

# National Assembly Debates

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE SECOND SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT  
OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE  
REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN**

**Part I**

56TH SITTING

2.00 PM

Thursday, 10 March 2005

## *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)**

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| The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P.                 | - <i>Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications</i>                  |
| The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, O.R., J.P., M.P.   | - <i>Minister of Parliamentary Affairs</i>   |
| The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P.                  | - <i>Minister of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation (Absent)</i>               |
| The Hon. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.                | - <i>Minister of Local Government and Regional Development</i>                           |
| The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P.                     | - <i>Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport</i>  |
| The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P.              | - <i>Minister of Education</i>   |
| The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P.              | - <i>Minister of Finance</i>   |
| The Hon. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P.                  | - <i>Minister of Housing and Water</i>   |
| The Hon. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P.                  | - <i>Minister of Home Affairs; Region No. 3-Essequibo Islands/West Demerara (AOL)</i>    |
| The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P.   | - <i>Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security</i>                          |
| The Hon. Clinton C. Collymore, M.P.              | - <i>Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development</i>           |
| The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P.                    | - <i>Minister of Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock (Region No. 5-Mahaica/Berbice)</i> |
| *The Hon. S. Rudolph Insanally, O.R, C.C.H, M.P. | - <i>Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Foreign Affairs</i> |

- \*The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P. - *Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (AOL)*
- The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P. - *Minister of the Public Service*
- 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*
- 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) (Absent)*
- 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. - *(Absent)*
- Mr Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P. - *(Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)*
- Mrs Shirley V. Edwards, J.P. M.P.
- Mr Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P. - *(Absent)*
- Mr Heeralall Mohan, J.P., M.P. - *(Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)*
- Mr Ramesh C. Rajkumar, M.P. - *(Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)*
- Dr Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.D., M.P.
- Mrs Philomena Sahoye-Shutty, C.C.H, J.P, M.P. - *Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Water*
- Mrs Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P. - *(Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)*
- Mr Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P.
- Mr Neendkumar, M.P. - *(Region No. 4 - Demerara/ Mahaica) (Absent)*
- Mr Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P. - *(Region No. 6 - East Berbice/ Corentyne) (Absent)*

\* *Non-Elected Minister*

\*\* *Elected Member from The United Force*

**Members of the Opposition (30)**

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

Mr. Robert H. O. Corbin, M. P.	- (Absent)
Mr. Winston S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P.	- (AOL)
Mrs Clarissa S. Richl, M.P.	- Deputy Speaker of the N.A
Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P.	- Chief Whip (AOL)
Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P.	- (Region No.2-Pomeroon/Supenaam)
Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.	
Mr. Deryck M. A. Bernard, M.P.	
Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M.P.	- (Absent)
Mr. Raphael G. C. Trotman, M.P.	
Mr. Vincent L. Alexander, M.P.	- (Region No.4-Demerara/Mahaica)
Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.	
Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.	
Dr Dalglish Joseph, M.D., M.P.	
Miss Anna Ally, M.P.	- (Region No.5-Mahaica/Berbice) (Absent)
Miss Sandra M. Adams, M.P.	- (Region No.10-Upper Demerara Berbice)(AOL)
Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P.	
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)
Dr Carl Max Hanoman, M.P.	
Miss Lurlene A. Nestor, M. P.	- (Region No.4-Demerara/Mahaica) (AOL)
Mr Abdul Kadir, J.P., M.P.	- (Region No.10-Upper Demerara/Berbice)
Mr Ricky Khan, M.P.	- (Region No.1-Barima/Waini)
Mrs. Rajcoomarie Bancroft, M.P.	- (Region No.8- Potaro/Siparuni)
Mr Nasir Ally, J.P., M.P.	- (Region Na.6-EastBerbice/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.	
Mrs Shirley J. Melville, M.P.	- (Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

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

Mr Ravindra Dev, M.P.	- (Absent)
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**OFFICERS**

Ms Lilawtie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

Mr Maurice B. Henry, Head Committees Division

*Thursday, 10 March 2005*

**PRAYERS**

**The Deputy Clerk read the Prayer**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**

**Leave**

Honourable Members, leave has been granted to the Honourable Member Mr Doodnauth Singh for today's Sitting.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Presentation and First Reading**

**VALUE ADDED TAX BILL 2005 - Bill No. 3/2005**

*By the Minister of Finance*

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

**APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2005**

**Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to continue consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the Financial Year 2005**

**ASSEMBLY IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

**The Chairman:** Honourable Members, we will start today's proceedings with the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security.

Pages 182 and 183

**AGENCY 48 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR, HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY, Programme 481 - Ministry Administration**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$97,777,000 for Agency 48 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Programme 481 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister to indicate to this House what is the causal factor for the increase of the provision for contracted employees from \$18,936,000 in 2004 ... *[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** Acct Code 6116, Page 182.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** I am very sorry, Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - to the sum of \$25,172,000 in 2005?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, the simple answer to that is that the number of contracted employers has moved from ten in 2004 to twenty-three. Let me indicate that of these twenty-three, thirteen were formally contracted employees of two subvention agencies, the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute ten, and the National Documentation and Research Centre for Gender and Development, three. Now, these have been integrated within the staff of the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security. The agencies have been removed from subvention status from 1 January 2005, as you can see on Page 384, to allow for greater supervision and financial ac-

countability. So that is the causal factor.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - we see a huge decrease for subsidies and contributions to local organisations, from \$18,329,000 to \$5,345,000. Could the Minister please indicate the reason? Has someone dropped off the list, Minister? I am looking at Page 384.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Actually, the explanation is related to that, which I just gave for subvention agencies. Rather, the subsidies for GWLI and for the Research Centre for Gender and Development have been withdrawn. They now will form part of the package that the Honourable Member Mr Alexander referred to.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, on Page 183, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services, could the Honourable Minister please share with the House the name of the security service that guards the premises?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Actually, Mr Chairman, the Ministry employs the services of four security companies:

1. The United Associate Security and Domestic Services Inc. headquartered in Kingston;
2. RK Security;
3. MMC, the Mecdeci Mining Corporation; and
4. the Guyana Police Force Special Constabulary.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, could the Minister indicate, I am only asking one question on this, which

of those four, under this Code, has the largest contract?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** The first one, United Associate Security and Domestic Services Inc.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent LAlexander:** Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Minister what were the circumstances that led to the use of more than one security service? You referred to the Special Constabulary, is the Special Constabulary paid from this head or are they paid from the head under the Ministry of Finance?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** The Special Constabulary is paid from under this head, but your main question is what led to this. Actually, we went through and we have come out of a process whereby, there was another body that supplied the bulk of the service, we went through a tendering process and United Associates won. The other two, RK Security, the Minister within the Ministry asked for RK Security and MMC for example, to provide electronic services for three buildings.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, the Honourable Minister in answer to my question about the reduction mentioned the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute. I was not sure ... Did you also mention, Sir, the night shelter?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Not under this Code, Honourable Member.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Okay.

**Agency 48 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Programme 481 - Ministry Administration - \$97,777,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 184 and 185

**AGENCY 48 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR, HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY, Programme 482 - Social Services**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,336,885 for Agency 48 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Programme 482 - Social Services - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mrs Lawrence.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister give the designations for the contracted employees listed in the Staffing Details and could the Minister also state the reason why there is 30 percent increase?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** I would appreciate if the Honourable Member would be good enough to repeat the question. I would be glad to supply the answer.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Certainly, Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees. Looking at the Staffing Details here, I am asking the Honourable Minister if he can give the designations of these contracted persons and if he can state the reason for the 30 percent increase?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, please bear with me for one half of a minute ... I had the document just here but I misplaced it ... *[Pause]* Yes ... and this would be of the ... what is the Code? ... - Contracted Employees under Programme 482:

- one Director of Social Services;
- one Administrator of the night shelter;
- one Ward Sister at Palms;
- one Women's Affairs Officer;



- one Administrative Assistant in the Difficult Circumstances/  
Poverty Unit;
- one legal adviser; and
- one vehicle driver.

These are the designations.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Miss Peterkin.

**Miss Myrna EN Peterkin:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6284 - Other  
- can the Minister say what this amount of money would be used for?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** 62 ...

**Miss Myrna EN Peterkin:** ... 84

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code  
6284 - Other - this amount really constitutes agency fees to the Guyana  
Post Office Corporation for administering the voucher process, related  
to pensions and public assistance.

**The Chairman:** You are next, Mrs Lawrence.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees -  
could the Minister say whether any of these persons will now be at-  
tached to the new TIP Office and if so, what will be their designations?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** No, these persons will not be  
attached to the TIP Office.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6251 - Maintenance of  
Roads - by the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security  
- Will the Minister kindly tell us which roads this Ministry is maintaining?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** This money, Sir, is for the maintenance of roads at the Palms compound.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Miss Peterkin.

**Miss Myrna EN Peterkin:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - could the Minister say who are the persons that will benefit from this training?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, Probation Officers and Social Workers and this training will be mainly in-house.

**The Chairman:** Mrs Lawrence.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees ... Could the Honourable Minister say whether this includes persons employed for the distribution and preparation of pension books and if so, what proportion of this amount here goes to that work?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, this year the night shelter will be integrated within the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security and the night shelter will go the same road as the two other subvention agencies I reported on earlier. This sum here' really is to pay those temporary workers who have now come within the integrated Ministry on the same status and with the same benefits as they enjoyed.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, could the Minister say ... well he has already answered Acct Code 6116 which does not take care of the employee or the employees who will be involved in the TIP operation ... or share with this House, under what Acct Code these TIP people will be employed, particularly when we see in the Capital Expenditure that there is a new vehicle being provided for them?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, will I be in

order, Sir, if I asked the Hon Bibi Shadick to respond to that?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** The officers who will be employed in the TIP Office will be contracted employees and their regularisation with Public Service Ministry and Commission, we are told, has to happen three years after. The Honourable Member Mrs Backer has made something that sounds like an accusation to me that there was a vehicle for TIP ... the TIP Office has received the gift of a vehicle from USAID; the vehicle catered for in the other part, if the Honourable Member will read, it says exactly where the vehicle is to be given.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Lawrence.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6224 - Print and Non-Print Materials - could the Honourable Minister say what has caused the significant decrease of print and non-print materials?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, the difference really comes about because some of the cost here will be shared under advertisement in newspapers and that kind of thing.

