

Official Report

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

13TH Sitting

Wednesday, 18TH April, 2012

Assembly convened at 5.04 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Speaker's apology for adjournment of the commencement of the sitting

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, ladies, gentlemen and all, I have on two occasions given announcements adjourning the starting time for this session of the sitting. Once again I wish to thank you, most profusely, for your patience. I would not say necessarily for your understanding, because many of you were not even aware of what was happening. Suffice to say that during the time that we were delayed Members of the Government side and Members of the Opposition were conferring as to issues pertaining to the budget, in general, and more specifically to issues as they pertain to the Estimates to be deliberated upon, today.

Motion by Mr. Ramjattan

Mr. Speaker: We are all aware that there is a motion moved in the name of the Hon. Member Ramjattan, as regard to some amendments, which he will be addressing in due course.

Workers' protest

Mr. Speaker: We are aware that, just prior to the start of this session of the sitting, workers from various Ministries and Government Departments, including from this very Parliament Office, were outside of this building ostensibly involved in a protest. I, myself, did not see the placards so I cannot speak exactly to what that protest was.

Wearing of armband

Mr. Speaker: Members have also observed that in the House, today, some Members of Parliament are wearing armbands, white armbands, very distinctive. Ordinarily, the wearing of any armband, any medal or any other paraphernalia as a sign of protest is prohibited. However, I have pointed out that on occasions Members have worn different pins in aid of different causes and I believe that the Members would feel that this cause is sufficiently justifiable to cause them to wear their armbands today. So for today only I will turn a Nelson's eye. I am sure that the Hon. Minister of the Public Service Ministry will be pleased to hear that. She seems rather stern. But I will turn a Nelson's eye on the wearing of the armbands today because they do ordinarily, as I said, go against the approved decorum of the House.

With that said, I believe that a Minister will be making a statement in due course and also there is another issue in which I will address at the appropriate time.

Once again I thank you. I apologise for the late start, much of it was due to my own involvement, and just to say that I am pleased and quite encouraged by the healthy sign of goodwill which pervades the Government and Opposition benches. I am happy that what, perhaps, began as a day fraught with the potential of a crisis is turning out to be one that will take us into a bright light of hope. With that said, we will proceed. Thank you.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

[Written Replies]

1. GUYSUCO

Dr. Roopnarine:

- (i) Can the Minister say when was the last Annual Report of GUYSUCO tabled in the National Assembly?

- (ii) Will the Minister make available the most recent audited accounts of GUYSUCO as a matter of urgency?
- (iii) Will the Minister make available the relevant documentation related to the announced financial release by the European Union (EU) aimed to assisting in the upgrading/diversifying of the sugar industry? Will he specifically provide the number of amounts of funds released and identify the projects in and outside the industry which benefited from these EU funds, and the related values?
- (iv) Will the Minister make available the current Strategic Turnaround Plan which is touted to inform GUYSUCO's current operational programmes?
- (v) Will the Minister make an explicit declaration regarding the existing defects of the Skeldon factory as well as the resources needed, and being utilised, to remedy these defects, specifying the deadlines set?

Minister of Agriculture [Dr. Ramsammy]:

- (i) The last Annual Report of GUYSUCO which was tabled in the National Assembly was for 2009. It was tabled on August 10th, 2010. The 2010 Annual Report was submitted to Cabinet in October, 2011. One will be tabling this report as soon as possible during this session of the Parliament.
- (ii) The audited accounts of GUYSUCO form part of its Annual Report. The last available set of audited accounts of GUYSUCO, therefore, is for 2010 and is available as part of the 2010 Annual Report which I will table in this session of the Parliament.
- (iii) I know that no direct releases of EU funds are being made to GUYSUCO. Under the Sugar Protocol, the EU provides financial support to the Consolidated Fund. As part of this arrangement, there are certain indicators that must be met. The indicators for 2011 included four related to GUYSUCO. The GUYSUCO-related indicators are the amount of land cultivated at Skeldon by private farmers, acreage for replanting, acreage converted for mechanical operation and amount of packaged sugar sold by GUYSUCO. The EU funding arrangements were made

with the Ministry of Finance and were utilised in general budget support. The details of how funds were utilised can be obtained through the Ministry of Finance.

(iv) The Strategic Turnaround Plan 2009-2013 was presented to the Standing Committee on Economic Services of the 9th Parliament In 2010. The Plan was part of the submissions made and is now part of the records of that Committee. I will provide an individual copy for the Member.

(v) The works which will be carried out between now and June, 2013 are not defects in construction by the contractor, but correction of design flaws. The design and corrective work is being done in collaboration with Tate and Lyle and an advance of US\$6M will be provided by Tate and Lyle/American Sugar Refinery for the works to commence. Through this collaboration, Bosch Engineers will begin the designing work and supervising the corrective work as of April, 2012. The works that are being done are as follows:

- Redesign and re-installing the outboard punt dumper.
- Redesign and modification of the bagasse reclaim system to allow bagasse to be fed back to the boilers in a more efficient manner.
- Redesign and corrective work on the cane conveying system.
- Construction of a borehole well for cleaner water supply to the factory.
- Installation of a condensate tank.
- Rotation of the shredder by 360 degrees.
- Replacement of a 5mw Wartsilla Alternator.

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A FACILITY TO PRODUCE ETHANOL

Dr. Roopnarine: Will the Minister provide the details of the agreement reached to avail a

foreign investor, reportedly of more than 44,515 acres of state land, for the establishment of a facility to produce ethanol?

Dr. Ramsammy: The investor is ANSA McAL. It is a group of companies with more than 130 years of business experience and financial capability in the Caribbean. It has been a major business in Guyana for more than two decades.

The investor has an interest in participating in the growing bio-fuel industry as part of its future expansion and diversification. In this regards, the investor has developed a concept plan for the production of bio-ethanol using sugar cane. The investor has approached the Government of Guyana to consider a feasibility study which will investigate the possibility of sugar cane production of about 2M tons per year and the production of bio-ethanol of about 40M gallons annually. The company has requested non-financial support from the Guyana Government to build a commercial bio-ethanol business in Guyana. This support involves the commitment of the Guyana Government towards an agro-energy policy. This policy was being developed since 2007 and this year we will finalise the policy. In addition, the Government of Guyana has also agreed that should the feasibility study leads to ANSA McAL investing in the development of a cane-based bio-ethanol enterprise, the Government will be in a position to lease at least 42,000 hectares of land for this purpose, with the possibility of adding more land for sugar cane cultivation and further expansion of bio-ethanol production.

DRAINAGE IN THE DEMERARA REGION

Dr. Roopnarine: Can the Minister advise on the total sums so far spent on drainage in the Demerara Region since 2005, specifically to control the flooding of the Mahaica and Mahaicony areas caused by the release of water from the East Demerara Water Conservancy into the Mahaica River?

Dr. Ramsammy: Please be informed that the total sum of G\$4,127,506,962 has so far been spent on the following drainage works in the Demerara Region since 2005, specifically to control flooding of the Mahaica and Mahaicony areas caused by excessive rainfall and exacerbated with release of excess water from the East Demerara Water Conservancy (EDWC) via the Lama and Maduni Sluices.

- Rehabilitation of structures and embankment works to the EDWC - \$307,081,114
- Raising, strengthening and rehab of structures of Crown Dam, East Coast Demerara (CD) \$87,729,375
- Structural and earthen works on EDWC relief channel at Kofi - \$12,854,000
- Construct revetment at Shanks canal, Mahaica - \$38,485,000
- Excavation of Cunha channel and Shanks canal - \$28,016,292
- Revetment works at Kofi outfall, East Bank Demerara (EBD) - \$22,499,000
- Raising of Kofi embankment, EBD - \$21,242,300
- Construct scour protection at Kofi outfall, EBD - \$36,510,600
- Construction of 2 pontoons, EDWC - \$97,534,000
- Rehabilitation of Cunha head regulator and outfall - \$27,312,000
- Installation of tubes and construct self acting gates for Mahaica flood embankment - \$18,720,000
- Excavation of outfalls, ECD - \$40,058,000
- Construction of EDWC Northern Relief Channel, (EDWC) - \$1,908,227,212
- Construction of sluice at Retrieve, Mahaicony - \$164,975,000
- Construction of sluice at Cottage, Mahaicony - \$153,302,000
- Construction of sluice at Profit, Abary, West Coast Berbice (WCB) - \$125,611,539
- Construct embankment at Karamat school to First Savannah, M/cony creek, Esau & Jacob to Water Dog creek and Mahaica creek - \$9,040,000
- Construct drainage culvert at Pert and Mortice, Mahaicony - \$28,289,150
- Revetment, excavation and embankment works at Pert Biaboo - \$31,357,000

- Revetment and rehabilitation works at Bellamy canal - \$32,826,680
- Construct embankment and install tube culverts at Wash Clothes and Biaboo - \$10,036,700
- Empoldering and embankment works on right bank Mahaicony to left bank Abary, Mora Point to Hyde Park to Kip Clear - \$26,000,000
- Repairs to flood embankment, right bank Abary, Belladrum to Profit - \$6,000,000
- Construction of flood embankment, left bank Mahaica - \$21,000,000
- Installation of drainage culverts on the left and right banks of Mahaica River - \$45,300,000
- Construction of facade drain from Hyde Park to Retrieve - \$21,500,000
- Cleaning the Mahaica Creek downstream of the public road bridge - \$11,000,000
- Construction of flood embankment from Hyde Park to Abary Creek - \$35,000,000
- Conservancy Adaptation Project (Sec Appendix 1) \$760,000,000

Total \$4,275,506,962

CAP Components

The project will finance the development of the technical foundation for a master plan of future interventions within the EDWC and lowland drainage systems, as well as specific upgrading works and operational improvements aimed at enhancing the flood control capacity of the EDWC. The tools developed under the analytical component of the CAP will be used by the Government of Guyana (GoG) and donor agencies to guide future investments.

Component 1 — Pre-investment studies for engineering design of works:

The objective of this component is to provide the hydrologic baseline necessary for contemplating rational interventions aimed at increasing the current discharge capacity of the flood control system. This objective will be achieved through:

- o Detailed topographic and land use mapping*
- o Hydrologic modelling of coastal lowlands*
- o Assessment of EDWC system integrity*
- o EDWC hydraulic modelling*
- o Pre-feasibility studies for coastal lowland interventions*
- o Operational capacity building*

Under this component, the following activities were completed:

- o Rehabilitation of the Lama and Maduni sluices
- o Procurement of pontoon and excavator

The key outcome of these pre-investment studies will be a high resolution topographic model of the inhabited coastal plain to be used as the basis for hydrologic analysis of the region under current and projected climate scenarios. The results from this component will pinpoint key areas where interventions will improve the system discharge capacity critical for flood zone management. Pre-engineering designs will be completed for a set of prioritised interventions. Specialised staff within the following agencies will be trained in the application of the analytical tools produced: National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA), the Lands and Surveys Commission, the Ministry of Works' River and Se Defence Division, the Guyana Environmental Protection Agency and the Civil Defence Commission.

Component 2 – Investments in specific adaptation measures: The objective of this component is to counteract the effects of sea level rise, which has decreased the GoG's ability to manage water levels of the EDWC system. The investments will improve the ability of the Government to

manage water levels behind the EDWC dam during heavy rains by improving internal water flows in the EDWC and increasing EDWC drainage relief capacity to the Demerara River and eventually the Atlantic Ocean. Based on analytical outputs, additional upgrading of water control structures will also be undertaken. This objective will be achieved through:

- o *Widening of key drainage relief canals*
- o *Improvement of water flow system within EDWC*
- o *Upgrading of water control structures*
- o *Selected equipment purchase and installation*

By the end of project, activities under this component should result in an increased drainage capacity of the EDWC to the Demerara River by roughly 35 per cent (the exact figure will be finalised during the first year of implementation). The GoG, through the NDIA, will direct additional investments in the strengthening of drainage and irrigation infrastructure based on the engineering foundation to be developed under Component I.

Component 3 — Institutional Strengthening and Project Management:

The objective of this component is to strengthen the institutional framework for flood control within the context of the national emergency management sector headed by the Civil Defence Commission. The project will also support an institutional consolidation of flood control in Guyana to help create consensus around a medium and long term intervention strategy to help the country adapt to sea level rise. This work will centre on specific products, including:

- o *Contingency plan for flood events*
- o *Consolidation of flood control actors*
- o *Monitoring and evaluation of project progress*
- o *Project management*

Through this component, the Government will be better positioned to respond to flood emergencies. Moreover, through the Implementation Secretariat, flood control work will begin

to be consolidated in the country, which is expected to lead to greater information sharing and institutional memory throughout the Government.

3. MAHAICA RIVER

Dr. Roopnarine: Can the Minister explain why the Mahaica River continues to be incapable of draining any significant volume of water over the past 7 years?

Dr. Ramsammy: "The question assumes that the volume of water drained from the Mahaica River somehow changed since 2007. My answer to the question asked by the Honourable Member is based only on advice provided to the Ministry of Agriculture from scientific studies and by engineers and experts in the area. The following are some of the pertinent statements from these studies and from the advice provided.

