

National Assembly Debates

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE FIRST SESSION (2001) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA
UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE RE-
PUBLIC OF GUYANA**

15TH SITTING

2.00 PM

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)

Speaker (1)

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

Members of the Government - People's Progressive Party/Civic (34)

- The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P. - *Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications*
- The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, O.R., J.P., M.P. - *Minister of Parliamentary Affairs*
- The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P. - *Minister of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation (Absent)*
- The Hon. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P. - *Minister of Local Government and Regional Development*
- The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P. - *Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport*
- The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P. - *Minister of Education*
- The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P. - *Minister of Finance*
- The Hon. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P. - *Minister of Housing and Water*
- The Hon. Navindranauth O. Chandarpal, M.P. - *Minister of Agriculture (Region No.4 - Demerara/Mahaica)*
- The Hon. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P. - *Minister of Home Affairs (Region No. 3-Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)*
- The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P. - *Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security*
- The Hon. Clinton C. Collymore, M.P. - *Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development*

The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P.	- Minister of Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)
*The Hon.S.Rudolph Insanally, O.R, C.C.H, M.P.	- Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Foreign Affairs
*The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P.	- Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Absent on Leave)
The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P.	- Minister of the Public Service (Absent)
The Hon. C. Anthony Xavier, M.P.	- Minister of Transport and Hydraulics
The Hon. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P.	- Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/ West Demerara)
**The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.	- Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce (Absent)
The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues, M.P.	- Minister of Amerindian Affairs
The Hon. Dr Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P.	- Minister of Health
Mr S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P.	- Chief Whip
Mr Cyril C. Belgrave, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.	- (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)
Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.	
Mr Husman Alli, M.P.	- (Region No. 7 -- Cuyuni/Mazaruni)
Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.	
Mrs Indranie Chandarpal, M.P.	
Mr Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P.	- (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)
Mrs Shirley V. Edwards, J.P. M.P.	
Mr Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.	
Mr Heeralall Mohan, M.P.	- (Region No.2 -Pomeroon/ Supenaam)
Mr Ramesh C. Rajkumar, M.P.	- (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/ Corentyne)
Mr Kumkaran Ramdas, M.P.	
Mr Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.	- (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/ Corentyne)
Dr Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.D., M.P.	
Mrs Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H, J.P, M.P.	- Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Water (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)
Mrs Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P.	

*Non-Elected Minister

**Elected Member from The United Force

Members of the Opposition (30)

(i) People's National Congress/Reform (27)

Mr. Hugh Desmond Hoyte, S.C., M.P.	- <i>Leader of the Opposition</i> - (Absent on Leave)
Mr. Robert H. O. Corbin, M. P.	- (Absent)
Mr. Winston S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P.	(Absent on Leave)
Mrs Clarissa S. Riehl, M.P.	- <i>Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly</i>
Mr E. Lance Carberry, M.P.	- Chief Whip
Mr Ivor Allen, M.P.	- (Region No.2-Pomeroon/ Supenaam)
Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.	- (Absent)
Mr. Deryck M.A. Bernard, M.P.	
Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M.P.	- (Absent on Leave)
Mr. Raphael G. C. Trotman, M.P.	
Mr Vincent L. Alexander, M.P.	- (Region No.4-Demerara/Mahaica)
Mr. Andy Goveia, M.P.	- (Absent)
Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.	
Dr Dalglish Joseph, M.D.,M.P.	
Miss Amna Ally, M.P.	- (Region No.5-Mahaica (Berbice) (Absent on Leave)
Miss Sandra M. Adams, M.P.	- (Region No.10-Upper Demerara/ Berbice) (Absent)
Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P.	- (Absent)
Dr George A. Norton, M.P.	
Miss Myrna E. N. Peterkin, M.P.	- (Region No.4-Demerara/Mahaica)
Mr. James K. McAllister, M.P	- (Region No.3-Essequibo Islands West Demerara
Miss Lurlene A. Nestor, M.P.	- (Region No. 4-Demerara/ Mahaica)
Mr Abdul Kadir, J.P., M.P.	- (Region No.10-Upper Demerara/ Berbice)
Mr Ricky Khan, M.P.	- (Region No.1 - Barima/Waini)
Mrs. R. Bancroft, M.P.	- (Region No.8 - Potaro/Siparuni)
Mr Nasir Ally, J.P., M.P.	- (Region No.6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)
Miss Judith David, M.P.	- (Region No. 7-Cuyuni/Mazaruni)
Miss Genevieve Allen, M.P.	- (Region No.4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