**The Chairman:** Go ahead, Mrs Lawrence.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister indicate on Acct Code 6251 - Maintenance of Roads and Acct Code 6252 - Maintenance of Bridges -- in which areas these bridges and roads will be maintained?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, there are no bridges, you will see a zero along that line, but I already answered that question when I said that it will be roads within the Páms compound.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister to advise me what has occasioned the increase in the subvention under Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to

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Local Organisations - to the Dharam Shala from \$100,000 previously to \$1,000,000 and the drop-in centre at Sacred Heart Primary School from \$850,000 to \$3,000,000 and also to advise me on the status of the Sacred Heart drop-in centre.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, Sacred Heart Church as we know has been destroyed by fire, but the programme that used to operate there once, continues at the drop-in centre on Hadfield Street. I do not know if I have answered your question.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Honourable Minister I see an increase of 33 percent from \$10,543,000 last year to \$15,000,000 this year. Could the Honourable Minister indicate which service or services are being employed? [*Interruption: '50 percent'*] Yes, sorry, I will correct it, it is not a 33 percent increase, it is a 50 percent increase, actually from \$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000. Thank you.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, once upon a time the night shelter used to pay its own security service' out of the subvention it received. Now, that expense falls to the Ministry as a whole and the New Amsterdam Office, we will also get some money out of this vote for their security service. The service is the United Associate Security and Domestic Services Inc.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, under the Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - almost all of the organisations have retained the same subventions, except for the Dharam Shala and the drop-in centre at Sacred Heart Primary School. My question is: what has occasioned the increase in subvention of these two organisations?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, the amount that was printed last

year for the Dharam Shala at \$100,000 was a misprint. If we looked at the history we would see that it was \$1,000,000 every year. In fact, the Dharam Shala was given the excess of \$900,000 to make up for last year, so the subvention of \$1,000,000 is the usual subvention that is given to the Dharam Shala every year. The increase in the subvention for the drop-in centre is because we are housing more children and we also have residential facilities, which I mentioned in my Budget speech.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6112 - Senior Technical - there is a reduction from \$4,300,000 last year to \$3,900,000 and the staffing details show an increase from six to eight. Will the Minister say if we are paying our Senior Technical people less, or will he kindly explain?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** They will not be paid less, but there are different categories of employees here.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Speaker, Acct Code 6292 - Dietary - there is a significant increase here. Would the Honourable Minister say whether this amount now includes the night shelter and the school feeding programme and if so, what amounts are allocated to each programme?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Under Acct Code 6292 that figure reflects the cost of providing persons who use this facility with dinner and breakfast. Previous amounts only reflected meals and supplies at the Palms, the Mahaica Hospital and the Mahaica Children's Home. Mr Chairman, I am afraid I really cannot give a breakdown in terms of figures now, but I can always make that available.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister, under the same Acct Code 6321, with specific reference to the Dharam Shala ... The previous answer indicated that in fact \$1,000,000 was allocated previously and my question here is whether

what we have before us budgeted \$100,000, Revised \$100,000, is a replication of that mistake, because if we are aware of the actual sums, then we are in the position to provide correct information to the House. We have a figure there which is certainly different from what the Minister is telling us at this point in time, having apparently corrected the mistake under the budgeted sum.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, the amount printed here has been noted, but we only noted it when it came in this Volume. As happened last year, we realised that the sum was incorrect and that a zero was left out. It seems as if in printing they printed what they had last year, but the amount will have to be corrected again this year as it was done last year.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - Mr Chairman, there is a decrease of about \$22,000,000. I notice that the the night shelter where last year we spent \$25,700,000, there is no budgeted allocation there. So, I am wondering if that is the reason for the drop. Will there be no expense involved in maintaining this night shelter, in terms of food or something?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Yes, as I indicated earlier, Mr Chairman, the Central Ministry will take the responsibility for expenditure under certain heads, for example, security and electricity, but the dietary expenditure of \$48,222,000, that sum will be made available to the night shelter.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, Miss Peterkin.

**Miss Myrna EN Peterkin:** Can the Honourable Minister say on the same Acct Code 6292, whether the school feeding programme is included in this \$48,222,000?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, the answer is no. The Ministry of

Education does school feeding.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mr Allen.

**Mr Ivor Allen:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - I note the provision of \$10,640,000 for Contracted Employees, and looking at Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - I note a provision of \$35,700,000 for 127 employees and wish to ask if it is a typographical error?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** No, it is not a typographical error.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question to my previous question, Acct Code 6112 - Senior Technical - was there a turnover of staff or is it the same number of persons who were employed as Senior Technical last year? Are those same persons employed this year?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, they are not the same individuals, but people are working in the same positions. Some may have retired at a higher salary than those who have now gone into the positions at a lower salary.

Agency 48 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Programme 482 - Social Services - \$1,336,885 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**The Chairman:** Pages 186 and 187

**AGENCY 48 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR, HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY, Programme 483 - Labour Administration**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$108,545,000 for Agency 48 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Programme

483 - Labour Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Basil Williams.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Mr Chairman, might I respectfully refer you to Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - could I inquire of the Honourable Minister if there is any provision for contributions to the Caribbean Congress of Labour, and if not, why not?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** The answer to that is no, at least not at this time.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question ... *[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** Why not, Honourable Member, the question is still standing, why not?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** That body has never requested a subvention or a subsidy or a contribution from us. That is the simple reason.

**Mr Basil Williams:** In relation to the said Acct Code 6322, your contribution of \$2,000,000 is specifically in relation to the ILO.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Yes, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Could I then ask a couple of questions, if it pleases you, Mr Chairman? Could the Honourable Minister explain the non-inclusion of the Guyana Trade Union Congress representative at last year's conference?

**The Chairman:** What does that have to do with the Estimates? That does not have anything to do with the Estimates.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Well, as I understand it, Mr Chairman, they have budgeted over \$2,000,000 ... *[Interruption]*



**The Chairman:** That is last year.

**Mr Basil Williams:** ... for our participation.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member that is not a proper question for the Estimates before us at the present time.

**Mr Basil Williams:** As it pleases you, Mr Chairman. Might I respectfully refer the Honourable Minister to Acct Code 6262 - Overseas Conferences and Official Visits - the question is if we have budgeted ...  
*[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** That is a zero ... *[Interruption]*

**Mr Basil Williams:** Yes, please, over \$2,000,000 for the ILO. Could the Minister explain why there is no provision for attendance at that conference, under this Acct Code?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, this is our membership dues to the ILO. We pay those dues every year. There is no allocation of funds for attendance at the ILO Conference this year. If it is decided that we will be going to that conference, at the present time, we go every other year - then the cost of that will be bourn by the Ministry of Finance.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Basil Williams.

**Mr Basil Williams:** May it please you, Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister be referred respectively to Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - could I inquire of the Honourable Minister whether the Trade Union Recognition Board is included under that Acct Code and if not, why not?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** There are three local organisations, the Board of Industrial Training, Labour Market Information System Commission and Occupational Health and Safety. This Ministry really has not been in the habit or the practice of giving a subsidy to the

Trade Union Recognition and Certification Board. We bear some cost for their meetings and for the refreshments that are used at those meetings.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question ... Could the Honourable Minister explain if the Guyana Trade Union Congress is included under this Code, if not, why not?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** It is under this Code but it certainly is not included.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Why not?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** It is not included. In point of fact, it was included once upon a time but it is not included now, Mr Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Honourable Member.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question ... Are any co-operative societies included on this Acct Code. If not, why not?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, the three bodies that benefit from these subsidies I mentioned here. I suppose the Honourable Member means National Advisory Council, that particular council has access to funds of its own. We have not made a request.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Mr Chairman, might I respectfully refer you to Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - on Page 147, the Staffing Details, we see that there are twenty contracted employees. If you look at the combination of those two items twenty employees who would be getting \$34,865,000 out of a workforce of eighty-four, whereas, the remaining sixty-four would be enjoying only 40 percent of the budgeted labour cost. Could the Honourable Minister please explain the designations of these twenty persons?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Yes, Mr Chairman, I would

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be glad to do so. The contracted positions, actually it is more nineteen than twenty. There are eleven persons who are involved in labour related positions:

- the Chief Industrial Relations Officer;
- one Assistant Chief Industrial Relations Officer;
- one Senior Industrial Relations Officer;
- three Industrial Relations Officers;
- four Statistical Officers; and
- one Occupational, Safety and Health Analyst.

Then there are eight employees who are contracted and they work with the Empowerment Unit. Those include:

- one Presidential Adviser;
- one Senior Economic Development/Procurement Officer;
- one Senior Community Development Officer;
- one Community Development Officer;
- one Confidential Secretary/Administrative Assistant;
- one Office Assistant; and
- two vehicle drivers.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Thank you Honourable Minister. A supplementary question ... Could you just specify, of those twenty persons, who are the super-salaried employees?

**The Chairman:** What do you mean by super-salaried?

*Thursday, 10 March 2005*

**Mr Basil Williams:** Super salaried was defined, Mr Chairman, several years ago by the government to be salaries in excess of \$1,500,000 a year.

**The Chairman:** Any above \$1,500,000 a year?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, I can indicate at this time that all of these persons, except the Presidential Adviser, are paid within the government GS scales from 2 to 14. There are three employees at the top of the scale, at scale 14 but none really is at the maximum of that particular scale.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Mr Chairman, my final question for the Honourable Minister ... Those positions that you have mentioned that were filled by the twenty contracted employees, would the Honourable Minister explain whether they were parallel positions in the traditional Public Service?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Actually, I would like to make a correction. It is more nineteen rather than twenty, but that is not much for correction. Let me say that some of these persons were employed as contracted employees while PSC was not in place, say between 2001 and 2003, so, because of that, they had to be employed on contracts. Now, that the PSC is in place, every effort is being made to bring them on stream, so to speak.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister under Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - if the position of Chief Labour Officer is covered by this head?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** The answer is yes, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question ... What percentage of this Code caters for the salary of that officer.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** I cannot tell you the percentage but let me say maybe we can get about it in a round-about way. The total employment cost for the Ministry for this Department is \$237,600,000. The total employment cost of contracted persons is \$70,600,000, the Chief Industrial Relations Officer is on GS14 on this scale, not at the maximum of the scale, I can tell you what he gets. He gets \$289,406 per month.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, under the Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations, I would like to be advised about the manner of composition, the nature of operation of the Labour Market Information System, Commission.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, this Unit's work started as a project of the United States Department of Labour. Its business really is to garner statistics that relate to employment and wages, that is the nature of its work and it is a very small; its staff is seven in all.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, under the said Acct Code, under labour administration, they have here, Occupational Health and Safety. This is supposed to be subsidies or contributions and I am at a loss to determine which organisation is referred to here as Occupational Health and Safety.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, actually, yes, I can understand what can cause the loss to the Honourable Member. If you put in the words, National Occupational Health and Safety there, that would help. There is a unit within the Ministry that is responsible for Occupational Safety and Health, the expenses of that unit are taken care of by the different votes that we have got but there is a National Advisory Body on Occupational Health and Safety. This small subvention here really, is for that national body.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, would the Honourable Minister care to explain Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - the contradiction between the reduction in allocations of \$1,800,000 in 2004 to \$1,120,000 when the staffing details show us an increase from three to more than 6 persons, more than double.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Staff turnover is responsible for this, Mr Chairman, and you would have noticed that if you looked at Acct Code 6113 - Other Technical and Craft Skilled - that there really is an increase of \$1,000,000, so as to take care of one category of some of those operatives.

