to the above question to the Clerk of the National Assembly for circulation to Members at that sitting, as required by Standing Order No. 22(4).

**10. LICENSED FIREARM HOLDERS**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. June Marcello, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Home Affairs

- (i) Whereas Licensed Firearm Holders are having great difficulties in obtaining ammunition; and whereas they have been told that they cannot obtain this if their guns do not have ballistic marks; and whereas it is expensive and costs \$48,000 to travel to Georgetown to obtain ballistic marks. Can the Minister send a team to Region 8 once a year to help firearm holders obtain ballistic marks?

- (ii) Can selected Police Stations and or Outposts in Region 8 stock ammunition for sale to licensed holders of firearms?

**(Notice Paper No. 294 (Q 196 Opp. 194) published on 2014-02-13)**

**Answers**

“In the year 2005 a decision was taken to ensure that the weapons of all licenced firearm holders are test fired and the records kept of the relevant ballistic markings. This process is being done on a phased basis. The difficulties that may have been or are likely to be experienced by licenced firearm holders in remote areas are being addressed by the Ministry of Home Affairs in consultation with the Guyana Police Force.

In respect of the sale of ammunition to the respective licenced firearm holders, the Ministry of Home Affairs will initiate action to ensure that the Guyana Police Force implement a viable system where ammunition could be made available to licenced holders in Region 8 and other interior locations, taking into consideration also the security implications of the exercise.

Licensed firearm dealers are not located in those areas, hence the reason for some of the difficulties experienced by licenced firearm holders in acquiring ammunition.”

**11. LIST OF ENTITIES DESIGNATED AS EXTRA-BUDGETARY AGENCIES**

**Member Asking:** Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Finance

Could the Hon. Minister provide to the Assembly:-

- (i) A list of all the entities which have to date designated as Extra-Budgetary Agencies in keeping with the 2003 Fiscal Management and Accountability Act?

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- (ii) Those entities which have had such status changed since they were first designated?

**(Notice Paper No. 295 (Q 197 Opp. 195) published on 2014-02-25)**

**Answer:**

“No entities have been so “designated”.

**12. STAFF EMPLOYED BY NICIL**

**Member Asking:                      Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:                The Minister of Finance**

Could the Hon. Minister provide this House with:-

- (i) The composition of the current Board of NICIL?
- (ii) A list of the staff currently employed by NICIL?
- (iii) The names, designations and employment experience immediately, prior to their joining the management of the entity, of the three (3) most senior staff members of NICIL?
- (iv) A copy of the advertisement of the vacancies for these positions?

**(Notice Paper No. 296 (Q 198 Opp. 196) published on 2014-02-25)**

**Answers:**

- (i) “Hon. Dr. Ashni Singh – Chairman;  
Dr. Roger Luncheon – Director;  
Ms Sonya Roopnauth – Director;  
Mr. Nigel Dharmalall – Director;  
Mr. Winston Brassington – Director.

(ii) Please see Appendix IV attached.

(iii)(1) **Winston A.M. Brassington**

**Hiring and Experience History:**

- Employed by the World Bank in November, 1994 to serve as Senior Financial Analyst to the Privatisation Unit, Government of Guyana (position advertised publicly and funded via World Bank project loan to the GOG);
- Promoted to Executive Secretary and Head (ag) (Privatisation Unit) in 1995 (position subsequently funded by IDB);
- Confirmed as Executive Secretary and Head of the Privatisation Unit around 1997;
- Assumed additional position of Executive Director of NICIL from start of 2002;
- Have served as Head of Privatisation Unit and NICIL since 2002 to date;

**Qualifications:**

- Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting (summa cum laude), Marywood University, Pennsylvania, USA;
- Master of Business Administration (Distinction), University of the West Indies;
- Completed US Certified Public Accounting (CPA) exams
- Certificate of participation (non-degree) from Harvard University (Kennedy School of Government) course on “Infrastructure in a Market Economy”
- Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification 1994 – immediately prior to joining Privatisation Unit, served as Finance Controller for a private group of companies in Guyana involved in construction, furniture manufacturing, hotel ownership, and consulting.



**(2) Marcia Nadir-Sharma, Deputy Chief Executive Officer**

**Hiring and Experience History:**

- Employed February, 2000, as Legal Officer of the Privatisation Unit following general application submission;
- Promoted in 2002 to Head of Project Co-ordination Department, PU/NICIL;
- Promoted in 2004 to Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Company Secretary (NICIL).

**Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's Degree in Law (Merit) 1996;
- Certificate of Legal Education (1998);
- Master of Law: Specialised in Commercial and Corporate Law (2012);

1 year private practice experience and 4 years on the job experience prior to assuming role in management of the entity.

**(3) Punaram Chanderban, Chief Projects Finance Officer**

**Hiring and Experience History:**

- Hired as Financial Analyst in January, 2005 (position advertised publicly in 2004);
- Assumed Finance Controller role (renamed CFO) in April, 2005 following departure of previous FC;

**Qualifications:**

Chartered Accountant (ACCA Affiliate)

Auditor at Ram & McCrae (2004); Demerara Bank (2000)

(iv) The appointment of the top three (3) senior positions were as a result of internal promotions.”