1. The current and recent capability of the Mahaica River remains significantly unchanged from its natural drainage capability established since the late 1950s.
2. Hydrographic surveys (including bathymetry) and reports by Camacho (1994), Camacho and Dharry (1999), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (2006) and CEMCO/SRKN' gineering Joint Venture in association with Mott McDonald (2009) have all corroborated on a largely unchanged physical character of the Mahaica River.
3. These studies have cautioned that the drainage load has increased in relation to drainage time because of high intensity rainfall and, in addition, areas that previously served as holding areas have recently been empoldered and water from these areas are being pumped into the river.
4. Based on hydrographic surveys from these studies, the Mahaica Creek does not have a sloping channel with lower gradient at the mouth of the creek. Such longitudinal profile creates constrictions that restrict the flow of water to the Atlantic Ocean. This physical characteristic is a characteristic of the river and not something new in the last seven years.
5. Studies have identified a natural constriction that exists at Cane Grove which allows a flow of 3,200 cusecs only, as compared to a flow capability of 8,300 cusecs in the upper Itabu area.
6. A review of the engineering surveys conducted in the Mahaica River by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (2006) and CEMCO/SRKN' gineering Joint Venture in association with Mott

McDonald (2009) concluded that there may be some constriction between Belmont and Mosquito Hall that retains higher water levels upstream of Belmont in the Mahaica River.

7. A further conclusion from this study concluded that there is a sand bar across the mouth of the river at Mosquito Hall which restricts outflow at low tides and results in higher water levels being retained upstream at Mosquito Hall.
8. In the 2006 study, the mean level recorded at Little Biaboo is 0.3m lower than that at Mosquito Hall and 0.4m lower than that at Belmont.
9. It is a known that the Mahaica River is very deep at Little Biaboo and there is a reverse gradient, indicating that sediments are washed into the river from the sea on a rising tide.
10. The Mahaica River is the shallowest and has the lowest flow of the Mahaica, Mahaicony and Abary Rivers. For 2012, desilting of the Mahaica River will be done.

4. FORMER PRESIDENTS (BENEFITS AND OTHER FACILITIES) ACT OF 2009

Mr. Greenidge: Would the Minister inform this House whether he has presented to the National Assembly the regulations under which the provisions of the Former Presidents (Benefits and Other Facilities) Act of 2009 are to be given effect and, if so, when this was done?

Dr. Singh: "The option to make regulations has not been exercised to date."

5. FISCAL MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2003

Mr. Greenidge: Would the Minister provide for the House the computation by which he has determined that the ceiling of 2% stipulated in the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act of 2003 has been met?

Dr. Singh: "On the presumption that the question is enquiring about the ceiling referred to in Section 41 of the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act 2003, the said Section provides that the total unreplenished amount drawn from the Contingencies Fund at any time shall not exceed 2 per cent of the estimated annual expenditure of the last preceding year.

On this basis, given estimated total expenditure of \$139,513,916,000 in 2010 as reflected in the 2011 Budget Estimates, the said 2 percent ceiling would have amounted to \$2,790,278,320 in

2011. At no time during 2011 was this amount exceeded. A similar computation in relation to previous years can be done by reference to publicly available sources.

[Oral Reply]

6. STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR DIASATER RESPONSE

Mr. Morian: I beg to ask the Minister of Agriculture Question No.7 on the Order Paper standing in my name:

Could the Hon. Minister provide copies of the contract document for the 'Strengthening of National and Local Capacities for Disaster Response and Reduction' for the project?

Dr. Ramsammy: I am not aware of what project the Hon. Member is asking about. The Ministry of Agriculture has no such contract with anyone.

Mr. Speaker: Hon Member, you have heard the answer. I will give you leave to move a slight amendment to add some specificity, or are you satisfied with the answer?

Mr. Morian: Mr. Speaker, I will add some specificity later on.

Mr. Speaker: So you will.

Mr. Morian: Yes Sir.

Mr. Speaker: Very well. Thank you very much Hon. Minister.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS, INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS

RESPONSE TO MOTION ON THE REDUCTION OF PROVISION FOR CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES

Mr. Speaker: I am informed that the Hon. Member Dr. Nanda Gopaul wishes to make a statement as a Minister. Please proceed.

Minister of Labour [Dr. Gopaul]: I rise to address this honourable House in my capacity as Minister of Labour. I am of the firm view that as Minister of Labour, of all Guyana, I represent

the interest of employers and employees and it is my duty and responsibility to ensure a level playing field for both workers and employers alike. I am also of the firm view that I should protect workers' rights and ensure that our employment laws are observed by all, and that the rights afforded to workers under these laws are scrupulously observed.

Yesterday evening I observed a document emanating from the Hon. Member Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan in which he was giving notice to the Committee of Supply of the National Assembly to reduce the provisions in the Estimates of a number of agencies. Of particular concern is the slashing of employment cost in those agencies particularly as they relate to contracted employees. If such a decision were to be taken the Government will, in effect, be forced to bring an immediate end to hundreds of public sector employees within Government's Departments and Agencies. Such an action will result in a flagrant violation of the affected employees' terms and conditions of employment and would be a breach of the Termination of Employment and Severance Pay Act 1997. This must be a matter of concern to all of us in this honourable House, since what some legislators are proposing can have far-reaching employment consequences and affect the livelihood of hundreds of young and qualified professionals.

What we are witnessing today is the first time in the living history of this Parliament, and perhaps in Parliaments around the world, where Opposition legislators are proposing the immediate dismissal of workers for reasons other than economic or that of affordability. This country is blessed with the economic wherewithal to provide descent employment for all public servants currently on roll. If there is an intention to cause the dismissal, sending home or bringing to an end the contract of any employees in the public service, then recognition must be given to the terms and conditions of the employees' contract and the protection offer them under those terms and under the Termination of Employment and Severance Pay Act. For any worker to be sent home or to be dismissed, section 12 (2) of the Act becomes relevant. I am quoting section 12 (2). An employer may terminate the employment of a worker if the worker becomes redundant or where the reduction of the workforce is a direct result of –

- “(a) The modernisation, automation or mechanisation by the employer of all or part of the business;
- (b) The discontinuance by the employer to carry on all or part of the business;

- (c) The sale or other disposition by the employer of all or part of the business;
- (d) The reorganisation of the business by the employer to improve efficiency;
- (e) The impossibility or impracticability for the employer to carry on the business at its usual rate or level or at all due to -

- (i) A shortage of 'materials'
- (ii) a mechanical breakdown;

... or

- (iv) an act of God;

- (f) A reduced operation in the employer business made necessary by economic conditions, including a lack of or change in markets, contraction in the volume of work or sales, reduced demand or surplus inventory.”

These are some of the conditions under which workers can be sent home and be terminated. The Act also prohibits the termination of employees based on their religious or political beliefs, among others. Should it become necessary to terminate workers under those existing conditions, then a clear minimum of one months notice must be given to the workers' representatives and the Chief Labour Officer. Any violation of the terms of the Act shall cause the employer to be liable on summary conviction to a fine and imprisonment for a period of three months. Of course, Mr. Speaker, you can dismiss for cause but then, again, the provisions of the Act should be observed.

The National Assembly therefore cannot willy-nilly and by the stroke of a pen, or the scissors, send home, in an arbitrary manner, hundreds of workers. I, therefore, appeal to this honourable House to respect the rights of these workers to be employed and their rights should be protected. Never, in my contemplation gracing the wall of this honourable House, would I have expected to witness such a cross approach towards the perusal of our Estimates, particularly under the heads which cater for employment. I, therefore, urge my colleagues in the A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), particularly, since yesterday, the leader of APNU came over as an elder statesman in his presentation, and I have my colleagues, who I know have championed the cause of workers for a number of years, Hon. Members Basil Williams, Rupert Roopnarine, Desmond Trotman and Keith Scott. I am looking forward for all of them, and the collective APNU, and perhaps for the Alliance For Change (AFC), to have a change of heart as it relates to

employment, thus bringing an end to this issue and securing the employment of every public servant.

Thank you Mr. Speaker. [*Applause*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Minister of Finance Dr. Singh, you had intimated that you wish to make a statement. I believe this would be the appropriate time and place for you to do so.

UPDATE ON MEETING WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION DELEGATIONS

Minister of Finance [Dr. Singh]: I do Mr. Speaker and I thank you very much for accommodating me. It would be recalled that a question was asked of me yesterday, whether Government would be willing to meet with the Opposition in relation to the budget's Estimates. In response to which I confirmed the Government's continued availability to receive views from stakeholders, including, most importantly, our colleagues, parliamentary parties, and to consider these views, provided that the matters to be discussed were documented and that a schedule for consideration of the Estimates was adhered to in its entirety.

I am happy to report that, as a result of that undertaking, this morning a meeting was held at Office of the President between President Donald Ramotar, and the delegation which included myself, and the Hon. Leader of the Opposition Mr. David Granger and his delegation.

At the start of the meeting Mr. Granger tabled a list of issues for discussion. Arising out of those discussions, I wish to announce that this People's Progressive Party/ Civic Government will increase the Old Age Pension to \$10, 000 per month with effect from 1st of May, 2012. Government will, in the coming weeks, be examining the adjustments that will be required to fund this increase. As a result of these understandings it is expected that the considerations of the Estimates will proceed smoothly in accordance with the schedule agreed.

It was further agreed that the other issues raised by Mr. Granger will require additional study and examination on which we will remain engaged. I wish to acknowledge the efforts made by both sides in ensuring cordial and effective discussions so that the interests of the people of Guyana are properly served.

Thank you very much. [*Applause*]

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE'S RESPONSE TO MINISTER STATEMENT ON THE MOTION

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member Mr. Ramjattan, I will permit you to give a personal explanation based on what had been ...

Mr. Ramjattan: Mr. Nagamootoo will...

Mr. Speaker: ... make the statement on behalf... Okay, because I believe you are entitled, based on the grievous matter raised by Dr. Nanda Gopaul, to put it into context. Proceed.

Mr. Nagamootoo: It was most disappointing to hear the Hon. Minister N.K. Gopaul giving what amounts to be clearly a distorted view of the position that has been taken by the Alliance For Change with regards to contracted employees. We have written Your Honour, and I read from a letter addressed to the Hon. Minister of Finance, sent by Chairman of the Alliance For Change, Hon. Member Khemraj Ramjattan, to the effect, asking, and I quote from this letter..., because it is very pertinent Your Honour.

Mr. Speaker: Just one second Mr. Nagamootoo. A personal statement is not a rebuttal statement. It is to be a statement which was permitting to set into context the decision, but it is not meant to be a rebuttal because there is no debate on a Minister's statements. A statement can be made if a Hon. Member feels he or she has been aggrieved or that he or she needs to give explanation for something done in the House, or outside the House, that is a matter of discussion, or discourse, or for which the public has an interest. So it is not a rebuttal statement.

Mr. Nagamootoo: The Standing Order provides that notice shall be given of the intention of any one Member of the Parliament to amend a provision as contained in the financial proposal. In keeping with the behest of the Standing Order, the proposals were made in a motion - a counter proposal was made in a motion - before the House in fulfillment of the Standing Order of this House. [*Interruption from the Government Members.*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, please allow him to give his explanation and then we will get through this rather quickly.

Mr. Nagamootoo: It means that the intention that we submit the motion was to have the Government to give explanations on various heads, within the context of the motion, and if the various explanations in, our view, are acceptable then we would decide how we will vote.

The intention also, if I may say - I will just make this one last point - is that we had asked, in writing, that the Hon. Minister of Finance to give us... [**Mr. Robert Persaud:** When did you ask?] It was asked on the 12th April. That we want the details of the compensation package paid to the top twenty-five contracted employees in the following budgetary agencies: Office of the President, Ministry of Finance, Guyana Elections Commissions, Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport. Clearly, the intention of the motion was to address, what the ordinary man calls the *fat cats*, the super salaries, because if we are to give the working people of this country an opportunity to benefit from the taxpayers' revenue then our explanation here is that we have to cut from the bloated and super salaries for those contracted employees working for \$2 and \$3 million per month. We could not have done so without notice to this National Assembly.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much. That went very well.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

A PARTNERSHIP FOR NATIONAL UNITY CONDEMNED THE ACT OF WORKERS' PROTEST

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, earlier today Ms. Amna Ally, Member of Parliament and Chief Whip, did indicate to me, in written form and orally, that she wishes to move the House under Standing Order 13, on a matter that, in her opinion, was definite, urgent and of public importance pertaining to this issue of contracted workers and the matter of the protest. I informed Ms. Ally that her request did not meet the established precedent and criteria for these motions to proceed. Nonetheless, based on the precedent set by my distinguished predecessor Mr. Ramkarran, when he was Speaker, when he would have disallowed some of these motions he would have allowed

the Member to make a brief statement, even though the motion was disallowed. I would however, in disallowing Ms. Ally's motion, permit her to make a brief statement on the issue and then we will proceed.

Ms. Ally: Thank you Mr. Speaker for your kind permission. I rise to move a definite matter of urgent public importance. During the course of this morning, I received a number of telephone calls from staffers of the Public Service Ministry, Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Housing and Water, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health. They alleged that they received verbal instructions from officials of those Ministries to come out and picket the Parliament Office because the Opposition wants to see them out of their jobs. They were threatened that if they do not come out they will be dismissed. I hesitate and I would not all the names of those staffers who called, lest they indeed be victimised and lose their jobs. APNU condemns this callous act. [Dr. Westford: They are listening to you.] I am happy they are. I call on all the Ministers concerned to stop this distasteful act and do not involve our professional with the politics of the day. We must not put our workers at risk. Rather, I believe that the Government must seek ways of working out a salvation with the Opposition parties in the National Assembly.