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

Mrs Sheila V.A. Holder, M.P.	- (Absent-on Leave)
Mrs Shirley J. Melville, M.P.	- (Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

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

Mr Ravindra Dev, M.P.

OFFICERS

Mr. Frank A. Narain, C.C.H., Clerk of the National Assembly

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

PRAYER

The Clerk read Prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Leave

Hon Members, leave has been granted to the Hon Doodnauth Singh, S.C., and Hon Member Mr Desmond Hoyte for today's sitting, Hon Member Mr Winston Murray up to 15th September, 2001, Hon Member Mr Stanley Ming up to 4th September, 2001, Hon Member Miss Amna Ally for today's sitting and the Hon Member Mrs Sheila Holder up to 18th August, 2001.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS ETC.

(1) By the Speaker:

Report of the Ombudsman for the year 1999

(2) By the Prime Minister:

(i) Annual Reports (5) of the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission for the years 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1998.

(ii) Annual Report of the Guyana Gold Board for the year 1999.

(3) By the Minister of Education:

Annual Report of the Ministry of Education for the year 1998.

(4) By the Minister of Finance:

(i) Financial Paper No. 1/2001 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$608,987,331 for the period 27th November, 2000 to 29th December, 2000 - Advances made from the Contingencies Fund.

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

- (ii) National Development Strategy (2001 - 2010) A Policy Framework.
- (iii) Investment Code

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

Suspension of Standing Order No. 68

The Speaker: Hon Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.

Hon Reepu Daman Persaud: Mr Speaker, I wish to move the motion standing in my name.

Be it resolved that this National Assembly approve of the suspension of Standing Order No. 68 to enable Financial Paper No. 1/2001 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$608,987,331, for the period 27th November, 2000 to 29th December, 2000 - Advances made from the Contingencies Fund to be considered at the Sitting on Thursday 9th August, 2001.

I so move.

Question put and agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

The following Bill was presented and read the first time:

By the **Hon Prime Minister Samuel AA Hinds:**

ACQUISITION OF LANDS FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 2001 - Bill No. 11/2001

PUBLIC BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 1/2001

The Speaker: Hon Members, the Assembly will resolve itself into Committee of Supply to consider Financial Paper No. 1/2001.

In Committee

The Chairman: Hon Members, as this is the first Financial Paper for consideration by the Assembly of this Parliament, I would like to advise Members, particularly new Members, of the procedure for consideration of the Paper.

The Supplementary Estimates shown on the Financial Paper are in respect of sums which have been advanced from the Contingencies Fund and which have already been spent. They are in respect of the period 27th November, 2000 to 29th December, 2000.

The Assembly is required, by resolution, to approve of the Supplementary Estimates. After the Minister of Finance has formally moved the motion, the Committee of Supply will consider the proposals in the Financial Paper. This Paper, which you have before you, has two (2) sections, Section A, which is the Current Estimates, one (1) page with four (4) items, and Section B, which is the Capital Estimates, one (1) page with eleven (11) items.

Members may ask questions on items and Ministers may respond.

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

After consideration by the Committee of Supply, the motion will be put. The Assembly will then resume and the Minister of Finance will report to the Assembly on the matter; the question will be put to the Assembly for a decision.

Therefore, Hon Members, I now call upon the Minister of Finance to move the motion.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, in accordance with Article 171:2 of the Constitution I signify that Cabinet has recommended for consideration by the Assembly the motion for the approval of the proposal set out in Financial Paper No. 1/2001, Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$608,987,331 for the period 27th November, 2000 to 29th December, 2000, advances made from the Contingencies Fund.

I now move the motion.