**Agency 48 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Programme 483 - Labour Administration - \$108,545,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Page 430

**DIVISION 545 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR, HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$17,800,000 for Division 545 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Lawrence.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, it is my understanding that rehabilitation work was done at the kitchen of the Palms last year. Could the Honourable Minister say how come this amount is now listed here for rehabilitation of the same kitchen?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** I will ask the Hon Bibi Shadick to respond to that.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, the kitchen of the Palms . . . When rehabilitation was done, the money was small and so we repaired the floor. We have to repair walls, there is other rehabilitation; we cannot break the whole kitchen down and we can only do as much as we can do with the monies allocated to us in any given year. So, if the kitchen appears again, it means that there was work to be done that was left and it has to be done this year from the funding that we will get.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, Mrs Lawrence.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, Project Code 24001 - Land Transport - could the Honourable Minister indicate whether this vehicle will be replacing or adding to the Ministry's fleet?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, this amount has been specifically allocated to buy one covered vehicle to transport foodstuff and other items for the Palms and for the night shelter and I think it says so in Volume 3 in the Capital Profile.

**Division 545 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security - \$17,800,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

**The Chairman:** Page 431

**DIVISION 546 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR, HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY - SIMAP**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,500,216,000 for Division 546 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security - SIMAP - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister to indicate under the Project Code 19003 - SIMAP PHASE III - what are the criteria which are used for the entitlement to

and disbursement of funds and, if the criteria differ from head to head, to disaggregate those criteria for our benefit?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, I wish to indulge with my friends from SIMAP and I will ask the Honourable Member, if you are good enough to restate the question.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, my question was under Project Code 19003 - SIMAP PHASE III - what are the criteria for entitlement to and disbursement of funds under SIMAP and if the criteria differ from programme to programme, please disaggregate the criteria for me?

**The Chairman:** That was a very long question and I do not know that that question is an appropriate question for the Estimates, Honourable Member. That is an appropriate question for a question that requires an answer in writing. If the Minister can answer it, you are free to answer it but, if you cannot ...

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, I will attempt to answer the question and I would hope that the Honourable Minister, in the event that I do not satisfy him could ask supplemental. *[Interruption: 'Member not Minister' "Did I say Honourable Minister?"]*  
*[Laughter]*

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Yes, you did say that. I presume, of religion, you meant.

**The Chairman:** A sign of things to come, Honourable Member.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Future events cast their shadows.

Mr Chairman, for SIMAP PHASE III, there are really three components:

- one has got to do with financial investments in social, eco



conomic and infrastructure, and organisational strengthening in poor communities;

- the other has got to do with a community services component which will finance provision of selected services to vulnerable groups through NGOs; and
- the third one has got to do with institutional strengthening, which will finance technical assistance and training to programme participants as well as to officers within SIMAP.

Component one, for this year, projects for example, is scheduled to enjoy a vote of US\$17,300,000. I am sorry, somebody has to compute that in Guyana Dollars. Then there are small projects and this modality has been designed to ensure a more rapid response to small scale community requests and that category will attract US\$15,000 but let me say here that that amount is really inclusive of the communities' contributions of 5 percent. Then, there are Amerindian projects. Those are the three major kinds of projects.

Let me say, Mr Chairman, that as far as selection is concerned, the process that SIMAP is using now can be described as needs driven. In the sense that the communities are invited to state their needs and if the focus is primarily on those communities that have never benefited from a SIMAP project or programme before and the community is going to be asked to prioritise at least three projects. So, the point of focus therefore is communities and areas not served before. I do not know if I should go on.

**The Chairman:** The time is up for this item, Honourable Members. I will entertain one more question.

**Mr Basil Williams:** I am much obliged. Project Code 19003 - Community Development - might I respectfully inquire of the Honourable Minister, whether these communities have already been identified?

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Yes.

**Mr Basil Williams:** No, well, let me do a supplementary.

**Hon Rev Dr Ramnauth DA Bisnauth:** Mr Chairman, at its meeting in March, 113 projects had been identified for funding. I am going to give you for Region 1, 113 projects for 113 communities, spread across the Regions.

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Honourable Member.

**Division 546 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security - SIMAP - \$1,500,216,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

Pages 208 and 209

**AGENCY 52 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, Programme 521 - Main Office**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$8,675,000 for Agency 52 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 521 - Main Office - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, I do not see the Minister. Will someone from the House?

**The Chairman:** Is somebody answering for the Ministry of Labour?

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Who is answering for the Ministry of Home Affairs?

**The Chairman:** Minister Shadick is answering those questions.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Okay, Mr Chairman, will the Honourable Member kindly state under the Acct Code 521. The Staffing Details show only one person, but the total expenditure under this programme head is about \$8,675,000, probably about \$700,000 per month. Will the Minister kindly tell us what functions this person performs?

**The Chairman:** After tax, that is only a small sum, Mr Kadir. [*Laughter*]

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, there is one contracted employee if you look at the Staffing Details and that is the Permanent Secretary and if you look at the amounts for contracted employees, it is \$5,276,000. Other employees are paid under the other programme, Ministry Administration.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Williams, do you have a supplementary to that?

Okay, Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, under this particular Acct Code there are no other employees, there is only one employee under this Acct Code.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I can only say that that would have been a mistake in print, because it clearly says contracted employees, one for a sum of \$5,276,000. If there is no other number to add on to it, it says total salary and wages \$5,276, 000 - contracted employee.

**Mr Basil Williams:** In relation to the said Acct Code, Mr Chairman, the question is, could the Honourable Minister indicate what designation this one employee has that is attracting the figure under that item?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman that question was already asked and answered.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** I do not think the Honourable Minister quite got the point, but if we could look at Acct Code 6293 - Refreshment and Meals - let us get to the Staffing Details first, please. There is one person employed under this entire Acct Code - Main Office - and there is ... last year that person ate \$260,000 of food and this year he or she

is expected to eat \$261,000 of food. Would the Minister agree with me that \$21,800 per month seems like a relatively high figure for one person?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I would agree with the Honourable Member that it is a high amount for one person, but what the Honourable Member needs to understand is that that one person normally would have meetings that would have to have refreshments served and sometimes those meetings are very big ones.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Could I respectfully ask, Mr Chairman, where is this Main Office located?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, the Main Office is located right where it has been for quite a number of years on Carmichael Street in Georgetown.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Okay.

**The Chairman:** If you do not have a question, Honourable Member ...

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** No, I am standing, Sir.

**The Chairman:** I see you standing without asking anything.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Oh, I was waiting to be recognised.

Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - \$2,000,000 to guard this person. Which service is so employed, Honourable Minister?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, there are two security services.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** For one person?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** RK's and the Police Force Special Constabulary and they are not guarding the person, Mr Chairman, they are guarding the premises.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Alright, we are going to come to that.

Agency 52 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 521 - Main Office - \$8,675,000. - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**The Chairman:** Pages 210 and 211

**AGENCY 52 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, Programme 522 - Ministry Administration**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$27,869,000 for Agency 52 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 522 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - first of all, I should ask a preliminary question ... Is the Ministry of Legal Affairs, in the same office? And the Ministry Administration, is it located in the same office, Honourable Minister? **Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, yes, the Main Office is located in one building.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Thank you. Is it then an error, Honourable Minister where we look at Acct Code 6281 and see again the figure of \$2,000,000 which was on the page before? Is it possible that this is duplicated and ought not to be under both Codes?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** No, Mr Chairman, it is not duplicated, the amount of \$2,000,000 here is allocated to guard the homes of the Minister of Legal Affairs and the Chief Parliamentary Council.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Okay.

**Agency 52 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 522 - Ministry Administration - \$27,869,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 212 and 213

**AGENCY 52 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, Programme 523 - Attorney General's Chambers**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$159,782,000 for Agency 52 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 523 - Attorney General's Chambers - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - specifically the contribution to the Council of Legal Education, I would like to be advised by the Minister if this includes the contribution to the Hugh Wooding Law School?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am advised that the subsidy to that organisation has been continued as of this year but this amount represents arrears that were owed from previous years that will be paid off this year.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** A supplementary question .. Does it mean that the Guyanese students who seek to attend the Hugh Wooding Law School will now have to revert to the previous fee as opposed to the economic cost they were paying up to the last academic year.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I do not know that the Ministry of Legal Affairs has anything to do with the Hugh Wooding Law School, so I do not think that is a very fair question under this budget.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, the Minister indicated in the answer that the monies allocated here are intended for retroactive payments to the Hugh Wooding Law School and payments for the current year.

**The Chairman:** No, the Honourable Minister said, for arrears. She

did not say current, just arrears.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Is it that no payments are intended for the current year?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** I said that. Mr Chairman, I did say that the subsidy has been discontinued. This amount is to pay arrears..

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Trotman.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** A supplementary question, Mr Chairman ... Could the Honourable Minister say how many years' arrears are to be catered for in this payment of \$99,000,000?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, the arrears spread over a period of about five years and we pay as much as we can from the funds that we are allocated all the time. With this \$99,000,000, in fact, has may not be all, next year's budget may have to have some more.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** A supplementary question, please, Mr Chairman ... Can we know with some exactitude how much money the Government of Guyana owes the Council of Legal Education?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, at this point we cannot give that amount, but I can certainly provide it to the Honourable Member.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - looking at the Staffing Details, two contracted employees, a figure of \$12,955,000 ... Can the Honourable Minister say who are these two employees and to make it short what function or functions do they carry out at that Ministry?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, actually, this reflects the salaries and other benefits to one person only, because one has been taken off and this is the salary and benefits, gratuity, travel and everything else for the Chief Parliamentary Council.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Thank you. I now refer to Acct Code 6284 - Other - could the Honourable Minister say what is Other that will accrue \$950,000 for this year?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am advised that this is for the purchase of law books for the library.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - I start with a preliminary question. Is the Attorney General's Chambers, Ministry Administration and the Main Office housed in the same building, Honourable Minister?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, yes they are and I would like to make a correction to what I said earlier on, when I said the security service in the other thing was for both the Attorney General and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel that was a mistake. One was for the Attorney General and this one is for the Chief Parliamentary Council.

**The Chairman:** Proceed, Honourable Member.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. Well, the security services provided \$2,990,000, which security services, please?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** This particular one under this programme is the Police Special Constabulary. *[Noisy Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** Mr Williams, please be silent.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Yes, Mr Chairman.