Finally, we would like to alert all that they must not be misled by the drama the PPP/C is pulling on our workers. APNU has always championed, and will continue to champion, the chords and the rights of workers. APNU in this debate has called for improved wages and better conditions for workers. We, therefore, call on the Government to desists from misleading the workers and let professionalism prevail. Thank you. [*Applause*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member Ms. Ally, I regret to inform you that your motion is disallowed, but you have read your statement. Thank you.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTION

BUDGET SPEECH 2012 - MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2012

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

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

AND WHEREAS Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of Guyana for the financial year 2012 have been prepared and laid before the Assembly on 2012-03-30;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2012, of a total sum of **one hundred and seventy nine billion, six hundred and ninety six million, five hundred and forty six thousand dollar (\$179,696,546,000), excluding thirteen billion, and eighty four million, seven hundred and thirty five thousand dollars (\$13,084,735,000)** which is chargeable by law, as detailed therein and summarised in the undermentioned schedule, and agree that it is expedient to amend the law and to make further provision in respect of finance.” [*Minister of Finance*]

Mr. Speaker: The Assembly will resolve itself into Committee of Supply to begin consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 2012.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply

In Committee of Supply

Mr. Chairman: We are in Committee of Supply Hon. Members. We will proceed in accordance with the Sub-Committee’s resolution and schedule.

Agency: 45 Ministry of Housing and Water

Current Expenditure

Programme: 451 – Housing and Water - \$497, 549,000

Mr. Ramjattan: I wish to ask of the Hon. Minister, of this \$33 million, line item 6116 - Contracted Employees - budgeted there, page 166. Could the Minister indicate what the salaries are of the top five contracted employees here?

5.34 p.m.

Minister of Housing and Water [Mr. Ali]: The top five contracted employees fill the following positions in the Ministry, that is, the Permanent Secretary, two Civil Engineers and two Chemical Engineers. The salary of these five persons are, that is, the Permanent Secretary - \$500,982; each of the Civil Engineers \$151,823; each of the Chemical Engineers - \$151,823. That is for the five positions.

Mr. Ramjattan: Are there any allowances attached to these designations?

Mr. Ali: In relation to the Civil Engineers there is an allowance of \$9,096 and in relation to the Permanent Secretary there is an allowance of \$14,500.

Mr. Harmon: Could the Hon. Minister state under line item 6111 - Administrative - what the authorised staffing is under this line?

Mr. Ali: The authorised staffing is two.

Mr. Chairman: Is there a supplementary question?

Mr. Ramjattan: On the line item 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence: Could the Hon. Minister indicate that who is the beneficiary of that \$2 million? Is it the entire Ministry or the Minister?

Mr. Ali: This covers the travel expenditure in relation to the execution of the responsibilities and roles of the various functionaries of the Ministry. That is the entire Ministry of Housing and Water.

Mr. Ramjattan: Is it the entire Ministry?

Mr. Ali: Yes.

Mr. Ramjattan: In relation to line item 6281 - Security Services - I notice that there has been a massive increase since actual 2010, from \$1.8 million to \$18 million. Could the Minister indicate what are the security services and to whom they are rendered?

Mr. Ali: This security service was procured through a public procurement process and the price is responsive to that process. The security is provided for the main office - the Minister's residence, Permanent Secretary's residence and the project office on Camp Street.

Mrs. Lawrence: Line item 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants: Could the Minister tell us what is the total fleet?

Mr. Ali: There is a total of approximately four vehicles.

Mrs. Lawrence: Could the Minister say which departments those vehicles are allocated to?

Mr. Ali: Those vehicles, three of which are in a pool of vehicles, are assigned to the Project Department and Community Development Department in the execution of most of the fieldworks. So they are not assigned to a particular department, except in the case of the Minister, in which one is assigned.

Mrs. Lawrence: Line item 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Minister tell us which buildings are earmarked for maintenance?

Mr. Ali: As the Hon. Members may be aware that after the fire of the Ministry's main office, on Homestretch, it moved to Brickdam to this temporary office. Over the last couple of years there have been tremendous investment made, capital investment, to make it the permanent office. There is the eastern wall, which is in its penultimate stage of rehabilitation, and this resource will go towards the rehabilitation of it.

Mr. Greenidge: In relation to line item 6281 - Security Services - in connection with which the Minister was already asked a question and to which he did not offer all the answers. I think a question was asked to whom the services had been contracted and secondly no explanation was given for the increase. In 2010, there was an allocation of less than \$2 million and we have arrived at a point in, 2012, where the budgeted sum is \$18 million. For 2011, it was \$7 million. I think one needs an explanation as to why these jumps are so significant. Presumably, there was a

Minister before and those residences and other places, which are protected, were in existence before.

Mr. Ali: My apologies for missing one section of the question. The firm is Roshan Khan's (RK's) Security Services and the increase in this is as a result of the outcome of a public procurement process. The Ministry went out to tender and there was an open bid. These were the responses that came at the time of the tender and this was the contract awarded. The Permanent Secretary is informing me that this was the lowest responsive tenderer.

Mr. Greenidge: The fact that the price shown here was an outcome of a tender does not really explain the increase. Who had the contract in the previous year?

Mr. Ali: Alright. The Permanent Secretary has just explained to me that some of the security services were provided through the Special Constabulary in 2011. Now all the services are provided for under this new contract.

Mr. Ramjattan: So what was the reason why the Special Constabulary ceased to providing the service for \$1.8 million and now the Ministry has to pay...?

Mr. Ali: The Permanent Secretary has just advised me that a request was made to the Special Constabulary to extend the services to the other facilities, and to even continue the service, and it responded by saying it does not have the capacity of manpower to do this.

Mr. Greenidge: Could the Minister say how many firms bid?

Mr. Ali: I am advised that three firms tendered for this service.

Deputy Speaker [Mrs. Backer]: Could I respectfully ask the names of the two unsuccessful bidders?

Mr. Chairman: I do not have that detail here, but I can undertake to provide it to the Hon. Member.

Mrs. Backer: Could I get a commitment from the Minister as to when he will do that?

Mr. Chairman: Yes. I was about to ask him about the "when."

Mrs. Backer: Would it be tomorrow, because we hear all these promises, as you know, Mr. Chairman? I hope, Sir, that this is not going to be a trend.

Mr. Chairman: It is a new dispensation.

Mrs. Backer: That is right. I hope that it is not going to be a trend that Ministers will come and say that they do not have information.

Mr. Chairman: Alright. Allow the Minister to answer.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, could I help my colleague out? There is a website called the “National Procurement Tender and Administration” where all the Minutes of the National Procurement & Tender Administration Board and the contracts which are awarded in the public sector are posted, most of them are, and therefore it might be helpful to check it first, and if it is missing then that can be additional provided. But this is public information.

Mr. Chairman: That notwithstanding, Ms. Teixeira, this is the highest deliberative body in the land. If a Member of Parliament makes a request and the Minister is prepared to supply it, it is public document and there is no secrecy, there is no conspiracy, and it will be supplied. I have no doubt.

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, I assure you that it will be supplied. The Permanent Secretary will try to get it even before tonight, if not, it will be tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman: I knew that I could count on you for that. Is there any other question?

Mr. Ali: I just want a bit of clarification in relation to the amendments that was raised by Mr. Ramjattan. It is whether I should speak to it just to ensure that the Hon. Member has a holistic picture of the effect of such amendment.

Mr. Chairman: My best advice, Hon. Member, is that if Mr. Ramjattan does not rise to prosecute the amendment, then it is to let it lie.

Question put.

Mr. Ramjattan: I wish to have a division on this in relation to security services. I am not very impressed with that explanation.

Mr. Chairman: Well, I was of the opinion that the...

Mr. Ramjattan: It is that we reduce that programme by \$9.8 million that we proposed.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the Clerk and his able staff advised me that the procedure that we are about to enter into has never ever been gone into in this honourable House in the past. Therefore I believe that in so far as the general considerations go the ayes have it and that Mr. Ramjattan has called for a division after the vote had been taken of the total. I do not believe that this is an oversight, because I believe we have no guide post to take us through this process. What I would do is to recommit the question. Mr. Ramjattan, before I put the question for a vote if you wish to isolate or single out, please indicate. So Hon. Members, I will put the question because I think inadvertent plays a part there.

Mr. Ramjattan: I seek your leave for an amendment at this stage, Sir, before you put it to the vote.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, make your application.

Mr. Ramjattan: I wish, Sir, in relation to the Agency 45, Programme: 451, to make the amendment as I had notified. I have given notice in relation to a number of heads, but only in relation to security services now, a reduction from \$18.8 million by \$9.8 million. I ask that there be a division on that.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, save and except the other matters in the head, there is a call for a division on the line item 6281 - Security Services.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, may I just ask you a clarification for a minute, please?

Mr. Chairman: Go ahead.

Ms. Teixeira: As we are on uncharted waters, does the amendment, which has been tabled, require a seconder? I know Ministers do not require seconders but the rest of us normally do. Could you advise me on that please? If it is being done orally, as I think it is not supposed to, then it has to have a seconder on the floor as well.

Mr. Chairman: I am told that when the motion was presented yesterday it was seconded by Mr. Nagamootoo. It is superfluous to have a seconder. Okay, I am guided. Well, thank you Ms. Teixeira for pointing that out.

Mr. Ramjattan: Do we need a seconder at this point in time?

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Nagamootoo: Mr. Chairman, I move to second the motion.

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, just before you take the vote, if I may be helped, and I would like to thank my technical staff for the efficiency here, the other two companies were Strategic and Federal Management. Those were the other two companies which tendered for the services. I just want you to put this additional information so that you can see the level of transparency, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much for that. Much appreciated. Well the motion for the amendment has been seconded by Mr. Nagamootoo and I will ask the Clerk to proceed to take the vote.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, what are we voting on? Is it the amendment or the motion? I am not clear.

The Committee divided: Ayes 7, Did not vote 26, Noes 31, as follow:

<i>Noes</i>	<i>Did not vote</i>	<i>Ayes</i>
Mr. T. Williams	Ms. Ferguson	Mr. Jafarally
Ms. Marcello	Mr. Morian	Mr. Damon
Dr. Ramayya	Mr. Allen	Dr. Persaud
Mrs. Garrido-Lowe	Mr. Jones	Rev. Dr. Gilbert
Mrs. Hughes	Mr. Adams	Dr. Mahadeo
Mr. Nagamootoo	Mrs. Baveghems	Mr. Seeraj

Mr. Ramjattan	Mr. Sharma	Mr. Neendkumar
	Mr. Bulkan	Mr. Lumumba
	Mr. Bond	Ms. Shadick
Ms. Kissoon		Mr. Chand
	Mr. Trotman	Mrs. Chandarpal
Ms. Selman		Mr. Nadir
Mr. Allicock		Ms. Teixeira
	Ms. Wade	Bishop Edghill
	Mr. Felix	Mr. Whittaker
	Ms. Hastings	Mr. Baksh
	Mr. Scott	Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai
Mr. Harmon		Ms. Webster
	Mr. Greenidge	Ms. Manickchand
Mrs. Backer		Mr. G. Persaud
	Dr. Norton	Mr. Benn
Mrs. Lawrence		Dr. Anthony
	Mr. B. Williams	Mr. Ali
Ms. Ally		Dr. Ramsaran
Dr. Roopnarine		Dr. Westford
Brigadier (Ret'd) Granger		Mr. R. Persaud
		Dr. Singh

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett

Mr. Nandlall

Dr. Ramsammy

Mr. Rohee

Amendment negatived.

Programme: 451 – Housing and Water - \$497,549,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 451 – Housing and Water - \$6,569,400,000

Mrs. Lawrence: Looking at the profile description, we are told that this allocation is for “Rehabilitation of building” - project 1208400. Could the Minister indicate which building this allocation is for?

Mr. Ali: This installation of the fire escape, and remodelling, is on the same main office which has now been made the Ministry’s temporary office. As you are aware, Mr. Chairman, the Ministry is working towards the implementation of the building code and part of it is to have a fire escape and an office building. For it to set the right standard it has to ensure that it is not in breached.

Mrs. Lawrence: Follow-up. Mr. Minister, could you say why was it not listed here? All that is here is the rehabilitation of the building. While we want to ensure that the Ministry does meet with the fire regulations, I also want to ask the Ministry whether any thought has been given to a ramp for the disabled.

Mr. Ali: There is presently a ramp to go into the building, but the Hon. Member is right. There will be need for further investment to take it to the top floor.

Mr. Ramjattan: Project 10425000 - Community Road Improvements Projects: Could the Hon. Minister indicate where those roads will be built and the buildings that he is talking about there?

Mr. Ali: This is the Community Roads Improvement Project, funded by the Caribbean Development Bank, and part of that programme requires institutional strengthening. This project is implemented in twelve Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) and the NDC buildings have to be completed - to rehabilitate the NDCs buildings in number of those NDCs - and that is what it is provided for here. The list of the NDCs would be Bath/Woodley Park, Rosignol/ Zee Lust, Mon Repos, Enmore/Hope, Grove/Diamond, Haslington/Golden Grove, Tuschen/Uitvulgt, Stewartville/Cornelia Ida, Best/Klien/Pouderoyen, Industry/Plaisance, Unity/Vereeniging, Port Mourant/ John.

Mr. Ramjattan: Could the Minister answer the question on how much will be spent on community roads and how much on the NDCs buildings?

Mr. Ali: This project started last year. It is a multi-year project. The time frame for this loan is approximately five years. We are hoping to bring this project in within three years and that would save the Government and people of Guyana US\$100,000 in commitment fees. Out of this allocation here, approximately eighty-five per cent would represent that for roads.

Mr. Ramjattan: Where would those communities roads be?

Mr. Ali: The roads that would be within those NDCs, I have a comprehensive list - a very long list. I do not know if...

Mr. Ramjattan: If there is a commitment to give us the list, I could understand.