SECTION 'A' CURRENT ESTIMATES

The Chairman: Hon Members, the motion is proposed. We will now consider the proposal in the Financial Paper, Section A, Current Estimates. Any questions?

Hon Member, Mr Carberry.

Mr E Lance Carberry: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Mr Chairman, with respect to Item 1, Agency Code 03/2, Ministry of Finance, Chart of Account - 162, this item is to meet shortfall in expenditure regarding overseas conferences. Could the Hon Minister say how many conferences, which countries they were held in, how many persons attended these conferences and whether they were all from the Ministry of Finance? If they were not all from the Ministry of Finance, could he state which other Ministries they were from?

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, that sum represents a block sum for the entire system, all the Ministries. With respect to the number of conferences, I do not have all the information but I can say that we did have some additional meeting with respect to the CGX issue. Meetings were held in Suriname and Jamaica and we also had to take the press there as well. So I would say that there were several meetings, additional conferences, plus the exchange rate fluctuations were compensated for. Let me say that if there are any other details that are missing I will endeavour to present it to the Hon Member.

Mr E Lance Carberry: Mr Chairman, I would just like to ask the Hon Minister if the information is not available could he submit it in writing as soon as possible?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Thank you. Any other questions?

Hon Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Thank you. Item 3, Ministry of Agriculture. Code 508.

The Chairman: We are not yet on Section B, Mr Allen. If you have any questions on Section A.

Hon Member Deryck Bernard.

Mr Deryck Bernard: Section A, Item 3, Books were printed, who were the printers, please?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, I am afraid I do not have that detail at this moment but I can promise to have the details sent to the Hon Member.

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

The Chairman: Hon Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Minister of Local Government under Item 2, Code 05/01, to indicate which are the completed projects which were commissioned, which are the outgoing projects which were expected and which communities were consulted?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I must say that in our Ministry there are two Ministers and one Parliamentary Secretary hence the desire to go around and visit various communities.

Region No. 1:

Hosororo - commissioning of new Primary School.

Lower Aruka - meeting with residents of Lower Aruka Creek and Simatu Creek. *[Laughter]*

Koriabo - Barima River, Red Hill, Black Water, meeting with residents to discuss their problems pertaining to water and education.

Almond Beach - commissioning of new school.

Hobadiah, Hotoqui, Sacred Heart - meeting with residents and discussing economic projects including a chicken farm at Hobadiah, a sheep rearing project at Hotoqui and a health centre at Sacred Heart.

Warapocka - meeting with residents to inspect construction of new school which is being built by SIMAP. That school is ready for commissioning.

The Chairman: Hon Minister could you pause for one moment. Would I be correct in saying, Hon Member Alexander, that you asked for examples? *[Laughter]* Or a summary?

Mr Vincent L. Alexander: I think the Minister is giving the required

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

answer. I am prepared to listen and I would very much like to have a copy of the answer.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I haven't finished with Region No. 1, I was at Warapocka, that is, in the Waini River, for your information, a small Amerindian community about ninety (90) miles from the mouth of the River.

Santa Cruz - meeting with residents and discussing problems concerning construction of a new school which will soon be ready for commissioning.

Kwebanna - meeting with residents there and discussing problems with the nursery school and arranging to commission the new primary school.

Region No. 7

Batavia - an Amerindian community in the Cuyuni River, meeting with residents and discussing problems of health, education, transportation and logging. They have a health centre but no health worker. The health worker was on leave.

Itaballi - meeting with the residents who need to have a police outpost and a housing area established.

Agatash - there are problems of erosion of the river and land titleship for the people of which we discussed.

Imbaimadai - meeting with residents, discussing problems of health, air transportation, mining and water pollution.

Paruima, Waramadan and Jawalla - meeting with residents, discussing problems and presenting solar panels and brush cutters.

Kamarang - meeting with Administrative Staff and business community, discussing problems of littering, environment, water

supply and electricity.

Region No. 8

Monkey Mountain - meeting with residents on need for a bigger school, water pipes extension and medical supplies.

Paramakatoi and Kato - meeting with residents, discussing problems of construction of school building, etc.