**Agency 52- Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 523 - Attorney General's Chambers - \$159,792,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**



**The Chairman:** Pages 214 and 215

**AGENCY 52 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, Programme 524 - Office of the State Solicitor**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$9,833,000 for Agency 52 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 524 - Office of the State Solicitor - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 52- Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 524 - Office of the State Solicitor - \$9,833,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

Pages 216 and 217

**AGENCY 52 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, Programme 525 - Deeds Registry**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$30,354,000 for Agency 52 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 525 - Deeds Registry - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 52 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Programme 525 - Deeds Registry - \$30,354,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

Page 404

**DIVISION 514 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$64,153,000 for Division 514 - Ministry of Legal Affairs - stands part of the Estimates.

**Division 514 - Ministry of Legal Affairs - \$64,153,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

Pages 224 and 225

**AGENCY 55 - SUPREME COURT, Programme 551 - Supreme Court of Judicature**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$364,824,000. for Agency 55 - Supreme Court, Programme 551 - Supreme Court of Judicature - stands part of the Estimates.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Mr Chairman, he had referred to Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - can the Honourable Minister say, who these six employees are and the functions performed by them?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am advised that the Supreme Court is a semi-autonomous agency and details about those contracted employees are not available to the Ministry of Legal Affairs. But we can undertake to get that information for you from the Registrar of the Supreme Court.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Trotman.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Just to point out, Mr Chairman, that is a misnomer that you are the responsible Minister, with or without autonomy. I turn to Acct Code 6293 - Refreshments and Meals - can the Honourable Minister say what accounts for meals in the amount of \$6,100,000 at the Supreme Court or Judicature for 2005?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, these refreshments and meals refers to sums that are used to provide meals for jurors and those people involved in seminars and exercises.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** I do not know, but we will have to accept it. Could the Minister say what the other expense of \$4,690,000 is for, under the Acct Code - Other - for the Supreme Court?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am advised that under Other, the expenses catered for are travelling expenses for jurors and State Coun-

sels when they have to go to Berbice and Essequibo and so on, for trials.

**Mrs Clarissa S Riehl:** Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Honourable Minister, under Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - which security service would be in receipt of \$13,000,000 for looking after the Supreme Court Registry?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am advised that it is the Special Constabulary of the Police Force.

**The Chairman:** Yes, Mr Trotman.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Mr Chairman, may I refer the Honourable Minister to Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - can she say who is covered under that head for local travel?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, including the Registrar, the staff of the Supreme Court would have to go from time to time to Essequibo and Berbice where there are other High Courts.

**Agency 55 - Supreme Court, Programme 551 - Supreme Court of Judicature - \$364,824,000. - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 226 and 227

**AGENCY 55 - SUPREME COURT, Programme 552 - Magistrates' Department**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$186,070,000 for Agency 55 - Supreme Court, Programme 552 - Magistrates' Department - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Trotman.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Mr Chairman, I ask the question of the Honourable Minister, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - whether to the best of her ability, she could say who these six contracted employ-

ees are that draw a salary of \$24,914,000?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, all those contracted employees are Magistrates some of whom have been ... *[Interruption]*

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** May I ask a supplemental, please?

**The Chairman:** Yes, Mr Trotman.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Does the total number of six represent the total number of Magistrates sitting in the entire jurisdiction of Guyana, Mr Chairman?

**The Chairman:** No, contracted is six, yes.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Yes.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** No, Mr Chairman, it does not include the total number of Magistrates. There are some under Acct Code 6111.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Trotman.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Can the Honourable Minister say again, under Acct Code 6284 - Other - where there is a figure of \$6,330,000 earmarked ... Can she define what Other is in this context?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am advised that these monies have been allocated for typing services, typing of depositions, typing of shorthand notes, verbatim that transpired in the Courts, summing up and so on, advertisements and publications of notices.

Agency 55 - Supreme Court, Programme 552 - Magistrates' Department - \$186,070,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**The Chairman:** Page 40

**DIVISION 514 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, Supreme/**

## Magistrate's Court (Project Code 12002)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$30,000,000 for Division 514 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Supreme/Magistrate's Court (Project Code 12002) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Trotman.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 2002 ... Can the Honourable Minister say why it has become necessary to rehabilitate the Judges' Quarters at the Court of Appeal, knowing that that has been done in the last four years?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am not sure I heard ... is it Judges Quarters at the Court of Appeal? Is that what you are saying?

**The Chairman:** Yes, that is the question.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** There is no Judges Quarters at the Court of Appeal.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** Well, Mr Chairman, again ... *[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** Judges Offices. Quarters might mean something else.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** ... I refer to the Legend given to me by the Honourable Minister of Finance, I do not know whether he needs to be educated, but I will use what is provided. I repeat, construction of Magistrate Court and rehabilitation of Judges Quarters (that is your government) and Court of Appeal ... Can the Honourable Minister say why it has become necessary to rehabilitate those Chambers and/or Quarters ... *[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** One minute, Honourable Member, let us see what it is.

**Mr Raphael GC Trotman:** ... when it was recently done.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Hold on.

**The Chairman:** Yes, okay.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am advised that the Judges' Quarters to be renovated are the Judges Quarters in New Amsterdam. There are to be repairs done to the Court of Appeal building in Kingston and that a new Magistrate Court is to be built at Fort Wellington.

**Division 514 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Supreme/Magistrate's Court (Project Code 12002) - \$30,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

**The Chairman:** Page 404

**DIVISION 514 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Supreme/Magistrate's Court (Project Code 25002)**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$4,000,000 for Division 514 - Ministry of Legal Affairs (Project Code 25002) - stands part of the Estimates.

**Division 514 - Ministry of Legal Affairs, Supreme/Magistrate's Court (Project Code 25002) - \$4,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

**The Chairman:** Pages 230 and 231

**AGENCY 56 - PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS, Programme 561 - Public Prosecutions**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$51,860,000 for Agency 56 - Public Prosecutions, Programme 561 - Public Prosecutions - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, looking at the Staffing Details, I see that there is an authorised staff of thirty but to date only twenty positions are filled. In other words, we have 33 percent less and my question is, what efforts, if any are being made to get our authorised strength up to its optimum.

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, when people become lawyers they tend to want to go into private practice. It is very difficult. We can ask my friend, the Honourable Member Mr Basil Williams about this, but all efforts are being made to persuade people to apply to fill those vacancies.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Could the Honourable Minister please say, when you look at the Staffing Details, what Acct Code would the lawyers come under, 6111, 6112, 6113, 6114, or 6115?

**Hon Bibi S Shadick:** Mr Chairman, I am advised that the Acct Code is 6111.

**Agency 56 - Public Prosecution, Programme 561 - Public Prosecutions - \$51,860,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Page 396

**DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES, Director of Public Prosecution (Project Code 25007)**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,500,000 for Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies, Director of Public Prosecution (Code 25007) - stands part of the Estimates.

**Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies, Director of Public Prosecution (Project Code 25007) - \$2,500,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 86 and 87

**AGENCY 14 - PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY, Programme 141 - Public Service Management**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$138,303,000 for Agency 514 - Public Service Ministry, Programme 141 - Public Service Management - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - I see a figure of \$7,033,000 which is a slight increase but I would like to know which security service or services are so employed.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister.

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Yes, Mr Chairman, RKs Security Services.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Is that the only service, Honourable Minister?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Yes, sir.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Ma'am I am still ... [*Oh, It is the Chairman she is talking to*] ...

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** I am speaking to the Chairman.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** A supplementary question arising from that. Mr Chairman, in view of the fact that there was a daylight robbery there



a couple of months ago, when a payroll was snatched, I wonder if there was any investigation carried out before RK was re-employed for this year?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Is that a budget question, Sir?

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Well, you tell me.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member declines to answer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Well, I will ask it in another way. Could the Honourable Minister indicate whether RK Services, started to guard those premises this year or if they were there last year also?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** They have been there since last year.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Okay.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Williams.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Mr Chairman, might I respectfully refer the Honourable Minister to Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - and the Staffing Details on the following page. The question to the Honourable Minister is ... Are there parallel positions in the traditional Public Service for those contracted employees?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Some of them, yes.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question, could the Honourable Minister explain what the 2005 determines, whether employment should be filled by the traditional Public Service structure as against not filling it by employing contracted employees? What considerations determine how you proceed in that area?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** These workers have been employed since 2003.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question, Mr Chairman ... so is

the Honourable Minister saying that from now, they would need no further contracted employees but employment would be in relation to the authorised positions in the traditional Public Service.

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** No.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question . . . Therefore my question is: what determines whether you employ and fill positions in the traditional Public Service as against just employ people outside of it.

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** One the vacancies and two the necessity to fill those positions with necessary qualified persons.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Could the Honourable Minister share with the House what efforts, if any, are being made to raise the filled vacancies so that they are as close as possible to our authorised strength. We only have fifty employees and the authorised strength is ninety-five. So, we are just over 50 percent in terms of woman power, I do not want to say manpower.

**The Chairman:** Person power.

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** May I inform the Honourable Member that all of the positions that are listed as filled, are considered authorised positions.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Is the Minister therefore saying that what we have under authorised as ninety-five is incorrect?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Yes.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Could the Minister then provide to this House what is the correct authorised figure?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** As I said before, those numbers that are listed on all of the Ministries to date as filled are the authorised posi-

tions.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - could the Honourable Minister answer as to whether the Public Service Commission or the Public Service Ministry, exercises jurisdiction over contracted employees?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Both of them.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question, Mr Chairman ... Could the Honourable Minister explain how both the Public Service Commission and the Public Service Ministry, in terms of employment and conditions of service could exercise simultaneous jurisdiction?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** I suggest the Honourable Member puts that as a question to the House and he will be given an extensive written justification.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Minister declines to answer Honourable Member.

**Mr Basil Williams:** As it pleases you, Mr Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

**Mrs Clarissa S Riehl:** Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Honourable Minister a question on the same Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees. I see she has a strength of eleven projected for, but she also had eleven last year to a figure of almost \$1,500,000 roughly. Why that increase, when these people are already operating under contracts and you would have known what you contracted for and why now you are increasing your budgeted figure?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** May I inform the Honourable Member that contracted employees also, are eligible for wages and salary increases.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Members, Mrs Backer and then you, Mr Williams.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Ladies before.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** I just want to be very clear, Mr Chairman, going back to Acct Code 6111 - Administrative - is the Honourable Minister saying that the figure there as authorised for 2005 is wrong and should be corrected to read four, as is indicated on the filled column? I will ask that question for all of them, thirty-nine to be replaced by four; ten to be replaced by seven and so on.