Mr. Ali: These are the following streets: In Uitvulgt - Bruda Street, Sideline Dam, Zeeburg - Mandal Street, Old Road, Corilla Street, School Street, De Willem - Cone Shop Street, Met en Meerzorg - Kastev Road, Pump Station Street, Kastev Back Road, First Cross Street, Second Cross Street, First Street, Prem Nagar, Met en Meerzorg - Red Spot Road, Middle Street, Rail View, First Cross Street - Housing Scheme, Second Cross Street, Third Cross Street, Fourth Cross Street, Fifth Cross Street, Tarla Dam, Lusignan - Roundabout Road, Lusignan, Willy Road, Lusignan, Middle Street, Alleyway, Second Street, Richard's Town, First Street, Second Street, Third Street, Fifth Street, Lusignan, School Street, Third Street, First Street, Fifth Street, Ice Factory Street, First Cross Street, Second Cross Street, Koker Street, Second Street, Fifth Street, School Street, Richard's Ville - First Street, Second Street, Third Street, First Cross

Street, Mackenzie Ville - First Street, Mackenzie Ville, Latchmansingh Housing Scheme - First, Second, Third, Fourth Cross Streets, Leonora - Sideline Dam, First Street, Second Street, Concrete Strip, Market Road, Albertloo Street, Cow Dam, Parafield, Stewartville, Old Road, Stewartville, First Street, Second Street, Cross Street, First Street, Golden Grove Scheme - First Cross Street...

Mr. Chairman: Which region are you in now, Hon. Minister?

Mr. Ali: I am in Region 4 now.

Mr. Chairman: Are you going to read through all ten of the regions?

Mr. Ali: I do not know. It is your guidance, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Advice me because I would urge the Hon. Member that you would make it available. Even though some may ask, I think that it would be for better reading and better listening.

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, I have no difficulty with your advice.

Mr. Chairman: I am grateful that you can have it available. Members should be satisfied that it is present and available, and it can be circulated. Thank you very much Hon. Minister.

Mrs. Lawrence: Project 1900900 – Infrastructural Development and Building: Could the Hon. Minister tell us which roads in the Mocha, Providence and La Parfaite Harmonie will be done? It is whether it is all the roads or just a percentage of the road will be done.

Mr. Ali: Many Members would recall that a lot of infrastructural work is being done at the back of Herstelling and Mocha areas and that has created some amount of inconvenience for the residents. For a matter of fact, to be frankly, it is a lot of inconvenience to the residents. The Ministry will be required to redo that entire main road and that is what is catered here for. It will be recalled that the Hon. Member Mr. Harmon raised the issue of roads in La Parfaite Harmonie.

6.04 p.m.

I agree with him that a lot of the roads now require that final stage of investment. There is a policy that normally brings the road up to a standard until we have more than 75% occupancy

and a section of that network will be completed. However, to answer directly to the Hon. Member, Mrs. Volda Lawrence, this will not cover all the roads in La Parfaite Harmonie.

Mrs. Lawrence: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister tell us of the amount allotted here, what percentage of it is allocated for the infrastructure in Bartica and where in Bartica will this infrastructure work be done?

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, the engineering estimate is around that of \$252 million and it is in the Four-Miles area.

Mrs. Lawrence: Project 2401200 – Land Transport: Could the Hon. Minister tell us what type of vehicle does the Ministry intend to purchase and to which department will these vehicles be assigned?

Mr. Ali: Because of the type of activities this Ministry has to engage in, that is the development of, sometimes, very difficult terrain, as a result of pushing the housing programme, it is more efficient and effective for us to invest in 4-wheel drive vehicles. As such, this will be a 4-wheel drive vehicle and this will be in the pool of resources that we will have to better equip us to serve in our work.

Mrs. Lawrence: Project 2800800 – Water Supply: Could the Minister tell us whether there is a timeline for the completion of the Pump House at Santa Rosa?

Mr. Ali: Once we have the approval of these Estimates, we will then be in a position to proceed with the implementation of the project. We have completed the administrative mechanism and we are just awaiting the approval of the Estimates so that we can proceed to award these works and implement same.

Mrs. Lawrence: Project 2800800 – Water Supply: Could the Hon. Minister tell us what provisions will be made for the residents of Ituni during the rehabilitation of the water supply?

Mr. Ali: When we implement the upgrade of any system or the rehabilitation of any system, there are various technical measures that are put in place to ensure that the service is not disrupted. In this case I cannot say exactly what technical provisions will be made, but I can give the commitment to get that to you.

Mrs. Lawrence: I will be very happy because the residents are asking.

Project 2801000 – Linden Water Supply: Could the Hon. Minister tell us how many homes the Ministry plans to bring into the metering system at Christianburg and Watooka?

Mr. Ali: In our effort to ensure that we push towards water conservation and efficiency, thus resulting in reduced operational cost for the Guyana Water Incorporated (GWI), we have been implementing a continuous metering programme all across Guyana. Our aim is to have 100% metre coverage of all our customers along the coastland. What we are seeking to do in this particular area is to install metres and service connections upgrade for approximately 1,200 customers.

Mrs. Lawrence: Could the Hon. Minister tell us what is the expected cost for this upgrade in respect of installing these metres? Let me pose my second question because it relates to the same thing. Mr. Minister, if you do not mind, the second question is: what is the estimated revenue the Ministry is expecting to derive from putting in these metres at the 1,200 residents?

Mr. Ali: If I may start from the last question first, it will be difficult for us to estimate the revenue because metre is a tool to conserve. As such, we have done many pilot projects and what we have seen is that metres actually reduce the bill for customers and that there is higher efficiency in terms of land losses, conservation and operational cost- they match. The second aspect of the question was the cost of this upgrade. As I said, this is a continuous project. We have some metres already in the stores and so on. I think approximately \$4 million has been earmarked for this development.

Mrs. Lawrence: Thank you Minister. Project 2801500 – Low Income Settlement Programme II: Could the Minister tell us whether there has been any development of any new sites in the Georgetown area? And if not, are there any plans for such development?

Mr. Ali: We do not have any development in the Georgetown area although we would like to have some expansion on housing development in this area. This is one of the areas that we have the largest section of communities to be relocated. However, there is no availability of land at the moment for us to expand the housing programme within Georgetown itself. That is why we have

been focusing on the immediate outskirts of Georgetown so that we can have the next best option.

Mrs. Lawrence: This particular project code contains several developments and my second question to the Minister is: were any housing schemes consolidated in the Georgetown area? And if not, does the Ministry intend to consolidate any?

Mr. Ali: I do not know if I interpreted the question right, but if there is any housing scheme that is consolidated within the boundaries of Georgetown, the answer is no. We do not have any housing scheme that is incorporated within the boundaries of Georgetown. We are exploring this because of the high demands from the East Coast Demerara and Georgetown the possibility of acquiring land in the back of Ogle and Cummings Lodge areas so that we can have further expansion.

Mrs. Lawrence: Could the Minister tell us which squatting areas does the Ministry plan to upgrade in Georgetown?

Mr. Ali: There is one squatter area in Georgetown that in the view of the technicians cannot be regularised and that is the squatting along the Front Road area. I know my Hon. Friend, Mr. Harmon, and I had lengthy discussions on this. We had even planned to visit this area together. The Government is working on a plan to expedite the development of infrastructure on the East Bank Demerara and some other areas on the West Bank Demerara so that we can move ahead with this relocation process as it is deemed a “zero tolerance zone” and an area that we cannot regularise. There is another area in Sophia that is referred to as the Tannery area. The Tannery area is also a “zero tolerance zone” that cannot be regularised and we are working aggressively with the Ministry of Public Works on finding a compromise and a solution to having residents in these locations be relocated. There are some amounts of challenges there because a number of the residents there are resisting the proposal to relocate. However, in some areas, in Section D, Sophia, specifically, we will be doing a lot of infrastructure upgrade works.

Mrs. Lawrence: My last question on this Project Code: Could the Minister tell us at what stage the Ministry is at with regards to this project to address the issues of affordability and sustainability for housing in the Georgetown area?

Mr. Ali: We do not have any housing development in the Georgetown area. However, on the issue of affordability and sustainability, there are many different programmes that the Ministry has embarked upon and is continuing to strengthen. Some of these include the Core Homes Project, the Starter Homes Project, the partnership with the professional groups and the partnership with the private developers and the partnership with professional Associations, for example, the Police Association, the Nurses Association and the Teachers Association..

Mr. Greenidge: Mr. Chairman, Project 1402500 – Community Roads Improvement Project: Could the Minister tell us – because even the title is a little obscure – how the choice of the communities is made for these roads to be upgraded? What are the criteria?

Mr. Ali: This Project was first conceptualised in 2005 and a technical team from the Caribbean Development Bank, and the Government of Guyana sat on what was then termed the Project Development Steering Committee. That Committee comprised the Caribbean Development Bank reviewing it and a local body established the criteria through which these roads were selected. I think that there were consultations in all the communities. It was basically a project that was driven by the community itself.

Mr. Greenidge: I would like to repeat the question in case it was not clear. I would like to know what the criteria were.

Mr. Ali: There was a socio-economic analysis done. That was part of the feasibility and the loan review programme. There was also a logical framework developed for this programme and all of those documents are available at the Ministry of Finance where the project was conceptualised. We are now implementing.

Mr. Greenidge: Perhaps the Minister needs some time to look at the documents and inform us as to the criteria because he has not answered the question. May I ask, additionally, whether it is envisaged that roads in the Sophia and Cummings Lodge area would fall under this caption – any roads at all?

Mr. Ali: This project is defined within the boundaries of the 12 National Democratic Councils (NDCs) that have I outlined earlier and those roads will not fall within this.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Project 2800800 – Water Supply: Could the Minister kindly say which are the hinterland regions that will benefit from this \$150 million in water improvement and which exactly are the villages that will benefit? Thank you.

Mr. Ali: Santa Rosa, Region 1; Port Kaituma, Region 1; Ituni, Region 10; Dog Point, Region 7; Batavia, Region 7; Malali, Region 10; Sand Creek, Region 9; Mountain Foot, Region 8; Kurukubaru, Region 8; Paramakatoi, Region 8; Saint Monica Mission, Region 2; and Rupanau, Region 9.

Mr. Allen: Mr. Chairman, Project 2800800 – Water Supply: Can the Hon. Minister say what was the amount allotted for the Santa Rosa, Moruca Pump Station?

Mr. Ali: The provision made is that of \$42 million.

Mr. Allen: Project 2800800 – Water Supply: Can the Hon. Minister say to us where in Port Kaituma these lines will be laid and what is the cost supplied there?

Mr. Ali: I am advised by the technician that it is from the new borehole to the elevated storage tank. The estimated cost is that of \$10 million.

Mr. Allen: Where will the elevated tank be located?

Mr. Ali: There is the existing elevated storage tank that we will be improving and utilising and I think we do not have the specific area but it is referred to normally as “Hill Top”. I can get the specific area for you, though, Hon. Member.

Mr. Allen: Thank you Minister.

Mr. Ramjattan: Project 2801700 – Georgetown Sanitation Improvement Programme – I noticed under the relevant head here, the distribution of drugs to reduce the prevalence in water diseases. How much money is being spent for these drugs?

Mr. Ali: As the Hon. Members will be aware this is a multi-year project financed by the International Development Bank (IDB) and technical assessments were done in relation to this project. One of the challenges that this project imposed during implementation is health related; there are health risks in terms of redoing the entire sewer main. As a result of that, the IDB and

the Government, in its technical review, sought to make a provision of \$6 million for this year during the implementation phase to have a specific type of drug distributed to residents to mitigate any risk that the implementation of this project imposes.

Mr. Ramjattan: You are doing very well Mr. Ali. The rehabilitation, because it is continuing and if \$6 million is going towards that eliminated disease drug, we would have in the vicinity of \$500 million going towards the sewage system. Which part of Georgetown is that centred around?

Mr. Ali: This is the entire ring main to service all of Georgetown. This is the complete main that connects the 24 stations to the main outlet.

Mr. Ramjattan: In relation to Project 2800900 – Coastal Water Supply – there is completion of wells at Cotton Tree, Number Forty-seven Village – a very close Village to me – and Onderneeming. Could the Minister indicate when it is that we are going to have these wells that have been rehabilitated for over eight/nine months now completed?

Mr. Ali: Again, these are multi-year projects and these are new wells and, hopefully, upon the passing of the Estimates, we will have a further, maybe, three months to bring it within the project time. If, however, there are delays because of the weather and so on, the Hon. Member will understand that this will require some extension.

Mr. Ramjattan: In relation to Project 2800900 – Coastal Water Supply – there is \$900 million. What is the installation cost there for the transmission lines in those areas – what portion of that \$900 million?

Mr. Ali: The area that we have for installation of the transmission main would be that of Bush Lot to Eversham, Providence to Mocha and Eccles to Providence. The total is \$250 million. Thank you.

Dr. Ramayya: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister to indicate to us the amount of money that is allocated to Region 6 and where that money will be spent and on what project.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Ramjattan will advise you on that. That will not be a permissible question.

Programme: 451 – Housing and Water - \$6,569,400,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Agency: 23 Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

Current Expenditure

Programme: 231 – Main Office - \$459,970,000

Mr. Trotman: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – can the Minister indicate to this Hon. House the list of names and designations, salaries and other benefits that were paid to the contracted employees under this Head.

Mr. Ali: I would endeavour to give the designations, the salaries and the qualifications and the band of the various contracted staff: Tourism Liaison Officer - \$114,125 with an allowance of \$10,000; two Tourism Officers - \$85,050 each with an allowance of \$10,000 each; Confidential Secretary - \$57, 649; Driver/Mechanic - \$42,293; Special Project Officer - \$66,708; Events Manager - \$226,998; Administrative Assistant - \$69,000; Accounts Clerk II - \$53,161, Labourer - \$45,354; Maintenance Assistant - \$51,030; Mechanic Operator - \$39,127; Office Assistant - \$40,935; four Cleaners - \$40,935 each; and Gardener - \$40,935.