Kurukabaru, Itabac and Kanapang - meeting with residents and walking along new road alignment to Orindiuk. Inspected new Guest House at Orindiuk and also discussed problems of medical supplies for the area.

Region No. 9

Katoka - commissioned a new health centre.

Yupukari - new nursery school commissioned.

Kaicumbai - held meeting with residents, discussed the question of a new school for a growing community and additional space for population.

Kaimata - meeting with residents and inspecting progress of work on construction of teacher's house.

Krashwater - commissioning of new health centre and discussing the question of a new school.

Shirriri - commissioning of new health centre.

Katur - (called Little Sand Creek) commissioning of new health centre.

Yakarinta - commissioning of new health centre, new nursery school and new primary school.

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

Taushida - meeting with residents and discussing problems of pure water supply and the new road.

Tiperu - commissioning of new school and health centre.

Rukumuta, commissioning of new school.

Mr Chairman, Region Nos. 1, 7, 8 are hinterland areas, so to access one has to use plane in most cases that is why the supplementary estimates were necessary. That is for commissioning and meeting of residents.

Mr Chairman, I have a list, the following are schools under construction and are likely to be completed by the beginning of the new school year in the various regions with indications of the executing Agencies. I discussed new schools and I can now tell you how many we have to commission now, if you need more answers I have it here. There are two Ministers and one Parliamentary Secretary to use this money, so we feel it was justified.

Thank you very much. *[Applause]*

The Chairman: Hon Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Speaker, a supplementary question, in the four regions mentioned, were the regional chairpersons and/or councillors invited to accompany the Minister, and could he indicate in which of those Regions this did, in fact, happen?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I do not know if I have to invite Chairman and Vice Chairman and so forth. But whenever I go into the Region the administration and officials are aware. In many cases they do accompany me.

The Chairman: Hon Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Hon Minister, could I request a copy of the

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

report of what was done for Region No. 9?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Sure.

The Chairman: Any other questions for Section A? Yes, Hon Member McAllister.

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, Item No.4, Agency Code 31/2, Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Public Works, Maintenance of Roads. Could the Minister say whether these roads, under Remarks, were programmed to be executed in the 2000 Estimates? If they were not, what factors resulted in them being identified half way through the year? What resulted in the significant increase in expenditure of this head over 1999 and 1998? In 1998 the Ministry expended approximately \$11M, in 1999 approximately \$16M. I wish to also ask the Minister if he can state what method the Ministry used to determine, from the numerous roads across the country and in the city, which road is to be rehabilitated? Who were the contractors used to execute the works?

The Chairman: Hon Minister.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, the answer to the first question is no.

The answer to the second one is that this was at the behest of citizens who are under duress travelling on some of these streets every day of their lives.

The answer to the third question ... I really and truly can't remember the question.

Question four, this was done by force account, the Ministry of Works, and the bulk of this money was for the materials to repair the potholes in the streets and overlay some sections of the roads.

The Chairman: Hon Member McAllister.

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

Mr James K McAllister: I did ask the Hon Minister what was responsible for the significant increase in expenditure over 1999 and 1998.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: The increase was due to an increase of works, Sir.

The Chairman: Thank you. Hon Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Through you, I would like to ask the Hon Minister, under Item 4, Agency Code 31/2, with reference to Durban Street which specific section of the street was repairs effected to under this Section?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: I really cannot say which section, Mr Chairman, but I can provide the answer to the Hon Member.

The Chairman: Hon Member Mr McAllister.

Mr James K McAllister: As it relates to Princess Street, could the Minister say which section of Princess Street was rehabilitated?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: I do not know the section, Sir, but I can provide that answer too to the Hon Member later.

The Chairman: Thank you. Yes, Hon Member, Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, could the Minister state whether maintenance adequately describes what took place on Princess Street or whether it was rehabilitation? If in fact it was rehabilitation why was it placed under this head?

Hon C A Xavier: Mr Chairman, it was road maintenance.

The Chairman: Thank you, Hon Member. Those are lots of follow-ups. Yes, Hon Member.