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Yes.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Could I respectfully refer you to Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships), Mr Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Yes.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Does the figure of \$60,000,000 relate to scholarships? Could I inquire of the Honourable Minister the nature or types of scholarships and where tenable in relation to this item?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** This figure reflects all scholarships that are obtained locally, at all local institutions. As I said in my Budget speech, we give scholarships to all local training institutions, provided those skills are deemed to be acceptable and necessary for the public and private sectors.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question . . . Does this Ministry then caters for external scholarships contradicts disposed to local scholarships?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Payment-wise no, administratively yes.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** This is the last question, Mr Chairman, on this whole question of employment ... Is the Minister therefore saying that, as we speak today, the Public Service Ministry has no vacancies?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** No.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** No, what? You have or you do not have?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** We do not have any vacancies.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Thank you.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent LAlexander:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question under Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - we have been advised by the Honourable Minister that contracted employees are entitled to increases in wages and salaries. I would like to know what is the specific term or condition of their contracts that deals with this question of increases in wages and salaries.

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Like the rest of the public service, those on contract and not on contract are entitled to the increases, whatever is the increase that we give on their salaries as of the 31 December of the year, before that award was made.

**Mr Vincent LAlexander:** Mr Chairman, a further clarification ... Are you saying that every contract employee is entitled to increases ... *[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** I do not know that the Honourable Minister said *entitled*.

**Mr Vincent LAlexander:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. Are you saying that irrespective of the specific conditions and terms of the respective

contracts that every contract employee gets an increase at the end of the year? And that this increase is not guided by the specific contract of employment?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Contract employees who are paid by foreign funds are not given those increases.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - when we look at Page 387, we see there that there is a total of \$2,700,000 and we see that we are paying the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration \$2,210,000. My question to the Honourable Minister is what benefits are we obtaining from the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Mr Chairman, let me tell the Honourable Member that CARICAD conducts for us administrative programmes, both locally and overseas and we collaborate on a frequent basis on public sector administration.

**The Chairman:** Mrs Riehl, who asked the fewer questions of the other two persons standing up.

**Mrs Clarissa S Riehl:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. On the aspect of Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - I am sorry to come back to this ... Is the Honourable Minister saying that contracted employees usually get increases when the other public servants gets increases. Is that your answer?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Yes, that is my answer.

**Mrs Clarissa S Riehl:** Well, since that is your answer, I have a follow-up right on my feet, Sir ... Since, there is no budgetary increase this year for ordinary public servants, why is it that your contracted employees ... are you saying that your contracted employees will get what

ordinary public servants would not get this year?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** No, I am not saying so. This money reflected here is the salary that they are currently getting. Last year's budget did not reflect the increase that they had in 2004.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Williams.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Might I respectfully refer the Honourable Member to Acct Codes 6111 to 6117 and 6131 to 6141 as per Page 86. Honourable Minister, these employees to which these Acct Codes speak, all are entitled, contracted or not to increases due to collective bargaining rulings. Is that so?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Just repeat your question.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Increases emanating from the collective bargaining process between the PSM and the relevant unions ... all these categories of workers here would benefit from such increases?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Yes, they will.

**Mr Basil Williams:** A supplementary question, Mr Chairman ... Might I respectfully inquire whether in 2005 your Ministry is involved in further collective bargaining with the relevant unions for increased wages and salaries.

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** As I said in my budget speech, Mr Chairman, every year we do have collective bargaining and we will have collective bargaining and the results of those, I cannot tell you at this point in time.

**Mr Basil Williams:** Thank you, Honourable Minister. A supplementary question ... Can the Honourable Minister indicate what stage the process is at currently?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Unfortunately, Honourable Member

Williams, I cannot tell you what stage it is at because it has not started as yet and we are still awaiting a date from the Guyana Public Service Union.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, I wish under the Acct Code of contracted employees to ask the Honourable Minister if the contracted employees, those not paid through foreign agencies are subject to a firm contract, the same in nature as that of the employees who are not contracted employees? That is my first question. Are they subject to a firm contract?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Could you explain for me when you say a firm contract?

**The Chairman:** A contract that is identical, all of them having the same terms and conditions?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Yes, all of them have the same terms and conditions.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Those terms and conditions are different from those that apply to the employees who are employed under the establishment?

**The Chairman:** Well, they do not have to get a contract.

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** The persons under the establishments are not employed by contract.

**The Chairman:** Yes, there are no written contracts.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** I wish to ask, under what condition of the contract is the outcome of the negotiation between the union and the employer, an implied term that gives them a right to increase when those negotiations would have been concluded?



**The Chairman:** Do you know the answer to that, Honourable Member?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** There is no right, Honourable Member. As an employee they are entitled to any increases that are given to all of the workers who are employed at that point in time in the government agency.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member asked what is the specific term of the contract? Do you know that offhand?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** There is no specific term.

**The Chairman:** There is no specific term.

The Honourable Member Mr Williams

**Mr Basil Williams:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 ... could I inquire of the Honourable Minister if contracted employees are subject to the disciplinary rules of the traditional Public Service?

**Hon Dr Jennifer RA Westford:** Yes, they are and there are even more rules that they are subjected to.

**Agency 14 - Public Service Ministry, Programme 141 - Public Service Management - \$138,303,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Page 435

#### **DIVISION 549 - PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$8,300,000 for Division 549 - Public Service Ministry - stands part of the Estimates.

**Division 549 - Public Service Ministry - \$8,300,000 - agreed to**

**and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 110 and 111

**AGENCY 23 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, Programme 231 - Main Office**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$180,853,000 for Agency 23 - Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Programme 231 - Main Office - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - the sum of \$5,124,000, could the Honourable Minister please share with this Honourable House the service or services that are so employed?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Mr Chairman, Strategic Action Security and that is for security at the National Exhibition Complex.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Allen.

**Mr Ivor Allen:** Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - we note the sum of \$116,000,000 voted for 2005. Could the Minister advise which are the local organisations to benefit from this Acct Code?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Mr Chairman, those two organisations are the Guyana Tourism Authority and the Guyana National Bureau of Standards as contained in the Appendix.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** A supplementary question, Mr Chairman. I am looking at the Appendix, Mr Chairman, and I see five organisations and looking at Page 382, would you want to advise me whether he is

correct or whether the print here, which of these five agencies are correct?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Mr Chairman, she is ... *[Pause]*

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** ... reluctantly correct.

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Absolutely correct and that was just a means of testing you if you were going to go back there. *[Laughter]*

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Well, let me stay here as I am here.

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Okay.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** The Guyana National Bureau of Standards, we see a princely sum of \$63,656,000 and I am at Page 382. Honourable Minister does that represent a subsidy or is that a reflection in fact of their full operating cost?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Mr Chairman, it is a subvention to the Guyana National Bureau of Standards, to assist in running the operation but not the full cost. There are other incomes which are garnered from other services produced especially for the private sector.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Still on Page 382, the Guyana Tourism Authority Board, I see a figure of \$51,000,000. Seeing tourism is set to take off, could the Honourable Minister indicate to us what major benefit the government is getting from the contribution, the subvention of \$51,000,000?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Mr Chairman, the major benefit is the increase in tourism arrivals in 2005.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** For funerals and weddings.

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** As you know, sir, we set a record in 2004 and

we are hoping to do that amount or even better. The allocation in this year's budget reflects the emphasis which the government is placing on tourism and we expect that we will be able with this allocation to have representatives in the major markets, as mentioned by the Minister of Finance in his Speech. So, we do believe that this allocation is well founded and the country will gain from this marketing and technical expertise in tourism which will be acquired because of these monies.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Thank you, Minister. In view of all that you have said, do you think that \$51,000,000 is enough to catapult us from an almost non-existent tourism industry to a highflier?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Except for the qualification of non-existent, Mr Chairman, it is not enough and we could always do with more, but what we have to look at is the growth in the tourism industry expenditure. Four years ago, \$20,000,000 was allocated, today, \$51,000,000 is allocated to semi-autonomous agencies and there are other resources which we garner from friendly donor agencies to assist us with our efforts and we are working to improve this. It is going to be by merits - if you do better, I am sure the Minister of Finance will see the rewards of giving us more and more allocations in the future.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Vincent Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. The Minister in responding to a previous question, indicated the benefit to be derived, the increased arrivals in the year 2005. I would like to ask the Honourable Minister, if when we expend these princely sums of money, if we do not have short term, medium term and long terms benefits. Are we only going to benefit from the arrivals this year? Is there no multiplier effect down the road?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Mr Chairman, I know that you have been very, very ...

**The Chairman:** ... patient.

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** ... I know, we have been testing your patience. You know, like I do that this does not deal specifically with the numbers and we do have those expectations and those plans and those projections.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Staffing Details, going back to numbers. Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - I see eight contracted employees and my question is, could the Honourable Minister please share with this House what are the functions of these eight contracted employees? What are their job titles and specifications?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Administrative Assistant to the Office of the Minister; Confidential Secretary to the Minister; Administrator of the National Exhibition Centre, Accounting Officer, National Exhibition Centre, Confidential Secretary, National Exhibition Centre; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce and Personal Assistant to the Minister.

Mr Chairman, most of those positions are carried within the Establishment. If you go to the section, I think they are on Page 490, you will see them detailed there so they are not phantom positions.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** A supplementary question, Mr Chairman ... Could the Minister advise if the Permanent Secretary's annual salary is in excess of \$5,000,000?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Mr Chairman, I do not know about the Permanent Secretary's salary being in excess of \$5,000,000.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** It is not in excess of \$5,000,000?

**The Chairman:** The next question, Mrs Riehl.

**Mrs Clarissa S Riehl:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6272 - Electricity Charges - I would like to ask the Honourable Minister, why this dip in your figure for electricity from \$15,000,000 last year to \$6,000,000? What is your explanation?

**Hon Manzoor Nadir:** Mr Chairman, this has to do with an ongoing problem with the electricity to the compound and the problems we experience with those persons making illegal connections. In 2003, it caused severe disruptions in the supply of electricity to the compound and it took some time for us to regularise the accounting with GPL. What you saw last year with the \$18,300,000 reflected some arrears from 2003 and bringing the account up to date. What we have reflected there is what we expect to expend this year for electricity.

Agency 23 - Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Programme 231 - Main Office - \$180,853,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**The Chairman:** Pages 112 and 113

**AGENCY 23 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, Programme 232 - Ministry Administration**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$33,662,000 for Agency 23 - Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Programme 232 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 23 - Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Programme 232 - Ministry Administration - \$33,662,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

Pages 114 and 115

**AGENCY 23 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, Programme 233 - Commerce, Tourism, Industry and Consumer Affairs**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$26,977,000 for Agency 23 - Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Programme 233 - Commerce, Tourism, Industry and Consumer Affairs - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 23 - Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Programme 233 - Commerce, Tourism, Industry and Consumer Affairs - \$26,977,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

Page 414

**DIVISION 529 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$31,900,000 for Division 549 - Ministry Of Tourism, Industry and Commerce - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Melville.