Now I will go to the National Exhibition Centre. There are: Administrator - \$254,000; Labourer - \$45,000; Foreman - \$60,000; Confidential Secretary - \$73,000; Machine Operator - \$45,000; Office Assistant - \$40,935; Labourer - \$35,864; and Cleaner - \$40,935.

Mr. Ramjattan: Line Item 6321 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations – I see approximately \$220 million. Could the Hon. Minister indicate what are some of the local organisations and what sum of this \$220 million will be paid to them?

Mr. Ali: The agencies will include: the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) - \$107,160,000; Guyana National Bureau of Standard (GNBS) - \$111,932,000; Consumer Movement - \$400,000; Consumer Association - \$500,000; and Consumer Advisory Bureau - \$500,000.

Mr. Trotman: Line Item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings – can the Minister say to this House how many buildings are being maintained under this Head and can he also indicate where the buildings are located?

Mr. Ali: The buildings that are being maintained will be the Guyana International Convention Centre (GICC) and the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) which comprises a lot of buildings within that compound.

6.34 p.m.

Mr. Trotman: Line item 6265 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure – can the Minister indicate what is referred to as other infrastructure? If there are several others, can he give an itemised cost of maintaining each aspect of it?

Mr. Ali: This investment is not related to the core building(s). For example, in the National Exhibition Centre compound. However, we have additional work to do in terms of infrastructure development and maintenance, that of drainage, the building of curb wall, guard hut, construction of the fence et cetera.

Mr. Trotman: I will also ask the Minister if he can give an itemised cost of those aspects of the works.

Mr. Ali: These projects will have to be given out on contracts. I can assure the Hon. Member that when those works are contracted and the cost is established through the tender process I will share that information with him.

Mr. Chairman: I appreciate it.

Mr. Trotman: Line Item 6261 – Local Travel and Subsistence – can the Minister say who will benefit from travel and subsistence being requested under this head?

Mr. Ali: In actual fact this year we have suffered a decrease in this subhead of \$383,000 as a result of a lack of capacity in terms of vehicular assets at the Ministry we were having the use of a lot of taxis to conduct the business of the Ministry. Over the last quarter of last year and into this new year we have followed the advice of the Auditor General. Hon. Member, Mrs. Volda Lawrence, who was Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) would know that this was part of her advice, to have a centralised vehicle pool and a centralised management system. That is what we have implemented here, and the reduction is an indication of the efficiency that has resulted.

Mr. Trotman: Line Item 6264 – Vehicle Spares and Service – can the Minister say how many vehicles are assigned to the main office of the Tourism Industry and which vehicles these spares are being requested for?

Mr. Ali: As I indicated earlier, in the new system we have a centralised pool of four vehicles. Three vehicles are in the pool, and one assigned to the Minister and one to his Secretariat.

Mr. Trotman: Line Item 6272 – Electricity Charges – can the Minister say if this amount being sought is intended to cover the charges for all buildings and appliances under his purview?

Mr. Ali: This figure will cover the electricity expenses of the buildings under the Ministry.

Mr. Trotman: All the buildings?

Mr. Ali: Two of the buildings, the Guyana International Convention Centre and all the buildings in the National Exhibition Compound.

Mr. Trotman: Line Item 6273 – Water Charges – bearing in mind the inefficiency of GWI, does the Minister believe that the amount under this head accurately reflects the consumption of water by his staff at the office.

Mr. Ali: Having regards for the improved efficiency and reliability of GWI as a result of the metering system and actual reading of the meter a decrease in provision is sought, because there is better conservation and consumption.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members I recognise Mr. Felix and then Ms. Selman. I believe I also see Dr. Ramayya. I know Mrs. Backer had indicated as well. Go ahead Mr. Felix.

Mr. Felix: Mr. Chairman, Line Item 6281 – Security Services – I would like to enquire of the Minister who was awarded the contract to provide the security.

Mr. Ali: This would cover security for the GICC and NEC, and this again went to Public Tender. There are two firms providing the security services which are Federal Management and RK Security.

Mr. Felix: A follow up question. I would like to inquire from the Minister whether sections 30 (1) and (2) of the Procurement Act of 2003 were followed.

Mr. Ali: Yes, all aspects of the Procurement Act and procurement guidelines and procedures were followed for this award.

Mr. Felix: Final question. In which of the daily news papers was this highlighted and when was the tender published?

Mr. Ali: I am advised that it was published in all the news papers and also on the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB) website.

Mr. Felix: When was this done? You will observe that the website is not mentioned as a medium for publicising tenders.

Mr. Ali: I would like to emphasise that it was published in all the newspapers. I will endeavour to give the details as to the dates it was published.

Ms. Selman: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – could the Hon. Minister indicate how many persons will be the beneficiary of such budgetary allocations and what are the training programmes?

Mr. Ali: The staff of the Ministry, especially those of the GICC and the National Exhibition Centre, will from time to time be the frontline staff in the hosting of international, regional and national events. One example is that of the ongoing Sustainable Tourism Conference (STC) Conference. These resources are placed there to provide training in the field of hospitality management and events hosting. Approximately 16 staff will benefit.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – since tourism is being promoted in the Hinterland, I would like to know how much of this \$300 million will be allocated not to the backline staff in the tourism industry. We will need our Hinterland people up to scratch also.

Mr. Ali: That is covered for under Programme 3. We did not get to that as yet. It is in our focus on community based tourism. These are not scholarships. This is basically local training for the frontline staff in the area I outlined.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, permit me take back the Minister to line item 6282 – Equipment Maintenance – can he please identify the types and quantity of equipment slated for maintenance

and can the Minister say if this maintenance includes the replacement of parts. If yes, can the Minister inform this House of the actual value of the parts to be replaced?

Mr. Ali: We have for example the lawnmowers, air conditioning units, computers, and the elevator at GICC; these are just a few of the equipment that would require maintenance under this agency. As to extent to the level of maintenance that is required in terms of acquisition of spares and parts and a detailed description of such spares and parts, I can commit that when those tasks are completed I can have the full report these investments circulated to the Hon. House.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, a supplemental question. I thought that when the sums were requested, the Ministry would have already had an idea of what it is that they want and what it is that they are spending for. It is in that sense that I am asking the question. I wonder if it is that the Minister cares to review his answer.

Mr. Chairman: Do you know what parts you will be buying before the machine breaks?

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, you will appreciate that the amount in the budget is an estimate and some of these equipment require quarterly maintenance. While we can have an indicative number as to what that maintenance figure might be based under normal circumstance. In one quarter, the maintenance staff might find that the elevator requires some substantial change in terms of wear and tear. That is something that is not predictable but is based on the continuous maintenance mechanism established. So, I would not be able to do that level of prediction.

Mr. Trotman: There is an item here; “Other Operating Expenses”, and I refer you to Line Item 6284, which talks about “Other” with a price of \$8.5 million attached to it. Could the Minister be specific in terms of what this means?

Mr. Ali: We have a number of national assets that are the venue for most international events, such as GICC and NEC. Within those assets we have a lot of fixed assets and movable assets. For example we have furniture and fittings that require constant maintenance. In addition to that we are required to spend a lot of resources within this head on advertisements for international events, regional events some of which are part of the annual agenda of the Ministry for example, GuyExpo. These expenditures will be covered from within this head.

Mr. Jones: Comrade Chairman, Line Item 6281, can the Hon. Minister inform this House of the companies that were not successful?

Mr. Ali: The two other companies that tendered, I am advised, would be Strategic Action and COPS.

Mr. T. Williams: Mr. Chairman, Line Item 6291 – National and Other Events – given the fact that the Minister briefly attributed some expenses to line item 6284 under “Other”, could the Hon. Minister say what are some of the likely expenditures under “National and Other Events”?

Mr. Ali: Some of these events will include the Pakaraima Mountain Safari, Rupununi Rodeo, Bartica Regatta, Linden Town Week, Moruka Expo, motor racing, Wakenaam Night, Mahdia Expo, Orealla Regatta, Rockstone fish festival et cetera.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Hon. Member. I see someone in the A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) benches.

Mr. Nadir: Mr. Chairman on a Point of Order. I am looking at Standing Order No. 76(9), (10) and (11). I notice that we have some amendments tabled and given on the Notice Paper, and I think we may need to deal with those aspects.

Mr. Chairman: I will again suggest a rule of thumb. Unless the proposer rises and prosecutes them, I will let them lie silently. That is my suggestion.

Programme: 231 – Main Office – \$459,970,000 000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 232 – Ministry Administration – \$71,774,000

Mrs. Backer: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Line Item 6273 – Water Charges – we see an increase; it has been constant since 2012 at \$500,000. We see a figure of \$3.312 million. Hon. Minister, could we get an explanation for this increase please?

Mr. Ali: This increase reflects arrears. The agency was in arrears to the Guyana Water Inc.

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister, does this figure now make you current or will you continue to be in arrears?

Mr. Ali: I am advised that this will bring us to a current position.

Mrs. Backer: Line Item 6281 – Security Services – could the Hon. Minister provide us with the name of the security service?

Mr. Ali: We have two security services there: Brans Security and RKs security.

Mrs. Backer: Hon. Minister could you indicate to us which of the two companies; Brans and RK, has the majority or greater portion, if you will, in terms of value of the service?

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman that will be RKs Security.

Mrs. Backer: I could have answered that.

Ms. Selman: A follow up to her question, could the Hon. Minister say how many security personnel are provided for?

Mrs. Backer: Mr. Chairman we have in total three security guards. In terms of shift, it is a twenty-four hour service and also a radio service.

Programme: 232 – Ministry Administration – \$71,774,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: I now invite you to turn to pages 116 and 117. Hon. Members while you do so, it is pertinent that I mention particularly for the benefit of the new members that the Procurement (Amendment) Act No. 13 of 2010 amended the Procurement Act to provide for the publication of tenders on the website provided for by the Government. So, it is permissible in addition to being sensible. For the benefit of the exercise over the next few days, bear in mind that tenders can be published as per law on the website.

Programme: 233 – Commerce, Industry and Consumer Affairs – \$91,347,000

Ms. Selman: Line Item 6284 – Other – could the Hon. Minister say what is responsible for the significant increase in this allocation and what comes under “Other”?

Mr. Ali: Hon. Members will be aware that we are doing a lot of work in the Consumer Affairs Division and as a result of that we have additional costs in designing, printing and developing

new brochures and booklets, specifically as it relates to consumer affairs. We will also be compiling sector profiles in preparation for a business directory.

Mrs. Backer: Line Item 6231 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations – there is a sharp increase and when we look at page 397 we see that \$26.6 million has been budgeted for the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission. My question is what is the composition of the Consumer Protection Commission, firstly?

Mr. Ali: Within the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission we have the positions of a Director, two Economists/Analysts, one Competition Policy Officer, One Consumer Affairs Officer, one Administrative Officer and one Finance Officer.

Mrs. Backer: Supplementary- are these people on a fulltime basis?

Mr. Ali: Yes Mr. Chairman. They are on a fulltime basis.

Mrs. Backer: Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to tell us where this Commission is located?

Mr. Ali: This Commission is located within the National Exhibition Centre compound.

Ms. Ferguson: Mr. Chairman, under Line Item 6116 – Contracted Employees – in the staffing details, can the Hon. Minister say what was the need for the increase of contract employees from eight to eleven and would you mind providing the House with the new positions created for these contract employees?

Mr. Ali: There are three positions and those would be the positions of an Analysts/Researcher, one Consumer Affairs Officer and a Research Assistant. The salary of the Analyst Researcher would be \$66,052 and the same for the Consumer Affairs Officer and the Research Assistant would be paid a salary of \$46,402.

Programme: 233 – Commerce, Industry and Consumer Affairs – \$91,347,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 231 – Main Office – \$39,700,000

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, just on a point of correction, it is the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce and not Housing, Tourism, Industry and Commerce.

Mr. Chairman: My apologies. Maybe I am being a bit futuristic.

Mr. Trotman: Project Code 1208300 – Guyana International Conference Centre – Upgrading of water supply system and purchase of equipment - can the Minister detail the specific amount to be spent on these two items?

7.04 p.m.

Mr. Ali: Based on the engineer's estimate, the upgrade of the water supply system is estimated at \$8 million and a photocopier of industrial standard and volume is estimated at \$4 million.

Mr. Trotman: A supplementary question - can the Minister say what is the method used to procure the items and in identifying the contractors?

Mr. Ali: I would not be in a position to identify the contractors as yet as the method used would be that of public tender and advertisement. When that process is completed and the procurement is completed a contractor will be awarded the project, and at that time I would be in a better position to advise the Hon. Member as to who the contractors would be.

Programme: 232 – Ministry Administration

Mr. Jones: Project Code 2403600 - Land Transport - could the Hon. Minister inform this House of the type of vehicle to be purchased?

Mr. Ali: The Secretariat of the Permanent Secretary is without a vehicle so we are proposing to purchase a Toyota Camry vehicle.

Programme: 233 - Commerce, Industry and Consumer Affairs

Mr. Nagamootoo: Mr. Chair, Project Code 4402000 - Competition and Consumer Protection Commission - I observe that the allocation of \$91 million forms part of a \$192 million-dollar project under the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). Is this a loan or a grant?

Mr. Ali: This is grant resources.

Mr. Greenidge: Project Code 4501500 - Industrial Development. The legend reads, "Provision for Industrial Estates." I notice that in the project profiles it indicates two estates. What I would like to know is whether there is a plan around which these estates are identified and then funded. Is there a plan and if so can we have it?