Mr James K McAllister: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. The

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

final follow-up. Could the Minister say what the maintenance works in Princess Street entailed? Was it base, sub-base work, the wearing course, drainage works?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Patching of potholes.

The Chairman: Thank you, Hon Members.

SECTION 'B' CAPITAL ESTIMATES

The Chairman: Hon Member, Mr Trotman.

Mr Raphael GC Trotman: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman.

Section B, Item 1, Agency Code 501, Marine Development - GDF: could the Hon Minister say whether, in fact, the work for the construction of the new wharf costs \$42M? If so what gave rise to this increase by \$18.8M? What has happened to the existing wharf at the Coast Guard installation?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, my recall is that when work began it was found that much more had to be done and I know that we are invited to go and see the commissioning of that wharf by 3:30 p.m. once the Hon Members allow the Assembly to be concluded by that time.

The Chairman: Hon Member, Mr Trotman.

Mr Raphael GC Trotman: Mr Chairman, firstly, we are here to do the people's business, it is not a matter of releasing anyone from this Chamber.

Secondly, can the Hon Minister then admit or say that the item described as construction of a wharf is improperly done. He said that when works commenced it was realised that further works were needed. It would mean that there was an existing wharf and there was rehabilitation of an existing wharf. Therefore the remarks column

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

is perhaps in need of amendment.

Thank you.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think, Mr Chairman, this may be a matter of degree. There was a wharf there and it was in a very poor condition. We set out to bring it to an acceptable condition . . . *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Hon Members, kindly allow us to complete our business.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: ... and having begun the work, more work was done than was anticipated. I think it is a matter of degree whether you speak of rehabilitation or construction.

The Chairman: Any other questions? Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Item 3, Agency Code 508, Ministry of Agriculture: could the Hon Minister say what percentage of the \$100M for which approval is being sought was spent in Region No. 2 and what percentage was spent in Region No. 6? Could he also say from the amount spent in Region No. 2, if any work was done in the Aberdeen/Koja area or in the Hackney/Koja area (noting that these expenditures were incurred in 2000)?

Item 4, Agency Code 510, MMA: could the Minister say how we justify this expenditure in light of the fact that since 29th December, 2000 MMA proceeded to dismiss rangers? I rather suspect that if we had rangers we would not have had cause for this type of expenditure. I refer to the dismissal of Mr Leyland Paul and Mr Michael London, rangers, which occurred after expending \$37M plus dollars on sealing breeches.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Hon Minister.

Hon Navin O Chandarpai: Mr Chairman, first I will like to clarify

this that the information in the case of Region Nos. 2 and 6 is not totally correct; it includes also 3, 4 and 5. It is 2 to 6.

As far as Region No. 2 is concerned the specific area that was asked for would have been done during this year not last year. The amount spent in Region No. 2 in the Pomeroun for last year would be, to the extent of \$2.5M. Most of the other works in Region No.2 were carried out during the course of this year. That, I think, would give 2.5% of the \$100M for last year.

On the question of the MMA, the linkage that was attempted does not really hold because the works that were carried out here were done because there were areas of the conservancy that were determined to be in very bad shape. This work was done to make sure that the conservancy was brought to a state of readiness for any increase in volume of water. We could not take the chance, and, in fact, that in itself was not a completion of the task, only a part of it was completed last year and more had to be done this year.

The question of rangers as employees is that since the levels of production in the MMA have been affected during the current problems facing the rice farmers, a lot of the work and the maintenance of staff depends on revenues earned by the MMA. These have significantly declined and management was forced to take action in terms of the size of the staff, this includes many persons who would be overlooking the state of the conservancy dam. Thank you.

The Chairman: Hon Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Would you permit me in light of the answer given in relation to MMA . . .