**Mrs Shirley J Melville:** Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister explain what type of training would be done? Is it page 110, Mr Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Page 414, Honourable Member.

**Mrs Shirley J Melville:** Oh, I am sorry, Mr Chairman.

**Division 549 - Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce - \$31,900,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 94 and 95

**AGENCY 16 - MINISTRY OF AMERINDIAN AFFAIRS, Programme 161 - Amerindian Development**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,000 for Agency 16 - Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, Programme 161 - Amerindian Development - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 16 - Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, Programme 161 - Amerindian Development - \$1,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

Page 437

**DIVISION 551 - MINISTRY OF AMERINDIAN AFFAIRS**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$90,043,000 for Division 551 - Ministry of Amerindian Affairs - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Melville.

**Mrs Shirley J Melville:** Mr Chairman, under Project Code 14015 - Amerindian Development Fund, could the Honourable Minister state whether the \$500,000 that is donated to Bena Hill Institute from September 2004 to September 2005 is included in this fund?

**Hon Carolyn Rodrigues:** Yes, it is included and it is \$6,000,000, not



\$500,000.

**Mrs Shirley J Melville:** Could the Honourable Minister say whether that is another figure with regard to the \$630,000 for the revolving loan fund?

**Hon Carolyn Rodrigues:** With the loan scheme, the Staff is catered for in the employees section, and the fund is actually separate from whatever is here. In other words, the employment and the actual money are separate, and it is kept in a separate bank account, with a separate board.

Division 551 - Ministry of Amerindian Affairs - \$90,043,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**The Chairman:** Pages 160 and 161

**AGENCY 46 - GEORGETOWN PUBLIC HOSPITAL CORPORATION, Programme 461 - Public Hospital**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,066,126,000 for Agency 46 - Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, Programme 461 - Public Hospital - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Lawrence.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6112 - Senior Technical - could the Honourable Minister say how many Guyanese are employed in the Senior Technical position?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** We have thirty foreign doctors who are employed at the Georgetown Hospital, and most of the Senior Technical staff are Guyanese.

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister say what he will do to keep these doctors, or to attract them to continue to stay here?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, I do not think that is an appropriate question, but I will give the Minister an opportunity if he wants to say anything on it. Strictly speaking, it is not a proper question.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** We have been addressing this issue time and time again in this House.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister please advise, under Acct Code 6241 - Rental of Buildings - \$13,922,000, which buildings the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation are renting?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** We have been renting several houses to house doctors and other senior staff.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Norton.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** We have, as I said, over thirty doctors who have come through some of the technical agreements between governments - for example, the Cuban doctors, the Chinese doctors, and so on. We rent houses for them.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Norton.

**Dr George A Norton:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - could the Honourable Minister state what are the scholarships included?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** This is training and scholarships. In terms of training, we have several training programmes, as you well know, Dr Norton. PCA programmes - we are sponsoring multipurpose technicians to the Ministry of Health training programmes. This year you will notice there is an increase in the Budget. We have succeeded in making arrangements with several other governments, such as the government of Israel, to be sending doctors for training.

In addition to that, we have many training programmes now at the Georgetown Hospital. For example - AACLS, PALS, and so on, and some of these doctors are coming to do training in the country and are being accommodated under this programme.

**Dr George A Norton:** Mr Chairman, I was referring particularly to scholarships, not training.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** For example, this fund will support three doctors who will be going to Israel this year on three-month training programmes, and we are going to be sending, under this programme, doctors to Mexico.

**Dr George A Norton:** Mr Chairman, a follow-up question. Could the Minister say if, under the scholarship programme, if complete specialists programmes are included?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Not in Acct Code 6302 programme - a Budget that is here.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - I noticed that the revised figures for 2004 is very close to the budgeted figures for 2005, just a mere \$9,000,000 difference, but when we turn to the Staffing Details, we see an increase of more than 100 percent - from 280 to 635. I wonder if there is an under-statement, in terms of the budgetary allocation, or if there is a mistake with respect to the numbers under the staffing details? The two do not seem to correlate.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, the figures on that table on Page 161 were filled under 2004 are similar to 2005 figures. The total number of employees at the end of 2004 was 1,249.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Lawrence.

*Thursday, 10 March 2005*

**Mrs Volda A Lawrence:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - could the Honourable Minister say what is the reason for the decrease in the drugs and medical supplies this year?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The budgeted figure for 2004 was \$460,000,000, and the budgeted figure for 2005 is \$480,000,000. Last year, we purchased drugs so that it could go into the next year; we purchased drugs that will take us into 2005, so therefore we have to vire money from another programme to meet that additional cost. We expect this year that this amount will be sufficient.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Miss David.

**Miss Judith David:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Infrastructure - revised 2004, it was \$279,000, we now see in 2005, \$6,800,000, can the Minister explain?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Yes, of course, Georgetown Hospital is housed in a large complex, and there are many internal roads and drains that need to be maintained. We continue to do work routinely on the roads and drains. Last year, it was not necessary for us to use the entire budget. However, this year we intend to do additional roads and create more parking spaces.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Norton.

**Dr George A Norton:** Mr Chairman, Programme 461 - Public Hospital - under Materials, Equipment and Supply - could the Minister say, specifically, if, among the equipment under that programme to acquire during this budget, if a trial set and frame is included, especially since the one that the Georgetown Hospital had and has been using is now used elsewhere.

*continued in Pt II*

# National Assembly Debates

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE SECOND SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT  
OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE  
REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN**

**Part II**

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56TH SITTING

2.00 PM

Thursday, 10 March 2005

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*cont'd fr. Pt 1*

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Dr Norton, could you please repeat that?

**Dr George A Norton:** If, among the equipment that we plan to acquire this year, if included is a trial frame and set?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** What Acct Code are you talking about?

**Dr George A Norton:** Acct Code 6222.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** No, you are asking about a capital item. This does not cover capital items.

**Dr George A Norton:** Just a supplementary question. I noticed, further down, equipment was mentioned ... Acct Code 6222 ...

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** ... Field material and Supplies ...

**Dr George A Norton:** Right

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** It does not include capital item, such as equipment.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

**Mrs Sheila VA Holder:** Mr Chairman, will the Honourable Minister

turn his attention to Acct Code 6283 - Cleaning and Extermination Services - could the Honourable Minister indicate whether this is a contracted service, or a single company doing both cleaning and extermination, and what does it cover?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The cleaning and extermination services, that is cleaning, in terms of the buildings, the floors and so on, and we have several new buildings with tiles and so on. So, there is a cleaning contract that is given. In terms of the extermination services, it includes pest control and it is not one company that provide pest control.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander, you have been trying for sometime.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, I would like to ask, under the Acct Code 6284 - Other - where there is provision for \$55,920,000, what are the items that are covered by this Acct Code?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** There is a number of items that are covered under Acct Code 6284 - Others - advertising cost, consultancy cost, ID badges, airline tickets for several consultants whom we bring in to work. They are not paid, but we pay their expenses of coming. The bindings of payroll sheets, custom brokers, courier and freight services, maid services for the guest houses that we rent for the doctors, poor burial and grave orders, and internet services. Prior to this year, we have also been paying for people to get CT scans at a private sector service. This year, we intend to have our own CT scan, but MRI services are now available to the private sector, and where the doctors think it will benefit the patient, we assist patients for that. Maintenance of telephone systems come under this. Transportation of patients, pager rental, cylinder rentals, shipping charges, et cetera, are covered under this.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

**Mrs Sheila VA Holder:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. Will

the Honourable Minister indicate, from his answer just now, the types of specialists whom are likely to be brought in under this Acct Code this year?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** It changes as we go along and we see needs, but I could give you an example. A couple of weeks ago, a doctor from Hadassah University came - an ophthalmologist, to work at New Amsterdam Hospital and help develop systems there. Last year we had a cardiologist come in from Belgium. We have had cardiologists coming from Yale, Virginia University, from Leeds, and these are ongoing relationships that we do have now. They are not only coming to provide services, but they are providing training to the local doctors.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

**Mrs Clarissa S Riehl:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6292 - Dietary - I see there is a \$10, 000,000 increase in your budget, Honourable Minister. Is it that you plan to feed the patients at the Georgetown Hospital better, or do you anticipate more patients this year?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** It is both. We keep improving the nutritional content and so on. We have hired nutritionists and we are preparing specialised meals now. For example, for the diabetics and so on. In addition, as the years go by and the meals improve and the distribution improve, patients' families are opting more to use the hospital's food rather than bringing in food, and our occupancy rate has improved at the hospital, so there are more inpatients.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Norton.

**Dr George A Norton:** Mr Chairman, could the Minister kindly say if, as he improves the dietary conditions of a patient, when we look at Acct Code 6293 - Refreshments and Meals - we see there is a reduction there. Could he explain if he will then be taking this out of the workers, probably?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** This covers water and refreshments,

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and sometimes a light snack for meetings that are held at the hospital, and we have budgeted slightly more than we budgeted last year, even though the revised budget shows that we used a bit more, but that is because we had an unscheduled number of teams coming in to the country.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dagleish Joseph:** Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister state, under Page 161, Staffing Details, with the amount of unfilled vacancies, whether they will be advertised both locally and abroad.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** First of all, I have already answered part of this question, and I am sure Dr Joseph's colleagues will advise him.

Secondly, the authorised staffing is what was in the old establishment of the public service, and we have been working on a workforce development plan, so that will change, and there are still some vacancies that needs to be filled, and we are working to fill those positions.

**Dr Dagleish Joseph:** I think the specific question was, are these vacancies going to be advertised locally and abroad?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Both, Dr Joseph.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

**Mrs Shirley J Melville:** Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister state, under Acct Code 6264 - Vehicle Spares and Service - how many vehicles we are looking at and if that allocation is sufficient, against Acct Code 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - with \$36,000,072?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, there are four vehicles that we need to maintain. We now have two ambulances that are operating and, consequently, it necessitates an increase in the Budget for fuel and lubricants.



**Agency 46 - Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, Programme 461 - Public Hospital - \$2,066,126,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Page 405

**DIVISION 516 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH, PUBLIC HOSPITAL CORPORATION (Project Code 45001)**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$30,000,000 for Division 516 - Ministry of Health, Public Hospital Corporation (Project Code 45001) - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, I have perused the entire Division 516, seeing that it deals with all of the capital expenditure for the Ministry of Health, and I am looking in vain for the allocation of the much-talked-about new McKenzie Hospital. Will the Minister state where is this allocation for the new McKenzie Hospital? It is not under the capital here.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The Linden Hospital will not be covered under the Georgetown Hospital.