Mr. Ali: I am informed that there is a plan for industrial development. If I may add some additional information, this provision is to have the infrastructure development completed. For example, the Belvedere Industrial Site is a site that has been there for some time now. This site has about 14 plots and about 18 potential investors who have submitted different projects, but as a result of the lack of infrastructure at this moment the investors cannot proceed to the investment stage. This allocation caters for the provision of that infrastructure.

Mr. Greenidge: I thank the Minister for that answer, but the question was intended to ascertain whether there is a national plan which identifies the geographic locations and whether there is sequencing for that.

Mr. Ali: I do not have a clear answer at the moment. The technician is advising me that he is sure there are some regional plans but in terms of the macro national plan, I am not getting that. I will check and inform you.

Mr. Nagamootoo: Returning to Project Code 4402000 - the grant for institutional strengthening-my question is on how much of this money is going towards training, how much is going towards computerisation of the system, and where is the computerisation of the database taking place?

Mr. Ali: All of the resources under this subhead will be going towards training, that is, the building of institutional capacity. The physical infrastructure, the computer and so on that you are speaking about will be covered under the Competitiveness Programme.

Mr. Nagamootoo: A follow-up please. How many people are expected to be trained under this programme?

Mr. Ali: All of the staff plus the Competition Advisors and Commissioners.

Mr. Nagamootoo: I am asking how many; numbers please.

Mr. Ali: Approximately ten in all.

Mr. Nagamootoo: If you permit me Sir, a final follow-up question. Under this programme it was envisaged that there be a review of legislation. Has the legislation been reviewed? What is the status of the review?

Mr. Ali: I am advised that we are in the process of retaining the services of an attorney. We have also just had the competition policy advisor position put in place which is critical in giving impetus to this matter.

Ms. Selman: Mr. Chairman, Project Code 4700300. Can the Hon. Minister say what purpose the mobile test truck and test measure he proposes to purchase will serve?

Mr. Ali: We are expanding our capacity in the rice industry. For example, this mobile truck will be able to move to different factories and different export locations to verify standards, measurements, et cetera.

Ms. Selman: The same Project Code, could the Minister indicate the cost of each item?

Mr. Ali: I wish to advise the Hon. Member that this sum is for the purchase of the heavy duty mobile test truck.

Ms. Selman: According to what is reported in the project profile, “the project entails the purchase of the mobile test truck and test measure”, which are two separate items, unless, of course...

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chair, I just wish to inform you that the two are connected to each other.

Ms. Selman: Thank you, Hon. Minister. Mr. Chairman, can the Minister indicate whether the system of competitive bidding was utilised or will be utilised?

Mr. Ali: Yes the system established in the procurement rules and guidelines will be utilised.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, it appears I permitted some questions to go through the entire range when I ought to have completed Programme 231 firstly.

I there are any other questions for Programme 231 let us get them so we could complete the programme.

Programme: 231 - Main Office – \$39,700,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 232 – Ministry Administration - \$15,750,000

Mr. Chairman: We already had some questions on this Programme so if there are any others I can take them now.

Programme: 232 – Ministry Administration - \$15,750,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme 233 – Commerce, Industry and Consumer Affairs – \$376,000,000

Mr. Ramjattan: Could the Hon. Minister indicate whether this IDB financing is a loan or grant? (Project Code 4502500)

Mr. Ali: I am advised this is loan resources.

Mr. Ramjattan: The matter in relation to be spent is \$235 million for the institutional capacity of the National Competitiveness Strategy. How much of the \$235 million is going to be put there this year?

Mr. Ali: I am advised approximately \$13.2 million.

Mr. Ramjattan: I will ask two follow-up. In relation to project description No.2, “Enhancing investment and export promotion” how much will be put there, and in relation to No. 3“Private enterprise competitiveness for export development” how much?

Mr. Ali: I am advised that the sum is \$51 million.

Mr. Ramjattan: Is that for subhead No. 2?

Mr. Ali: Yes

Mr. Ramjattan: “Supporting private enterprise competitiveness for export development”, how much money is being spent for that subhead No.3.

Mr. Ali: Approximately \$31 million.

Mr. Ramjattan: If I am to add it up it will be \$31, \$30 and \$13 million. The amount budgeted to be spent this year is \$235 million.

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chair, you will recall too that this is a multi-year type of loan; this is a continuous project. There is a number of capacity and other support services already built up that the programme and project will continue to support. For example, the support for the national competitiveness strategy unit has a number of subheads which fall under the support mechanism that is catered for here. I can go through the entire list but if you require further information I do not mind submitting the full list of those continuing and the new initiatives.

Mr. Ramjattan: I asked a supplemental question to that. The supplemental question will be answered by the fact that the Hon. Minister is indicating that he is committing to handing me that document on how the \$235 million will be spent. Is that the commitment you made?

Mr. Ali: Yes

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Nagamootoo, does your question pertain to the same head?

Mr. Nagamootoo: Yes, I may say the Minister has been very forthright with his answers and I am very pleased with that. I wish to ask that since this is a continuing programme of almost \$2 billion based on a loan, whether there is a single contractor or several contractors dealing with this project.

Mr. Ali: There is a series of consultants hired to implement different aspects of this programme. It is managed by a project execution unit.

Ms. Selman: Project Code 44020000 - Competition and Consumer Protection Commission - can the Minister say what kind of equipment, if any, is to be procured for the intended development of the database and computerised system? If the equipment is to be procured, can the Minister state the types and quantities and the relevant cost?

Mr. Ali: Basically what we need to do is to procure the services of an Information Technology (IT) consultant to set up the database. The two activities will be the training of staff in the competition law and competition policy and also the development of the database and procedural manual. That is what the consultant will be required to do.

Ms. Selman: Can the Minister state the number and categories of staff to be trained in this programme and the cost associated with it?

Mr. Ali: Approximately ten; and, again, I have the total cost breakdown here. I do not know if you wish me to go through.

Ms. Selman: No, thank you.

Mr. Chairman: But do you wish to have it supplied Hon. Member?

Ms. Selman: Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: I hope the Hon. Minister is keeping an index of all the documents undertaken to supply to the House.

Mr. Ali: Thank you Mr. Chair, and I wish to assure you that before the end of tomorrow these documents will be circulated.

Programme: 233 – Commerce, Industry and Consumer Affairs - \$376,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members that brings us to the end of the ministerial responsibilities of Minister Ali.

Mr. Ali: I just want to take this opportunity to thank the technical staff for both ministries and agencies for their very good support. I am also happy to say that the Permanent Secretary (PS) from the Ministry of Housing was efficient, as usual. I have here the tenderers and evaluation for the security services for the Ministry of Housing and Water which I will give to the Clerk of the National Assembly.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members in addition to the kudos given to by the Minister himself, I would like to thank Members, and even my assistants, for taking us through the first part of the unchartered waters.

I wish to congratulate two members in particular, Hon. Member Mr. Ramjattan for moving the first amendment in history of this National Assembly to an Estimate – I think the records will always reflect that; and the Hon. Member Irfaan Ali, for defeating that amendment, standing up to it ably, I believe, representing your Ministry this evening. Hopefully that will be the standard so we will not have any cause for concern and potential crisis.

Hon. Members it is 7.20 p.m. We propose to take a break. I am advised the snacks are on their way. [*Interruption*] Thank you. They are here. Before we take the suspension, I would ask the Hon. Prime Minister or his able Deputy, in a sense the Hon. Mr. Rohee to move a motion. Because we started several hours later, we breached a resolution of this House that we should have started at 2.00 p.m. so we may need to go a little further. I, therefore, ask the Hon. Prime Minister to move a motion to take account of the time adjustments, please.

Mr. Hinds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To accommodate the amendments that we have agreed to, I would like to propose that according to Standing Order No. 11 we continue this session to the end of the Ministries listed.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Prime Minister one technical matter. I think we have to resume in the plenary before the motion could be moved. My apologies, Sir.

Assembly resumed at 7.25 p.m.

Mr. Hinds: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think I need also to propose the amendment to the timing of the schedules.

Motion proposed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Assembly suspended at 7.26 p.m.

Assembly resumed at 8.01 p.m.

Agency: 48 Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security

Current Expenditure

Programme: 481 Ministry Administration - \$179,021,000

Ms. Selman: Mr. Chairman, Line Item 6116 - Contracted Employees - could the Hon. Minister provide the designation of the four new contracted employees and their emoluments?

Minister of Human Services and Social Security [Ms. Webster]: Mr. Chairman, the four new employees are two Accounts Clerk II at the sum of \$45,338 each; one Clerk II at \$53,161 and one Principal Assistant Secretary (Finance) at \$158,854.

Ms. Selman: Line Item 6281, could the Hon Minister tell this National Assembly what is responsible for the increase in the budgetary allocation.

Ms. Webster: The increase stated here will meet charges associated with this and we have had to have changes in security because the firm United Associates Security & Domestic Services, which up to yesterday was providing security services, indicated to the Ministry one month prior that they were having difficulties and were unable to continue to provide services for us. As a result of that notification, the Ministry had to solicit urgently the approval of the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board because we would have been left without security from tomorrow. So we had to solicit approval for selective tendering because of the emergency in the short term. The head office location will be provided with security by the Special Constabulary and the other locations will be secured by Brans Security Services (Brans). We shortlisted three security firms: RK's Guyana Security Services (RK's), Brans and the Special Constabulary.

Ms. Selman: Line Item 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - could the Hon. Minister indicate the buildings identified for maintenance under this head?

Ms. Webster: In response to that question, the buildings identified for maintenance include the Head Office at Water and Cornhill Streets, the Drop-In Centre at Hadfield Street, the Palms Institution at Brickdam, and the Mahaica Hospital.

Mr. Jones: Line Item 6241 - Rental of Buildings - could the Hon. Minister indicate which building is being rented and which department is functioning in this building?

Ms. Webster: We pay rental for five offices for the Guyana Legal Aid clinic in the Maraj Building.

Mrs. Baveghems: Could the Hon. Minister give the total staff...

Mr. Chairman: Line Item?

Mrs. Baveghems: Line Item 6231.

Mr. Chairman: Fuel and Lubricants?

Ms. Baveghems: Yes

Mr. Chairman: Okay, proceed.

Mrs. Baveghems: Would the Minister say how many vehicles there are in the fleet of the administration department at your Ministry.

Ms. Webster: The answer is that there are ten vehicles.

8.08 p.m.

Mrs. Baveghems: Line Item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings, would the Minister tell us which building or buildings this allocation is for?

Ms. Webster: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure I heard the Hon. Member's question properly Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 6242 is lubricants; sorry Line Item 6231 is fuel and lubricants...

Mrs. Baveghems: It is Line Item 6281- Security Services.

Mr. Chairman: There is no Line Item 6281 – Security Services.

Ms. Webster: If it is Line Item 6281– Security Services, and you want to know the facilities where the security is provided, it is the Head Office, the Palms Geriatric Home, the Labour Department on North road, the Labour Department on Brickdam, the Labour Department in New

Amsterdam, Berbice, the Drop-in Centre on Hadfield Street, the Sophia Care Centre - Sophia, the Child Care and Protection Agency - Charlestown, The Mahaica Hospital - Hospice, the Mahaica Children's Home – Mahaica, the Night Shelter – East La Penitence and we also provide security for Help and Shelter for the Safe Home.

Mr. Chairman: Do you have a follow up Mrs. Baveghems? What I will suggest is that you get that together. Is there any other question from any other Member?

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, Line Item 6321 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisation, I wonder if the Hon. Minister can indicate to us, which local organisations are receiving subsidies and contributions under this head.

Ms. Webster: The Amerindian Handicraft Association, the Beacon Foundation, Friends of the Needy, the Guyana Relief Council, the Guyana Red Cross Society, and Rural Women's Network Women in Environment.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Madam.

Mr. Jones: Cde. Chairman, Line Item 6293 – Refreshment and Meals, could the Hon. Minister explain Refreshments and Meals?

Mr. Chairman: Explain it or...?

Mr. Jones: For what purpose is the refreshment and meals.

Ms. Webster: Under that Line Item provision is made for the purchase of refreshment for meetings, also for the recently held activities to commemorate International Women's Day, that expenditure is met from there. Also it is for refreshment and meals for staff that go out of town. Many of our officers have to go out of town on a regular basis, so refreshment and meals are provided; many are Probation and Social Services Officers and our Child Care and Protection Officers and that expenditure is met there.

Mr. Bond: Line Item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships), could the Minister indicate what nature of training the staff would be exposed to?

Ms. Webster: In response to that question, 25 staff members will benefit from Staff Development Training in computer science.

Mr. Bond: Under the same Line Item, where would the staff be going to further their training under the Head – Scholarships? That would be local or foreign.

Ms. Webster: They will be trained locally as I understand at Global Technology.

Programme: 481- Ministry Administration - \$179,021,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 482 – Social Services - \$5,082,587,000

Mrs. Lawrence: Could the Minister tell us whether Social Workers fall within the Line Item – 6116 – Contracted Employees?

Ms. Webster: Yes.

Mrs. Lawrence: Follow up, would the Minister tell us how many Social Workers are presently employed?

Ms. Webster: We have 46 Social Workers.

Mrs. Lawrence: Would the Minister tell us what is the complement required by the Ministry for Social Service Workers or Social Workers, as they are called, in the Line Item 6116 – Contracted Employees.

Ms. Webster: I am advised that the maximum positions of Social Workers amount to 57. Some of the social Workers are paid under Line Item 6116 – Contracted Employees and the others are paid under Line Item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skills.

Mrs. Lawrence: Mdm. Minister, could you kindly tell us why they are under two different categories and whether it has anything to do with the positions that they hold?

Ms. Webster: In response to the question by the Hon. Member, some of the Social Workers are on the pensionable establishment, whilst the others are on contract.