The Chairman: I will permit you anything, Mr Allen, *[Laughter]* once it is brief

Mr Ivor Allen: The Hon Minister said that the reason for the terminations at MMA had to do with the reduction in production. But it

Thursday, 09th August, 2011

conflicts with the letters of dismissal which state that the termination was as a result of a fire which destroyed the offices on Saturday, 19th May. This had nothing to do with production and more than that, these rangers were not part of the office and should not have been affected. My contention is that if you have rangers you are going to be able to preempt breeches and detect when there is a difficulty. And believe me, my intentions are good, I am not seeking political mileage in this. If you have rangers on the conservancy you will know when a problem is developing and be able to correct it long before. The stitch in time saves nine theory is what I am advocating. Thank you.

The Chairman: Hon Minister.

Hon Navin O Chandarpal: Since it was not a question but a suggestion I would just like to respond. Yes indeed the issue of monitoring of the dam is still being continued. The particular situation here is that because of the need to link the revenues of MMA to the number of people employed by MMA efforts are being made now to involve more the Regional authorities and the NDCs that surround the MMA area in the monitoring what is taking place.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Any other questions? Mr Trotman.

Mr Raphael GC Trotman: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Item 5, Agency Code 513, Ministry of Information, could the Hon Minister say which areas of Guyana were previously inaccessible before these monies were spent. Secondly, whether now both GBC and GTV can reach the areas that were intended?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: In the case of GBC, during a number of trips in the interior area, many people were complaining that they could not hear local radio and I think the shortwave system has been restored, so there is some improvement in reception_all across Guyana. In the case of GTV I know now that some programmes from

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

Georgetown are being transmitted in Linden so they have the benefit, that link has been improved. But I will need to get more specific details for you.

Mr Raphael G C Trotman: Will you provide them?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes, I would provide them.

The Chairman: Hon Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question: could the Hon Prime Minister advise in the instance of Linden whether, in fact, GTV transmits to Linden or the medium is transported and transmitted from Linden?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, that is a very specific question and I would want to answer it after some research into it.

The Chairman: Any other questions? Mr McAllister.

Mr James McAllister: Mr Chairman, Item 6, Agency Code 519, Sub Head 15002, I wish to ask the Hon Minister how are the budgeted provision and the previous supplementary provision expended? In what areas were they expended? What percentage of the supplementary provision now being sought is for variation works? I also wish to ask the Hon Minister who was the contractor that executed the works in these areas?

As it relates to Sub Head 15005 I wish to ask how was the voted provision expended? In which areas? Who was the contractor?

As it relates to Agency Code 520, Sub Head 11001: I wish to ask the Minister if this item is part of the rehabilitation project funded by EU? I wish to ask him also what the works that were carried out on the scow ends and unifloats entailed?

As it relates to Sub Head 14007: I wish to ask the Hon Minister

why these roads were not in the original estimates since most of them were in a deplorable state for many years? I wish to ask also what is the status of the works on the Tucville road, if those works are substantially completed? And is it true that the contractor for the Tucville road is still owed for works executed in accordance with the contract? I will take a break.

The Chairman: Hon Minister.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, I will attempt to answer the Hon Member's questions though not necessarily in the order he asked them.

519 - the supplementary sought here for the Corentyne, East Coast, Essequibo Coast, the voted provision, as you can see here, was \$550M. This sum was for the payment of the unfinished contract works which commenced in 1999 at Devonshire Castle on the Essequibo Coast. It was also for the final 50% retention works at Aberdeen and Tamouth Manor on the Essequibo Coast and the programmed works in 2000 at Good Hope and Reliance contracts.

On awarding the Good Hope/Reliance contract in February 2000 it was recognised that there was a balance of approximately US\$3.5M under the IDB loan. It was agreed between the Government of Guyana and the IDB to utilise the remaining balance on additional sea defence work, hence the additional works that were awarded in 2000. The additional programme of works for that sum of money was Cornelia Ida - the construction of 220 metres of rif-raf sea defences, Mon Repos - 290 metres of rif-raf sea defences, Hague - 310 metres of rif-raf sea defences, Stanleytown - 200 metres of rif-raf sea defences, Turkeyen/Ogle - the upgrading of 1100 metres of sea defences. The supplementary provision was used to offset a portion of expenditure for the additional programme of works.