**13. RESIGNATION OF MR. MIKE BRASSINGTON AS CEO OF NICIL**

**Member Asking:**                      **Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:**                **The Minister of Finance**

In March 2012, subsequent to the declaration of the 2011 General Elections results, Mr. Mike Brassington announced his resignation as CEO of NICIL. Will the Hon. Minister indicate Mr. Brassington's:

- (i) Job description and Terms of Reference up to that time?
- (ii) What is his current position in the entity and his changed terms of reference?

**(Notice Paper No. 297 (Q 199 Opp. 197) published on 2014-02-25)**

**Answer:**

“I am advised that no person by the name of “Mike Brassington” is, or has ever been, employed at NICIL.”

**14. CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD TO AMAILA FALLS HYDRO PROJECT**

**Member Asking:**                      **Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:**                **The Minister of Finance**

In 2009, NICIL awarded a contract for the construction of the road to Amaila Falls Hydro Project. Will the Hon. Minister indicate:-

- (i) Who cleared the specifications for the road and the role of the Ministry of Works in the preparation of the tender documents for the tender and specs?

- (ii) The cost of the amendment of the specifications of the Amaila road contract, undertaken after the termination of the contract with Synergy?

**(Notice Paper No. 298 (Q 200 Opp. 198) published on 2014-02-25)**

**Answers:**

“No such contract was awarded in 2009. On 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, a Contract Agreement for the construction of the Amaila Falls Access Road and Transmission Line Clearing was entered into between Synergy Holdings Inc. and the Government of Guyana, represented by the Ministry of Public Works and the National Industrial and Commercial Investments Limited (NICIL).

- (i) The specifications were provided by Sithe Global and reviewed by NICIL and the Ministry of Public Works. Given that the contract was jointly executed by both NICIL and the Ministry of Public Works, the tender documents were jointly reviewed by the two contract parties in consultation with Sithe Global.

It should be noted that the tender was publicly advertised, and the specifications (based on a design-build type contract) were part of the tender package, and a pre-bid site visit was arranged. The tenders received were reviewed by a 3-person evaluation team comprising of Mr. Walter Willis, Mr. Leon Goring, and Mr. Gordon Gilkes, and the evaluation report was submitted ultimately to Cabinet for its no-objection.

During the course of construction in 2012, the scope was revised after taking account of third party inspections of the terrain, environmental consideration, maintenance requirements and the detailed negotiation ongoing with China Railway First Group.

- (ii) The cost of the amendment of the specifications of the Amaila Falls Access Road Contract amounted to US\$1.9 million, taking the contract sum of Synergy Holdings Inc. to US\$17.3 million. This was the contract cost with Synergy Holdings Inc. when the contract was terminated. The current cost of construction of the Amaila Falls Access Road, taking into account the separation of the project into lots and separate tendering, now amounts to US\$23.8 million, as increase of US\$6.5 million from the revised contract sum with Synergy Holdings Inc. The current costs include both changes in specifications and other changes in costs since 2010.”

**15. REPAIRS DONE TO TOYOTA LAND CRUISER PLL 6278**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development

- (i) Can the Hon. Minister say how much money was spent in 2012, to repair Toyota Land Cruiser PLL 6278 in Region No. 8?
- (ii) Can the Hon. Minister say if the contract for the repair to the Land Cruiser was awarded by the Regional Tender Board of Region No. 8?
- (iii) Can the Hon. Minister say if the money for the repair to the vehicle was spent against Line Item 6264 of the Regional Budget 2012, for Region No. 8?  
**(Notice Paper No. 300 (Q 202 Opp. 200) published on 2014-02-25)**

**Answer:**

“The following repairs were done to vehicle PLL 6278 in 2012. This vehicle was unserviceable at the time; the need for working vehicle to execute the mandate of the Region necessitated the repairs, which included:

- (a) Complete change of all under carriage parts
- (b) New Bearings and Bushings
- (c) Electrical Works
- (d) Engine Parts
- (e) Servicing
- (f) Alignment
- (g) Breaks System

Date of Repair	Contractor	Vehicle	Cost
2012/12/17	G. Ramcharitar	PLL 6278	\$565,200
2012/11/07	M. Willie	PLL 6278	\$150,000
2012/01/20	G. Ramcharitar	PLL 6278	\$460,000
2012/05/21	G. Ramcharitar	PLL 6278	\$220,000

**16. REPAIRS DONE TO TOYOTA LAND CRUISER PKK 2288**

**Member Asking: Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development**

- (i) Can the Hon. Minister say how much money was spent in 2012, to repair Toyota Land Cruiser PKK 2288 in Region No. 8?