Mrs. Lawrence: I know that, does it have anything to do with levels?

Ms. Webster: If I could just perhaps provide some more information. The levels of the officers there on contract are at the level of Probation, Family Welfare Officers and Social Services Officers. If I can, for the information of the House, the salaries of those persons are \$66,052.

Mrs. Lawrence: I think the Minister forgot my question that I asked. What is the complement required to meet the Social Services Department and its programmes?

Ms. Webster: I would say that the current is 57 Social Workers.

Mrs. Lawrence: What is required to meet the programmes?

Ms. Webster: In response to the question I would say to the Hon. Member that because the Ministry intends to expand its services, due to demand for the service, the Ministry in collaboration with Public Service Ministry will be undertaking a review, we will like to have all of our Social Services and Welfare Officers placed in all ten of the administrative regions to meet the demands of our people. That review will be concluded very shortly between the Public Service Ministry and our Ministry.

Mrs. Lawrence: Thank you Mdm. Minister for that answer. A follow up question on the same Line Item can the Minister tell us, how many Social Service Workers there are in the ten administrative regions and which region does not have a Social Service Office?

Ms. Webster: All regions have Social Service Officers currently. In Region 1- Port Kaituma, we have two; in Region 2, we have two; Region 3 we have four; Region 4, at the Head Office we have six, on the East Coast of Demerara we have four and on the East Bank of Demerara we have four persons; Region 5 we have two; Region 6, New Amsterdam we have five; at Whim we have three; Region 7 there is one; Region 8, Mahdia one; Lethem we have two persons there; and at Linden we have three.

Mrs. Lawrence: Follow up question, could the Minister tell this House why both Social Workers were placed at Port Kaituma, sub-region 2? What has happen to sub-region 1?

Ms. Webster: I am advised that one Social Worker is in Moruka and one is in Port Kaituma.

Ms. Kissoon: Line Item 6321 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations, Minister would you tell this Hon. House how the allocation of \$56.191 million is allocated across the ten administrative regions, which we were told offered legal aid?

Ms. Webster: The amount here being provided for legal aid will be for the Guyana Legal Aid Clinic, the sum of \$32 million. That amount will be distributed to the core operations of Georgetown, Region 5, Anna Regina and Region 6.

Ms. Kissoon: Could the Hon. Minister say how much and why is Region 10 legal aid not receiving any under this?

Ms. Webster: With respect to Region 10, the Ministry has not been in receipt of a request from that NGO (Non Governmental Organisation) for Region 10. I did say so in my budget presentation. However, over the past three years, the Ministry supported that NGO because we know that it is important to have legal aid services provided in Region 10. Through Country Funds for the Ministry we worked out with UNICEF for funding to be provided for Region 10. That will be done, again, for Region 10 through Country Funds with UNICEF. We have started discussions with UNICEF and we are awaiting the figure from that NGO in Linden and the funding will be provided for Region 10 this year using UNICEF's Country Funds.

Mr. Chairman: Can you say how much that will be?

Ms. Webster: Mr. Chairman, it will not be less than what they were given prior, but we await the budget. I have asked UNICEF for consideration to be given so that we will meet whatever is provided based on the budget submission.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Ms. Kissoon: Could the Hon. Minister indicate the allocation for the areas that she listed before? She did not give me the specific allocations.

Ms. Webster: In response to that question, maybe I should, for the record of this House indicate that the Guyana Legal Aid Clinic submitted a budget to us for \$45.9 million and funds were only provided for \$32.338 million and as a result of that we will have to re-allocate the moneys to the four operations that I just stated.

Mrs. Lawrence: Follow up; during the debates the Minister indicated to this House that the Ministry under her was going to open three new offices in three regions where there are presently no offices. If we follow what the Minister just said in terms of allocation, she is allocating all of the moneys that are being asked for to the offices which currently exist, so I want to know whether she is telling this House that she is going to ask for a supplemental provision for those new offices?

Ms. Webster: I am not sure in my budget presentation if I spoke about expansion of additional offices for legal aid, what I did say is, we intend to expand the services of the Child Care Protection Agency by providing additional offices in other regions.

Mrs. Lawrence: Mr. Chairman, I do not know whether you would permit me to ask the Minister if in her plans for 2012 she is going to seek to open offices in the other administrative regions for the provision of legal aid services.

Ms. Webster: It is our intention and Government's commitment to provide legal aid services throughout the length and breadth of our country, but it would be based on our ability to meet such an activity.

Mrs. Lawrence: Follow up question, can the Minister tell us, since she just indicated that UNICEF will be providing funding for this particular Line Item, whether in her discussions with UNICEF if there is any provisions for future offices to be opened in the other administrative regions?

Ms. Webster: In response to that question, the UNICEF has a Country Programme Action Plan with certain specific identified activities and one of those activities entails providing support and legal aid services to children who are victims of abuse. In that Country Action Plan, the only region there is Region 10 for the funding. So the additional operations which we would require throughout the length and breadth of our country will have to be met at some point in time from Government's funds. But what I have said earlier is that it will be based on our ability to find those resources, but it is not being provided here right now.

Mrs. Lawrence: Thank you Mdm. Minister, moving on to Line Item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure, would the Minister tell us what other infrastructural maintenance works are planned for this allocation?

Ms. Webster: In 2012, we plan to undertake repairs to the fence of the Mahaica Children's Home, concreting of the yard, do work to the drains and compound of the Palms Geriatric Home and repair the southern side fence of the Night Shelter at East La Penitence.

Mrs. Lawrence: Follow up, could the Minister kindly tell us what works she is planning to do in the Palms Geriatric Home compound?

Ms. Webster: There are plans to re-silt the drains, weed the compounds and do maintenance of the flower gardens.

Mrs. Lawrence: I am very happy to hear that. It tells me that the Minister is taking in stride the recommendations of the Auditor General.

Mr. Chairman: That is a good thing.

Mrs. Lawrence: Yes I am congratulating her. Line Item 6343- Old Age Pension and Social Assistance... [Mr. Nandlall: Inaudible] I want you to listen and learn. Could the Hon. Minister tell us what percentage of the allocation of this \$4.2 billion is allocated to, (1) – the School Uniform Programme; the School Feeding Programme; and whether the School Feeding Programme will be extended this year and how much will go to the other services that you have in that basket; spectacles, food and so on?

Ms. Webster: The School Uniform Funding is provided for under the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Chairman: Maybe you can speak to the other items.

Ms. Webster: Under Line Item 6343 - Old Age Pension and Social Assistance, this year we will meet under this sub-head, payment to our pensioners, public assistance, the payment of foster care for those children who are placed in foster homes; and for the single parents, we have budget the sum of \$25 million for that and for foster care \$25 million. The Uniform and School Feeding Programme is met under the Ministry of Education. The expenditure for the spectacles and all the other benefits are provided to us by via warrants from the Ministry of Finance.

Mrs. Lawrence: Just one other clarification on this same Line Item. Do you meet the water expenditure for the senior citizens from this item? Could you tell me how much is allocated?

Ms. Webster: Actually the expenditure for the water subsidy is met from here and it is incorporated with the figures for the old age pension. It is approximately \$21.9 million.

Dr. Ramayya: I would like to ask the Minister to indicate to this House how many persons do we have on our pension plan and how many are receiving a social assistance?

Mr. Chairman: Will this be under Line Item 6343- Old Age Pension and Social Assistance?

Dr. Ramayya: Yes Sir.

Mr. Chairman: How many persons are we catering for under this Line Item?

Ms. Webster: This year approximately 42,000 pensioners will receive pensions and 9,000 persons will receive public assistance.

Mr. Jones: Line Item 6284 - Old Age Pension and Social Assistance, we see a figure of \$44.02 million, could the Hon. Minister explain what is "Other"?

Ms. Webster: In response to that question, under this Line Item we meet the payment of the administrative fees to the Guyana Post Office Corporation for effecting the payment of pensions to our pensioners and we also purchased items for the residents who live at the Palms Geriatric Home.

Dr. Ramayya: Seeing that the Hon. Minister has given us the figure can that figure be electronically available to the public on the website?

Mr. Chairman: Well you can publicise it?

Dr. Ramayya: The names of those persons Mr. Chairman... to become a public record.

Mr. Chairman: 42,000 persons. What I will do Hon. Member is, I will have discussions with the Minister and you at some point in time soon. It is a matter of some interest. I know that the Minister, on assuming office, did say that she was working on addressing that list, if I can recall correctly. So I will arrange a meeting with anyone who is interested in meeting with the Minister

and her staff pertaining to the issue of the numbers and perhaps the distribution. We will disaggregate the list so that you will know in which region how many persons there are and where they can be found. That will be arranged some time very soon.

Ms. Webster: Thank you Mr. Chairman we will be willing to...

Dr. Ramayya: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Jones: A follow up for Line Item 6284 – Other, the Hon. Minister explained that this is to purchase items for the Palms Geriatric Home and we note under Line Item 6292 – Dietary, I am assuming it is to purchase dietary for the inmates at the Palms Geriatric Home. Could the Hon. Minister explain or give us the specifics as to exactly what is being purchased under this Line Item for the residents of the Palms Geriatric Home?

Ms. Webster: Under this Line Item here, 6284 – Other, we purchase items such as clothing for the residents, personal items for their hygiene; also we have children at the three homes in Hadfield Street, Sophia and Mahaica that are in our custody and care. We have to provide clothing for those children and at Easter time we purchase kites for them and take them kite flying and at Christmas time we provide them with little gifts and so on. That expenditure is also met here.

Ms. Ferguson: Under Line Item 6294 – Other, can the Hon. Minister advise this House, what is being classified as “Other”, thank you.

8.38 p.m.

Ms. Webster: Mr. Chairman, under this heading we made payment to those board members from across the Regions of the Local Board of Guardians. We also paid stipends to the persons under the Poor Law Commission. We met the cost of burial for persons at the Palms –We also meet the cost for barbers for the inmates of the Palms.

Mr. Jones: Cde. Chairman, line item 6281, Security Services: Could the Hon. Minister explain to this House why there is this huge increase from \$23.102 million to \$29.308 million?

Ms. Webster: Earlier this question was asked and I gave an overall explanation which covered all three programmes because the security services were originally provided by the United

Associates and Security Company at a lower rate and that company indicated that they would be unable to provide to all the locations of the Ministry; as a result, we have had to secure the services of another security firm.

Mr. Jones: My apologies.

Dr. Ramayya: Mr. Chairman, I have a burning question for the Minister, I can see here that in 2011

Mr. Chairman: Which line item is it?

Dr. Ramayya: Sorry. 6343, in 2011 we had \$4,372,069,000 and for 2012 we have \$4,281,283,000. I heard in this House that people are living longer and today we have a budget for the pensioners and social assistance that dropped.

Mr. Chairman: What is the question: Why has it dropped?

Dr. Ramayya: Yes.

Ms. Webster: Mr. Chairman, I think in all that has been said earlier in this Hon. House, the Hon. Minister of Finance spoke about a proposal for the increase of the pension payments up to \$10,000 and whilst I have noted what the Hon. Member has said that reduction there definitely... We will have to have additional funding at some point in time.

Mr. Chairman: The question is, if there is a reduction now, even if the quantum is increased... In other words the number should be fixed but the amount increase. Why was there a reduction between last year and this year?

Ms. Webster: What happened during last year was payments were affected. The water subsidy was affected to the Guyana Water Incorporated for two years because it was not met prior to that for two years.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the answer is some payments had to be made to GWI last year which were really some arrears and now they are current, hence the reason the figure has dropped but, given the announcement received this afternoon, of course we are going to see an

increase. That is an explanation as to why the allocation was expected, up until this afternoon, to diminish to this figure for this year.

Mr. Felix: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6281: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister to explain to this House how many locations are to be covered by this contract.

Ms. Webster: I know that the question was asked already but I will still answer it. The security services will have to provide security coverage to 14 locations.

Mr. Chairman: Dispersed throughout the Regions.

Ms. Webster: Yes, throughout.

Mr. Chairman: 14 locations, Hon. Member Mr. Felix.

Mr. Felix: As a follow-up, did the Ministry set criteria for the security services to meet before being awarded?

Ms. Webster: The answer is “yes”. We specified what locations should have armed guards, guards with radios and baton guards.

Mr. Felix: Those are specifications for the security company, but if one follows Section 5.1(i) one will see the criteria set out there. I was wondering...

Mr. Chairman: What are you referring to? Section 5.1(i) of...?

Mr. Felix: Procurement. It is said here that it possesses or has access to the technical competence, financial resources, equipment and other physical facilities, managerial capability, reliability, experience and reputation and the personnel to perform the contract.

Ms. Webster: The answer is “yes”, because there are standard bidding documents with which we have to comply which are set one and specify all criteria.

Mr. Chairman: If there is some disagreement a Member may bring a motion if they wish to expose the area but it is subjective. If the Ministry puts out the description and it feels, through its technocrat that the requirements have been met and Members may know otherwise, they are free to explore it further in the proper manner.

Programme: 482 – Social Services – \$5,082,587,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 483 – Labour Administration – \$287,915,000

Ms. Selman: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Hon. Minister say what is responsible for the significant increase in line item 6116?

Mr. Chairman: My apologies, I was just clarifying a procedural matter.

Ms. Selman: May I continue? Line item 6116: Could the Hon. Minister indicate what is responsible for the significant increase having regard to the movement or the addition of four contracted employees? Could the Hon. Minister also provide the designation of the four additional contracted employees and their emoluments?

Ms. Webster: The increase caters for the 8% salary increase which was paid in 2011 and the four new staff members. There are two Office Assistants at a salary of \$48,540, one cleaner with a salary of \$35,864, one driver with a salary of \$53,704.