Of the previous amount requested, \$156M, only \$78M was approved, the additional specific amount was to be provided in the

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

2001 Budget. The supplementary provision was used too to make the following local payments for works completed during the period November 1 to November 30. I can give you the details if you wish.

The contractor was B & K International and \$14,726,045 for works done at Good Hope/Reliance, Stanleytown, Hague and Mon Repos.

As regards the Demerara Harbour Bridge to meet the expenditure pertaining to the rehabilitation of the unifloats and the scow ends, because of the fact that the retractors slide on top of the acceptor spans during the openings of the Bridge for vessels, it was critical that all the piers have the same buoyancy as this causes severe strain on the rollers travelling in the guides, (if you follow what I am saying, Hon Member). The result of this is inadequacy in the buoyancy which could be damaging to the travelling roller. Therefore, this \$6M was sought to have that work done. It was an emergency type of work.

I think he asked a question under 521, the expenditure regarding an approved extension of approximately 9 kilometres of road works in Linden and Wismar. That was to take care of consultancy fees for the consultant S & C Lvelen.

Mr Chairman, there are so many questions, if there was any that I left out please, the Hon Member could remind me.

The Chairman: Any more questions? Mr McAllister.

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, I could not follow what the Minister meant when he spoke about buoyancy. However, if we have had scow ends and unifloats recently rehabilitated and installed at the retractor and acceptor spans, could the Minister say whether the installation was done or the rehabilitation programme was improperly done so that we now have a so-called problem, he speaks of, with buoyancy?

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

I wish to remind the Minister in relation to the question of the present status of the works on the Tucville Road and to ask whether the contractor has been fully paid for works executed?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, the unifloats, that was the last remaining pier that needed to be done in order to have the area completely overhauled.

As to the works in Tucville, I have not been there in about two weeks so I am not sure what is the status of the work at this present time. But I can provide the answer to that question along with whether the contractor was paid to the Hon Member in writing.

The Chairman: Thank you. Any other questions? Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, to the Hon Prime Minister, in relation to 513, Ministry of Information: could Region No. 9 be taken into account when you talk about 'to facilitate expansion into new areas' because we are not so fortunate to be able to listen to GBC?

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you, Hon Member. Any other questions?

The Hon Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, will the Minister of Finance or the Prime Minister, who has the responsibility for LINMINE, care to explain Agency Code 526, Item 10: What percentage of this money has been allocated to purchase fuel? If the fuel was given to LINMINE Operations or if it was given to Linden Power Company for supplying of power to LINMINE? And the sixty per cent shortfall as against what was previously sought, how has it affected LINMINE's production in terms of the bucket wheel operations and the water pump operations so as to bring about the shortfall in the production for the Company?

The Chairman: The Hon Prime Minister

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, I thought that the Hon. Member being a citizen of Linden and a former Mayor of Linden and a former employee, a Superintendent in the Bauxite Company, he would have been able to inform me even more precisely on these matters. I am at some distance with the Chairman. There is Management and there is the Chairman of the Board and so on, and I would have thought that he would have helped us. But, Mr Chairman, we know that there have been problems with electricity supply in the Linden area, with the Linden Power Company. We know, too, that for historical reasons the price of power in the Linden area is still at some historical levels, like forty cents per kilowatt hour and so on. Therefore, we know that there is support which has to be provided. Now, historically too, that power was provided by the Company, but we know that the Company itself has been having monetary support from the Government - from the Treasury. So, I think, in that background, and that is the background, we should approach this issue and monies have had to be used to subsidise community power. Some of it would go towards paying fuel and some of it would go towards paying the capacity charge for having equipment available. I am not so sure how much it would be helpful to provide any more details at this time but I could provide the Hon Member with such details as he would want.

The Chairman: Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question or rather a clarification - My question was and is, if the purchasing of fuel was relative to LINMINE's Operations or if the fuel was to be given to Linden Power Company in order to provide power for LINMINE?