- (ii) Can the Hon. Minister say if the contract for the repair to the Land Cruiser was awarded by the Regional Tender Board of Region No. 8?
- (iii) Can the Hon. Minister say if the money for the repair to the vehicle was spent against Line Item 6264 of the Regional Budget 2012, for Region No. 8?  
**(Notice Paper No. 301 (Q 203 Opp. 201) published on 2014-02-25)**

**Answer:**

“The following repairs were done to vehicle PKK 2288 in 2012. This vehicle was unserviceable at the time; the need for working vehicle to execute the mandate of the Region necessitated the repairs, which included:

- (a) Complete change of all under carriage parts
- (b) 5 new Mud Terrain Tyres
- (c) New Shocks and Bushing
- (d) Engine Parts
- (e) Servicing
- (f) Alignment
- (g) Breaks System
- (h) Replacement of Automatic Transmission

Date of Repair	Contractor	Vehicle	Cost
2012/07/17	Action Tyre	PKK 2288	\$1,409,382
2012/12/14	Action Tyre	PKK 2288	\$63,800
2012/12/28	Action Tyre	PKK 2288	\$498,000

**17. CONTRACTS AWARDED BY THE REGIONAL TENDER BOARD OF REGION  
NO. 8 FOR THE YEARS 2012 AND 2013**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and  
Regional Development

Can the Hon. Minister provide this House with a list of all contracts; including the dates awarded, monetary allocations and the name(s) of the contractor/company, awarded by the Regional Tender Board of Region No. 8 for the financial years 2012 and 2013?

(Notice Paper No. 302 (Q 204 Opp. 202) published on 2014-02-25)

**Answer:**

See Appendix V

**18. NATIONAL OPHTHALMOLOGY HOSPITAL**

**Member Asking:** Dr. Vishwa Mahadeo, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Health

Could the Hon. Minister say:-

- (a) What kind of services were offered over the years?
- (b) When was Laser Surgery started?
- (c) Is Retinal Surgery being done at the facility?

- (d) What number of persons had procedures done at the facility?
- (e) How many persons from out of Guyana accessed and received services at the facility?
- (f) How many Guyanese Ophthalmologists were trained over the last five (5) years?
- (g) How long will the Cuban Brigade continue to manage this facility?

**(Notice Paper No. 303 (Q 205 PPP/C Private Member 1) published on 2014-02-28)**

**Answers:**

(a) “(i) Surgical Procedure

- Cataract Surgery (Blumenthal Technique)
- Pterigium Surgery
- Minor Surgery
- Laser Treatment:

Posterior Bag Capsulotomy. (Caterata laser) – a non invasive laser procedure to eliminate the cloudiness that occasionally interferes with a patient’s vision after cataract surgery.

Iridotomy, (Glaucoma laser) – treatment for narrow angle glaucoma

(ii)Intravitreal Injection

(iii)Other services

- Refraction
- General ophthalmology consultation
- Internal medicine consultation
- Retina Consultation
- Refractive surgery consultation
- Pre and post surgery consultation
- Ocular ultrasound



- Pachymetry – a visual field test that produces a map of your complete field of vision. This test helps to determine whether your vision has been affected by glaucoma.
- Laboratory
- Pharmacy
- EKG

(b) August 9, 2009

(c) Retinal surgery is currently unavailable

(d) Results obtained (July, 2009 – December, 2013)

• Number of cases seen in consultation	-	124,454
• Total surgeries performed	-	7,354
• Total cataract surgeries	-	4,006
• Total Pterygium surgeries	-	2,694
• Total laser	-	654

<b>(e) Countries</b>	<b># of Patients</b>
Trinidad & Tobago	7
St. Lucia	3
Cayman Island	3
Suriname	12
Venezuela	10
Brazil	5

However, there is good reason to believe that scores of Guyanese residing in Suriname have already accessed services.

(f) Four Guyanese Ophthalmologists

(g) The Cuban Medical Brigade will continue to manage this facility until such time that our young Guyanese doctors take up post graduate studies and are qualified to serve. The Ministry of Health is building the capacity with the training of Cuban-trained Guyanese graduate doctors as Ophthalmologists. The Ministry of Health continues to train technical support staff such as Refractionist to complement the Specialists.”

**MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND  
MOVED BY A MINISTER-**

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS NOS. 10(2) AND 38(9)(a)**

The Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Standing Orders Nos. 10(2) and 38(9)(a) be suspended to enable the Minister of Finance to complete uninterrupted the reading of the Budget Speech for 2014 at the sitting of the National Assembly on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2014.

**(Notice Paper No. 304 (M 99 Govt. 34) published on 2014-03-18)**

The motion was then put and carried.

At 2.42 p.m., the Members of the Alliance For Change withdrew from the Chamber.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

(i) **GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

**BUDGET FOR 2014**

In accordance with Article 171(2) of the Constitution, the Minister of Finance signified that Cabinet had recommended that the National Assembly should proceed upon the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2014.

The Minister then moved the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2014 of the total sum of \$205,370,518,000 excluding \$14,676,143,000 which is chargeable by law (See Appendix VI).

The Minister of Finance read the Budget Speech.

The motion was then proposed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 5.53 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m. on Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2014.

.....  
**HON. RAPHAEL G.C. TROTMAN, M.P.,**  
**Speaker of the National Assembly**

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

**24<sup>th</sup> March, 2014.**