Division 516 - Ministry of Health, Public Hospital Corporation (Project Code 45001) - \$30,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**The Chairman:** Pages 166 and 167

**AGENCY 47- MINISTRY OF HEALTH, Programme 471 - Ministry Administration**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$466,834,000 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 471 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Dalglish Joseph.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - Can the Honourable Minister state which buildings will be repaired, or which maintenance will take place here?

**The Chairman:** Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - does not say anything about buildings.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** What maintenance will take place under this Code?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Acct Code 6255 for Programme 471 will be resurfacing the car park, weeding of the Ministry of Health Compound, the work at the food and drug bond, and the doctors' flat.

**Dr George A Norton:** Mr Chairman, could the Minister, under Acct Code 6132, explain in a little more detail the incentives as budgeted for?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, there is zero budget.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6294 - Other - there is a sharp increase here in 2005, can the Minister explain why? What is this money intended to do?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** This is just a little more than the 2004 budget, it is not a sharp increase and it covers the eye-care programme, \$50,000,000 has been allocated for special eye-care programme under our poverty reduction and it will provide spectacles for pensioners.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Miss David.

**Miss Judith David:** Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6284 - Other - can the Minister say why such an increase?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** This Acct Code covers petty contracts, advertisements of vacancies, tender documents, et cetera, the internet services. This year we anticipate, with the large numbers of projects that the Ministry must execute, greater expenses in the preparation of tender documents and so on.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6223 and Acct Code 6224, Honourable Minister, some of the items you mentioned, like the tender documents, would they not be covered under office materials and supplies of print and non-print materials?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** No, Honourable Member. Mr Chairman, this covers a large number of forms and so on t the Ministry uses

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - there is a figure of \$24,300,000. Could we Honourable Minister please share with the House the security service or services that are so employed?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** There are four security services that are used. It is not just for the Ministry of Health Compound - United Associates, a security service at the New Market Street ... no, they are located at New Market Street, but they provide services for us, Strategic Action Security, Brans Security, and the Special Constabulary.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Miss David.

**Miss Judith David:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training, including Scholarships - can the Minister say what training and scholarships would be had?

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**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** For this programme, there are several training, but the main one here would be the food safety workshops.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

**Mrs Sheila VA Holder:** Mr Chairman, will the Hon Dr Ramsammy turn to Acct Code 6222 - Field Materials and Supplies - and explain the purpose for the increase, and whether or not this has anything to do with introducing the new Malaria protocol?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** This covers things like raincoats, long boots, et cetera.

**Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 471 - Ministry Administration - \$466,834,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 168 and 169

**AGENCY 47- MINISTRY OF HEALTH, Programme 472 - Disease Control**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$329,601,000 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 472 - Disease Control - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Mr Chairman, the total appropriation here is approximately \$329,601,000. Could the Honourable Minister tell us whether this amount will be spent also on the mother-to-child transmission prevention programme?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** There is a small allocation here to cover some of the Ministry of Health's staff who worked in the prevention of mother-to-child programme. Most of the funding for the mother-

to-child programme is done through the US PEPFAR Programme, and that is not included in this budget.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** A supplementary question. Does this programme have a local component, in terms of monetary contribution?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Yes, there is, besides some of the people who are working and leading the prevention of mother-to-child efforts, and who are employed in this programme, there is also the provision of milk to women with children.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** A supplementary question. Can I ask how successful this programme has been so far?

**The Chairman:** That is not a question for the Estimates. The next question, please.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - can the Honourable Minister state why such a significant reduction in the contribution and which agencies may have not benefited from contributions this year?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, if the Honourable Member looks at Page 383, the answer is right there. NAPS, which is the Ministry of Health unit, used to be given, in addition to the normal budget, a separate amount of money; but this year the Ministry of Finance has integrated the funding that goes to all these bodies into the normal budget.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** So, Honourable Minister, is it fair to say, therefore, that NAPS is now null and void?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** NAPS is still a functioning unit, and much stronger than before.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Norton.

**Dr George A Norton:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and

Medical Supplies - we actually have budgeted less than we have last year. Could the Honourable Minister explain this, please?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Again, we have a larger budget this year than was allocated last year. We did utilise some extra funds through virement funds, and this was to prepare for this year.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Miss David.

**Miss Judith David:** Dr Norton took care of this.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Mrs Melville.

**Mrs Shirley J Melville:** Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister indicate under which heading would cancer be?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** There are several areas. Cancer treatment falls under Georgetown Hospital. It is also under this programme, and it is also under Programme 1.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - and the attachment, I note that AIDS secretariat is zero, and I wish to be advised on what the provisions are for this disease, outside of the apparent non-existence of the Secretariat in the 2005 budget?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, I just answered that. NAPS is a unit of the Ministry of Health, and its budget is integrated into the Ministry of Health's budget.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Miss David.

**Miss Judith David:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question to the Honourable Member's question. Can the Minister say which one of the programmes the outer regions come under for the treatment?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** I have already answered that. It is several programmes. Cancer treatment falls under several programmes. The regional budget that we support, each Region has its own budget. However, there is a programme for regional health within the Ministry that supports these programmes, and that will be programme 4.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, just a small question on Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - could the Honourable Minister please share with the House, the jobs being done by these contracted employees?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Some are technical such as, epidemiologists. There are a couple of medexes who had retired and we brought them back - the Chief Inspector for vector control, a couple of doctors that we brought back, the veterinary Public Health Inspector, Port Health Officer, such as at the airport, the one at Cheddi Jagan Airport, for example, has been retained under contract.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** A supplementary question. Would it not have been possible to fill the vacancy of the medex from within the authorised staff, rather than having to be contracted?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** We employ all the medexes that have come to us for employment. Some of these, though, have reached retirement age so we bring them back as contracted employees.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** A supplementary question. Will it then be fair to say that we do not have enough medexes? That there is a shortage?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** It is fair to say, we indeed have one problem in that, every time we have a new medex, we have to ask the Public Service to increase the establishment, because we have been training more medexes and, as I said in my Budget speech this year, there are 26 already in the programme, and we intend to take another 30, and we

intend to increase that to 50 next year, so that the establishment will increase substantially.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Would I then be correct, Honourable Minister, to presume that Acct Code 6302 - Training - that figure there of \$9,851,000 would include the figure for training of the medexes?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** No, that will come later, Honourable Member. Mr Chairman, that is under programme 5.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Thank you so much. You see, I might want to become a medex.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Mr Alexander.

**Mr Vincent L Alexander:** Mr Chairman, could I ask the Honourable Minister to indicate under Acct Code 6111 - Administrative - what are the designations covered under this Acct Code?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, Appendix Q, just to help Members, is on Page 503. You will see designations, Page 502 for Programme 2, this particular programme starts on Page 502, and you will see all the positions listed.

**Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 472 - Disease Control - \$329,601,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 170 and 171

**AGENCY 47 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH, Programme 473 - Primary Health Care Services**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$242,852,000 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 473 - Primary Health Care Services - stands part of the Estimates.



**Chairman:** The Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

**Dr Joseph:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6241 - Rentals of buildings - last year, it was budgeted \$100,500,000, it was revised and increased to \$110,000,000. This year it is \$106,000,000. Can the Minister explain the decrease, in relation to what may have caused the revised to increase to \$110,000,000 last year?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, there are two doctors who are now housed in rented buildings.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6241 ... sorry, which question did the Minister answer just now? I thought it was Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - can I have the correction there? Acct Code 6221 ...

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, could you repeat the question, please?

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6221 was the question I asked earlier.

**The Chairman:** Could you repeat the question, please?

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6221, I said that last year the provision was \$100,500,000. It was revised to \$110,800,000. This year the provision is \$106,000,000. I am asking the Honourable Minister, in light of what happened last year, where there was a revision and an increase by approximately \$10,000,000. What is his justification for this reduction?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The same answer, Dr Joseph, that I have given for the same line item in the other programmes. We have developed greater efficiency in our procurement and distribution. Last year, we not only purchased to take us through the year, but we have now purchased to take us into 2005, and that necessitated that virement. This year we expect that this sum is adequate.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6241 - Rentals of Buildings - which building, or buildings, are currently used by this agency?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** I have answered that, Mr Chairman.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** I did not hear that. Can the Minister repeat?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** I said that there are two buildings that we are renting for dental surgeons.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** I specifically asked the Minister where these buildings are.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, do I have to give the address of these doctors?

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** People need to know.

**The Chairman:** You do not have to, Honourable Member. If you do, you can give them.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** No, the two doctors are Dr Juan and Dr Lee.

**The Chairman:** There is a strong smell of fire. Is that what is agitating Members? Proceed. Can the staff investigate where the smell is coming from, please? Yes, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - can the Honourable Minister give us a breakdown on what training/scholarships will be provided for under this provision?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** There is a number of training besides the routine ones that we do with office staff and so on. There are technical training programmes here, for example, the breast-feeding workshop this year would be done across the country. There are also additional training and dental training under this programme, for example, training across the country of dental personnel for ARTs.

**Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 473 - Primary Health Care Services - \$242,852,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 172 and 173

**AGENCY 47- MINISTRY OF HEALTH, Programme 474 - Regional and Clinical Services**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$733,764,000 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 474 - Regional and Clinical Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6241 - Rental of Buildings - can we have an idea, from the Honourable Minister, which buildings are rented here?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Acct Code 6241?

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Yes.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The rental here is for the health centre at Kitty. You will remember that, two years ago, we moved out of the old building above the market and we are now renting a building in Kitty. Also, there is a building in Kwakwani.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. Are there any plans to have the Ministry to own its own building for a health centre in Kitty?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Yes, we have been looking in the Kitty area for a site and, as soon as we could locate that ... we have discussed this, and funds will be allocated for construction of a new health centre at Kitty.

**Dr Dagleish Joseph:** Page 173, Staffing Details, I am pretty aware that the divisional health services are plagued by shortages of staff. I wonder whether or not adequate advertising of these vacancies is done on a continual basis? You really do not see any of these vacancies being advertised. I would like to know whether or not there will be advertising of the vacancies, so that persons who may still reside in Guyana, or in the Caribbean, may be able to apply to fill these vacancies?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** We have been advertising, and we intend to advertise even more this year.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

**Mrs Clarissa S Riehl:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - Honourable Minister, I see you have a phenomenal jump here - from \$948,000 used last year, to \$170,000,000. You have a commensurate increase from one to seven contracted employees. Who are these eight contracted employees who will be in receipt of over \$20,000,000 a year? Who are they - \$170,000,000 budgeted and eight contracted employees? Could you tell this House?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, the big jump there is because, this year, the Ministry of Finance wants to integrate the budgets of various entities that were receiving subventions. For example, the Linden Hospital, the National Psychiatric Hospital, and Kwakwani. Their salaries fall under there.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Norton.