The Chairman: The Hon Prime Minister.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: There have been a number of arrangements, when all is said and done. One has to pay LPC economic rates for

the power that it supplied. The standard arrangement is that one pays an energy charge which relates to fuel and capacity charge which relates to having equipment available, presumably in good working order. So there have been arrangements at times when monies have been paid against invoices for energy charged and invoices for capacity charged. There have been arrangements at other times where fuel has been supplied to LPC for both the community and for the Company and that having been the case in those circumstances, there is no billing with respect to energy charged and there have been other occasions where fuel has been supplied and there has been billing for energy but because of some details in the arrangement, the bill, say, from LINMINE for supplying the fuel has been greater on occasions than the charges for energy which recovers fuel. So, I don't know if the Hon Member really wants all those details at this time.

The Chairman: Thank you, Hon. Member.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Yes.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, can I assume from the Prime Minister's attempt to clarify the issue, that he is saying that all of this money went some way or the other to pay Linden Power Company instead of going to LINMINE - contributing to LINMINE's production directly? That was my question.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Hon. Member, if you read what is written here:

*Loan to LINMINE to meet Community Power payment,
purchase of fuel, and meet cash flow shortfall.*

We start from the position that LINMINE has certain things to meet as a Company. We know also that its revenues have not been able to cover its expenses, so I think what is written here is quite

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

accurate, shortfall in the cash flow and amongst some of the items in this shortfall, there is the Community's power and also LINMINE's power. So I think that what is written here is quite accurate.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Yes, Hon. Member, we can't continue with this. There is a limit to supplementary questions, okay.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, LINMINE uses Bunker C Fuel for its productive operations. My question is that if the monies allocated here were for purchasing of fuel for LINMINE's direct operations or was it to supplement Linden Power Company so as to provide power for LINMINE? I think, Mr Chairman, my question is very straight forward and very clear and it deserves a clear, unambiguous answer.

The Chairman: Thank you Hon. Member, I think the Prime Minister has dealt with the question already. You have asked the question, he has answered it. You might not be happy with the answer, but he has answered it.

Any other questions? Mr McAllister.

Mr James McAllister: Mr Chairman, Agency Code 521: the Hon Minister did anticipate my asking a question under this head and he provided an answer even before I asked the question. However, I wish to seek some clarification. It is stated here that this supplementary provision is to meet expenditure regarding an approved extension of approximately 9 kilometres of road rehabilitation works in Mackenzie and Wismar areas. If my recollection serves me well the Hon Minister said that this was to pay the consultant. Could he offer some clarification here, and at the same time, say which roads in Mackenzie, since the estimates make provisions for work in Burnham drive. It would appear that some other works were done given the description here. Could the Minister say what were the other works and whether it was for actual payment

to contractor or merely for paying the consultant?

The Chairman: Hon Member, you dealt with this item already. Hon Member my recollection is that you asked a question on this item already and the Minister answered it. *[Interruption]* Hon Minister.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, I explained that this amount of money was to meet expenditure, and I do not think I said contractor but it works for the contractor and consultant regarding an approved extension of approximately 9 kilometres of road rehabilitation works in the Linden and Wismar areas. Is that sufficient an answer for you Hon Member?

The Chairman: Is that your answer, Hon Minister?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Yes, Sir.

The Chairman: Any other questions? Thank you, Hon Members.

This completes consideration of the Financial Paper. I will now put the motion which is that the National Assembly approve of the proposal set out in Financial Paper No. 1/2001, Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$608,987,331 for the period 27th November, 2000 to 29th December 2000, advances made from Contingencies Fund. Those in favour say Aye, those against say Noe.

Members: Aye.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it. The motion is carried.

The Assembly will now resume.

Assembly Resumes

The Speaker: Hon Minister of Finance.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of Supply considered Financial Paper No. 1/2001 and

Thursday, 09th August, 2001

approved of the proposals set out therein. I now move that the Assembly doth agree with the Committee in this said resolution.

Question put and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon Reepu Daman Persaud: Mr speaker, I wish to move that the National Assembly stand adjourned until next Thursday, August 16, 2001, to deal with the urgent business introduced by the Hon Prime Minister this afternoon.

The Speaker: The Assembly is adjourned to August 16, 2001.

Adjourned accordingly at 15:02 hrs