**Dr George A Norton:** Mr Chairman, could the Minister say if this is a typographical error under Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations—where, for this year, the budget is \$200,000, while last year it was \$245,000,000?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Yes.

**Dr George A Norton:** It is a typographical?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** No, Acct Code 6321 - there is a large increase.

**Dr George A Norton:** No, no, this is a decrease.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** I am sorry, Acct Code 6321, there is a decrease there, because a subvention that normally went to Linden Hospital and to Kwakwani Hospital and the National Psychiatric Hospital - if you look on Page 383, you will see they are now integrated into the budget.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - I have noticed a pretty big jump - from \$11,426,000 to \$20,672,000. First of all, could the Honourable Minister say which service, or services, and if he can share with the House the reason for this almost 100 percent increase?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The security is from Linden Hospital, Kwakwani Hospital, and so are now included in this budget. This is the integration of the budget here, and Special Constabulary is providing it at Linden.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Thank you. Just bear with me, I am not a health person. You have said, with Acct Code 6321, the figure has been reduced from \$245,000,000 to \$200,000 because you are taking away Kwakwani Hospital, Mackenzie Hospital and Fort Canje. I think you said they have been subsumed in the National ... Anyhow, you have taken those away. So then, how come for the purposes of security, you are including them in this Acct Code, in Programme 474?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, it is very simple. You used to have a subvention, one amount of money that was just assigned to Linden Hospital, Kwakwani Hospital, and to the National Psychiatric Hospital. Now, what we have done is to cover the various areas - security, drugs, staffing, in the various budgets.

**Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 474 - Regional and Clinical Services - \$733,764,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 174 and 175

**AGENCY 47- MINISTRY OF HEALTH, Programme 475 - Health Sciences Education**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$156,864,000 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 475 - Health Sciences Education - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Mr Chairman, the total appropriation here is \$156,800,000, I wish that the Honourable Minister, if he could tell us what training and educational programmes will be funded under this provision?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** There is a number of ... *[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** You have it under Acct Codes 6301 and 6302, Honourable Member. Those are the items that you are referring to?

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Training and education.

**The Chairman:** Yes, could you look at Acct Codes 6301 and 6302. You are not referring to those?

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Mr Chairman, the question is not the amount only, but what specific training programmes.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, this whole programme covers training, so it is not just Acct Code 6302, but the various pro-

grammes that are being conducted by this programme are:

- nursing;
- rehabilitation assistant;
- x-ray technician;
- dental extender;
- multipurpose technician;
- community dental therapist; and
- medex programme.

**Dr Dagleish Joseph:** Specifically, under Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - could the Minister explain?

**The Chairman:** Explain what?

**Dr Dagleish Joseph:** Explain what type of scholarships will be offered under this provision.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** There are no overseas scholarships. However, students from the Hinterland and so who come out for training are supported under this programme through stipends and so on.

**Dr Dagleish Joseph:** So the local training will be in the current programmes that are locally conducted by the Health Sciences?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Yes.

**Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 475 - Health Sciences Education - \$156,864,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**The Chairman:** Pages 176 and 177

**AGENCY 47- MINISTRY OF HEALTH, Programme 476 - Standards and Technical Services**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$140,538,000 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 476 - Standards and Technical Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - could the Minister explain what drugs and medical supplies are being purchased here, under *standards and technical services*, and for what purpose?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Yes, Mr Chairman. It is mostly here, laboratory re-agents, x-ray films, et cetera, that consists of drugs and medical supplies.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Is any of this money provided here going to be dedicated to standardising technical standards at the level of laboratories?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Yes, Dr Joseph.

**Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 476 - Standards and Technical Services - \$140,538,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

**The Chairman:** Pages 178 and 179

**AGENCY 47- MINISTRY OF HEALTH, Programme 477 - Rehabilitation Services**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$105,926,000 for Agency 47 -



Ministry of Health, Programme 477 - Rehabilitation Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 6241 - Rental of Buildings - can the Minister tell us which buildings? And Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of buildings - which buildings?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6241 - buildings that are rented for three VSOs and one of the local staff. They are located in Campbellville and Kitty.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** A supplementary question. It seems very expensive to rent buildings for these foreigners. They want to invest more than Guyanese ... *[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** Ask the question, Honourable Member.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** A supplementary question, Acct Codes 6321 and 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local and International Organisations - We see here a drastic decrease in relation to last year. Can the Minister explain?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The same answer as before, and on Page 383, one would see the answer there. These subventions previously were given to the National Commission of Disability, the Ptolemy Reid Centre, and Chester Home. Only the National Commission on Disability is retained. The rest of the Budget is integrated.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Of this total amount - \$105,900,000, is there any rehabilitation works to be done to the Ptolemy Reid?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** That will be covered under Capital.

**Agency 47 - Ministry of Health, Programme 477 - Ministry of Health - \$ 105,926,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of**

## the Estimates

**The Chairman:** Page 405

### **DIVISION 516 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$764,500,000 for Division 516 - Ministry of Health - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

**Mr Abdul Kadir:** Mr Chairman, I am back at Division 516 again. That deals with capital expenditure for the Ministry of Health, and I am beginning to get a little worried. I still have not seen the allocations for the new McKenzie Hospital. Can the Minister kindly tell us where, under Capital here, is the allocation for the new McKenzie Hospital?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** Mr Chairman, I will refer the Member to Project Code 44004 - Health Sector Programme. This is the local amount of money that is going to be put in. The IDB loan is under the Ministry of Finance, and this is being supported by an IDB loan.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dagleish Joseph:** Mr Chairman, a supplementary question ... According to the Budget Speech of the Minister of Finance, the specific construction of the new hospital at Linden was spoken of and therefore, under institutional strengthening, this has been occurring for a number of years now. IDB health care ... *[Interruption]*

**The Chairman:** You are making a speech, Honourable Member. Would you please ask your question?

**Dr Dagleish Joseph:** No, so the Minister of Finance said that the construction of the new hospital at Linden will commence. The Minister is asked a question, where is this financial provision?

**The Chairman:** Did he not answer the question?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The \$160,000,000 here is to design an architectural work. The tender board is now considering the proposals from the architects. We expect that will be approved and then submitted to the IDB for further release for the beginning of the construction. The construction will begin this year. *[Applause]*

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

**Mrs Deborah J Backer:** Mr Chairman, I am going back to Project Code 44004 - the \$160,000,000 that the Honourable Minister has just spoken about. When I look at the Profile which is on Page 89, what I see here, and perhaps this may be yet another error, *upgrading of health facilities, provision for institutional strengthening, provision for human resources development*, I see no mention here about Linden Hospital.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, the question was answered by the Minister. Can we have the next question, please?

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Acct Code 12014 - Ministry of Health buildings - the question concerning the Ptolemy Reid Rehabilitation Centre is now posted to the Minister.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** This is covered under the Basic Needs Trust Fund, not under the Ministry of Health.

**The Chairman:** Mrs Melville, do you have a question? Just a minute, allow Mrs Melville, please. You are on the floor all the time.

**Mrs Shirley J Melville:** Mr Chairman, under Project Code 24001 - Land and Water Transport - could the Honourable Minister tell us which of the Hinterland Regions would be benefiting from this?

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** This is for the MMU, for the Maternal Child Healthcare (MCH), and for the malaria programme in Regions 1

and 7.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

**Dr Dalglish Joseph:** Mr Chairman, are there any rehabilitation works to be done on the Ptolemy Reid Rehabilitation Centre this year?

**The Chairman:** The question was asked already, and the answer given.

**Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy:** The answer is yes.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Members, please do not repeat yourselves. The question was asked and an answer given. The next question, please.

Division 516 - Ministry of Health - \$764,500,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

Honourable Members, this completes consideration by the Committee of Supply of the Estimates of Expenditure for 2005.

## **ASSEMBLY RESUMED**

**The Speaker:** The Honourable Minister of Finance

**Hon Saiusnarine Kowlessar:** Mr Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of Supply considered the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 2005 and approve of them as printed.

Question -

That this National Assembly approves the Estimates of Expenditure for the Financial year 2005, of a total sum of seventy-six billion, four hundred and seventy-six million, six hundred and ninety-nine thousand dollars (76,476,699,000) excluding nine billion, nine

hundred and fifty-four million, nine hundred and ten thousand dollars (\$9,954,910,000), which is chargeable by law, as detailed therein, and summarised in the schedule, and agree that it is expedient to amend the law and to make further provision, in respect of finance.

**Put and agreed to.**

**Motion carried.**

### **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS NOS. 12 and 46**

*Be it resolved:*

*That this National Assembly approves of the suspension of Standing Orders 12 (Order of Business) and No 46, with respect to the publication of the Appropriation Bill, 2005, to be introduced in the Assembly at the same sitting at which, and immediately after, the Estimates of Expenditure for 2005 have been approved.*

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

**Hon Reepu Daman Persaud:** With your leave, I move that Standing Orders Nos. 12 and 46 be suspended to enable the Appropriation Bill No. 2/2005 to be introduced at this stage.

Question -

That Standing Orders Nos. 12 and 46 be suspended

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Motion carried**

**BILLS**

**Introduction, Second and Third Readings**

**ITEM 2 - APPROPRIATION BILL 2005 - BILL NO. 2/2005**

*A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sums necessary to meet the expenditure (not otherwise lawfully charged on the Consolidated Fund) of Guyana for the fiscal year ending 31 December 2005, estimates whereof have been approved by the National Assembly, and for the appropriation of those sums for the specified purposes, in conformity with the Constitution.*

**The Speaker:** The Honourable Minister of Finance

**Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar:** Mr Speaker, I beg to introduce the Appropriation Bill 2005, and to move that the Bill be read the First time.

**Question put and agreed to**

Bill read the First time.

**The Speaker:** The Honourable Minister of Finance.

**Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar:** Mr Speaker, I move that the Appropriation Bill 2005 be read the second time.

**Question put and agreed to.**

Bill read the Second time.

**The Speaker:** The Honourable Minister of Finance

**Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar:** Mr Speaker, I move that the Appropriation Bill 2005 be read the third time and passed as printed.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Bill read the Third time and passed as printed.**

### **EXPRESSION OF THANKS**

**The Speaker:** Honourable Members, this brings us to the end of our business for today. I would like to thank, firstly, all Members who participated in the debate and made their contributions. I would like to thank the Parliament staff for bearing up with us. I would like to thank the Ministers who were here, and who assisted us in the debate, and I would like to thank the press and other persons who paid an interest in the Budget debate. Thank you very much.

Honourable Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.

**Hon Reepu Daman Persaud:** Mr Speaker, I wish to move that the National Assembly stands adjourned to a date to be fixed.

**The Speaker:** Honourable Members, the National Assembly shall stand adjourned to a date to be fixed.

**Adjourned accordingly 16:50H**