Dr. Roopnarine: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6322, Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations, which has a figure of \$2,365,000, turning to page 404, which are the details of subsidies and contributions...

Mr. Speaker: Which page is that?

Dr. Roopnarine: This is page 404. I see that under Agency Code 48, the bulk of that consists of payments to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), a sum of \$2,115,000. Turning back to page 200 and looking at line item 6262, I see that there is zero expenditure of overseas conferences and I wish to ask the Hon. Minister whether we are taking advantage of this \$2 million we are paying to the ILO. Offer this House an explanation as to why it is we are not attending ILO Meetings, or is it listed somewhere else.

Ms. Webster: This is the contribution provided here which we have to make on an annual basis to the ILO. We are going to be attending ILO Meetings this year and that travel expenditure will be met from the conference vote, held at the Ministry of Finance.

Programme: 483 – Labour Administration – \$287,915,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 481 – Ministry Administration – \$20,600,000

Mrs. Lawrence: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Item 1206800: Could the Hon. Minister tell us if the \$1.1 million allocated for the completion of works at the Ministry's Head Office is adequate to complete the building?

Ms. Webster: The sum being requested is to meet payment due to the contractor for works done at the Head Office which was a contract awarded during 2011. That is the sum being requested here.

Mrs. Lawrence: As a follow-up, could the Hon. Minister tell us, given the present state of the building, why there is no allocation or whether there will be a review done in terms of the work that needs to be done to bring that place to a habitable level?

Ms. Webster: We are all aware of the conditions that the staff of the Ministry has to work under and, I think, as the Minister, and I am sure Dr. Gopaul agrees, we are working to ensure that we provide better office accommodations for the staff of the Minister as soon as possible.

Mrs. Lawrence: Thank you Mdm. Minister. I am glad to hear that and I am quite certain that the staff members are also happy to hear that.

Line item 2402800, Land Transportation: Would the Minister kindly tell us how many vehicles this allocation will provide for?

Ms. Webster: The answer is: two four-wheel drive vehicles for out of town travel into the interior and so on.

Mrs. Lawrence: As a follow-up, could the Hon. Minister elaborate a little? Will these vehicles be here in the pool at the Ministry or will any of these vehicles be allocated to the interior regions for the social workers there?

Ms. Webster: The vehicles will be utilised for the work of the Ministry and they will be based at Head Office but they will be utilised for work out-of-town in the various regional areas.

Mr. Chairman: Is there any other question on Programme 481?

Mrs. Lawrence: Yes. Mr. Chairman, could the Minister tell us what the present fleet of the Ministry is? I think she may have answered that question while I was out.

Ms. Webster: The current fleet of vehicles for the Administration is 10.

Programme: 481 – Ministry Administration – \$20,600,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 482 – Social Services – \$174,172,000

Mrs. Backer: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Line item 1206800, Buildings, completion of centre and construction of buildings – Venezuela, Project Profile 208: We notice that it is a four-year project. The sum allocated for this year, could you give us a break down as to what will be used to complete the centre and what will be used for the rehabilitation of the Salvation Army's Men's Social Centre?

Ms. Webster: The rehabilitation of the Salvation Army's building and the Social Centre, will cost \$16,345,000. In the budget there is \$162.572 million being requested. The difference will be used to meet the cost remaining for the construction of the centre for the rehabilitation and reintegration facility at Onverwagt.

Programme: 482 – Social Services – \$174,172,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 483 – Labour Administration – \$4,400,000

Programme: 483 – Labour Administration – \$4,400,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: I wish to report that Agency 48, Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Programmes 481, 482 and 483, Capital Expenditures, now stand part of the

Estimates. We thank you Hon. Minister, your staff and team for being here tonight and for your presentations and for all the questions asked.

Hon. Members we will move immediately into consideration of the Estimates for the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport. I would like to say that we will not be taking a break but the Parliament Office has provided sandwiches and coffee and other light refreshments; if any Member needs any they can just go ahead, but we will not be breaking.

Agency: 44 – Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport

Current Expenditure

Programme: 441 – Ministry Administration – \$161,030,000

Mrs. Backer: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Item 6111, Administrative Staff: We see that there are three such staff members; could the Hon. Minister share with us the designation of the staff and their emoluments?

Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport [Dr. Anthony]: Is it 6111 that you are asking about?

Mr. Chairman: 6111, Administrative.

Dr. Anthony: For 6111, I think we have one person listed there.

Mr. Chairman: You have three persons listed for this.

Dr. Anthony: Sorry about that, Mr. Chairman. We have three persons here. They are the Senior Personnel Officer and two Accountants.

Mrs. Backer: Salaries.

Dr. Anthony: For the Senior Personnel Officer the salary is \$102,133. For the Accountants, each gets \$80,538.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is nice to see that I can still make a gentleman – someone of the other sex – nervous; the Minister took such a while to collect himself.

On the same area, Contracted Employees: We see that there is an increase of seven contracted employees. Could the Hon. Minister share with us information on the seven new contracted employees? Of course not their names but positions they hold and their designations.

Dr. Anthony: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The seven persons are; Administrative Assistant and his salary is \$200,888, three Accounts Clerks at the same salary of \$45,338, a Stores Clerk at \$39,127, a driver at \$39,127 and an Office Assistant at \$35,846.

Mrs. Backer: As a follow-up, Hon. Minister, I just want to be very clear. Did you say that one of the seven new contracted employees was an Administrative Assistant whose salary is \$200,000 and more per month? Okay. Could you say, Hon. Minister, if the Ministry has a policy in terms of what the average contract looks like in terms of its duration? Is it usually a year which is renewable, two years? What is the average or the standard time?

Dr. Anthony: It is three years.

Mrs. Baker: Thank you, Hon. Minister. Line item 6281, Security Service: Could we please be provided with the name of the security service?

Dr. Anthony: The name of the security service is Strategic Action Security.

Mrs. Backer: Thank you so much.

Mr. Jones: Cde. Chairman, line item 6284: Could the Hon. Minister explain "Other"?

Dr. Anthony: "Other" in this instance refers to payment for advertisement at Guyana Information Agency (GINA). Additionally we use this subheading for transportation when we have national events like Mashramani, Independence Day and to purchase meals for staff when they are in routine meetings that we host for these functions.

Programme: 441 – Ministry Administration – \$161,030,000 agreed to and ordered to stand port of the Estimates.

Programme: 442 – Culture – \$493,895,000

Ms. Selman: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line Item 6116: Could the Hon. Minister provide us with the designations of the three new contracted employees and their emoluments?

Dr. Anthony: The three persons we have are the Anthropological Assistant and we have two such persons; their emoluments are \$45,338 each. We have one Office Assistant and that person's salary is \$35,864.

Ms. Selman: As a follow-up, could the Hon. Minister tell us what is responsible for the almost \$10 million increase?

Dr. Anthony: We have three additional workers for the year. If one looks at the legend, we had 62 and we have now gone to 65.

9.09 p.m.

Mr. Greenidge: Would the Minister be good enough to tell us on what basis the Ministry recruits these officers? I am thinking specifically about the Administrative Assistants. It is on the basis of: What criteria can an Administrative Assistant, in the same agency, be paid almost seven times more than another?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I think it is the criteria for the job as Administrative Assistant in your Ministry.

Dr. Anthony: I would like to make a slight clarification. What I am talking about here is an Office Assistant. The person under this line item, one of the three new employees, is an Office Assistant.

Mr. Greenidge: I clearly heard the Minister. If the Minister is withdrawing what he said before, that is a different matter. I distinctly heard him referred, in the first instance, to an Administrative Assistant being paid \$200,000 plus and an Anthropological Assistant, which surely is not an Office Assistant, being paid \$45,000.

Dr. Anthony: I am not sure whether it is under this line item but, nevertheless, for clarity and the Hon. Member's information, the Administrative Assistant that we spoke about in the previous instance is somebody with a master's degree. The Office Assistant is someone...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, allow the Minister to give the answer that he wishes to give and then we can take it from there.

Dr. Anthony: There are two different programmes. The first person is somebody with a master's degree and the second person is someone with basic qualifications. I do not know if that ...

Mr. Greenidge: I am still seeking clarification. Did I or did I not hear the Minister referred to an Anthropological Assistant which is now transmuted into an Office Assistant?

Dr. Anthony: There are three new employees. Of the three, two are Anthropological Assistants and one is an Office Assistant. The two who are Anthropological Assistants are technicians and the other one is an Office Assistant. So the qualifications are different.

Mr. Greenidge: I am still somewhat worried by what I hear. What I would ask is that the Minister provides us with the job descriptions of the two and also of the Administrative Assistant.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I think that is a fair request.

Dr. Anthony: I am willing to provide that information for the Hon. Member.

Mr. Chairman: I would expect that information by tomorrow. Thank you.

Mrs. Backer: Line item 6117 – Temporary Employees: I see that number has been reduced from nineteen to eleven. Minister, would you be kind enough to give us the designations of the eleven temporary employees?

Dr. Anthony: The persons referred to under this line item are instructors. There are three instructors, internal security officer, sound room supervisor, Assistant Field Officer, Secretary and a dancer. These are people at the National School of Dance.

Ms. Selman: Line item 6302 – Training: Could the Hon. Minister say how many persons will benefit from this training and in what areas?

Dr. Anthony: The training programmes are at the various cultural institutions. At the National Museum, there are children camps; at the Museum of African Heritage, there is a similar kind of children camp; at the Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology, there is a junior archaeology programme and so a number of children will benefit from that; at the Burrowes School of Art, there are summer programmes, apart from the regular programmes; at the music school, there are

classes in training right now and at the National School of Dance there are a number of children who will benefit from those training.

Mr. Ramjattan: Line item 6321 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - \$143 million: I notice at page 398 that one such component of that money is \$100 million to Sports and Art Development Fund. I notice that for Budget 2011 a similar sum was allocated and two-thirds of it, apparently, was not spent and there is, now, budgeted another \$100 million. Could the Minister indicate what those expenses are going towards - the \$100 million, in view of the \$70 million negative for the last year?

Dr. Anthony: These funds, which have been using..., maybe if I will give a bit of history. Last year, for example, the Ministry assisted with the President's endowment for films. Last year, the University of Guyana received \$30 million and it has been able to produce five short films and those had been taken around to different film festivals. The Ministry had also used this allocation for funding of the Caribbean Press and the publications which it is doing. For example, the National Assembly speeches, some of the allocation has been used for that. Last year, it did not exhaust the \$100 million and there is a rollover to this year. That is why there is \$143 million budgeted.

Mr. Jones: I do not know whether or not last year was a special year, but I note that line item - 6294 – Other - last year the Ministry was allocated \$40.7 million and this year it is allocated \$7.515 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain this item under, "Other"? If he so wishes, because I would love to know, could he say why last year there was an allocation of \$40.7 million?

Dr. Anthony: Last year, the Members who were here before would recall, that the Ministry came for a supplementary provision. In that supplementary provision, the Ministry had asked for funds to fund the inter-faith television station. These funds which were allocated here, from that supplementary provision, were used as start-up for that inter-faith television station. That is why there is a difference.

Mr. Jones: It is just a follow-up. How has it related to the \$7.515 million requested this year?

Dr. Anthony: There is a breakdown by the various cultural institutions that are there. The Ministry intends to use \$200,000 for the office of the Assistant Director of Culture; \$1 million will be for the National Museum; the Museum of African Heritage would receive \$500,000; the Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology would receive \$1.1 million; the National Archives would receive \$500,000; the Burrowes School of Art would receive \$2.5 million; the National Cultural Centre would receive \$400,000. There is also an allocation for special projects of \$2,015,000; and the music school would receive \$700,000.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6284 – Other: There is an allocation requested of \$8.5 million and its description is under “Other”. Could the Hon. Minister explain what “Other” is?

Dr. Anthony: The Ministry has been using the money under this line item to pay part-time lecturers at the music school, Burrowes School of Art, and so forth. There is a breakdown, here, where part-time persons have been hired.

Mr. Trotman: Line item 6291 – National and Other Events: Could the Minister say what the national and other events are which will be funded under this line item?

Dr. Anthony: The line item is used to fund national events such as Mashramani, Independence celebrations, Black History Month celebrations, Museum Week, Emancipation, Arrival Day celebrations, and so forth.

Mr. T. Williams: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): Hon. Minister, \$5 million is requested for...

Mr. Chairman: Is that line item 6302?

Mr. T. Williams: Yes. Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): Would the Minister mind shedding some light on...?

Mr. Chairman: A question was asked about that, I think.

Mr. T. Williams: It was.

Mr. Chairman: A question was asked about it before, but you can go ahead, for the benefit of the Member, please, Mr. Minister.

Dr. Anthony: Again, these are allocations for the various cultural institutions such as the National Museum, Museum of African Heritage... As I said, at the National Museum, children camps are done. At the Museum of African Heritage, it is the same thing. At the Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology, there is the junior archaeology programme, and so forth.

Mr. Greenidge: Mr. Chairman, could I take you back to line item 6321 – Subsidies and Subventions to Local Organisations – specifically to the Sports and Arts Development Fund? Would the Minister be so kind as to indicate whether it is a statutory agency with articles governing its functions? And secondly, I believe that I had a difficulty with the arithmetic. Could he give us a breakdown, perhaps in writing, as regards the elements which were spent in 2011 and what are proposed for 2012? But most importantly, the agency was allocated \$100 million in 2011, it spent \$30 million and it is now making a request for \$100 million. Could we have an explanation as to why the agency thinks it will be spent this year when it was not spent last year?

Dr. Anthony: Every year the Ministry has been allocating moneys to it to do cultural development. Over the years there have been different things that we would have worked on, including work at the National Archives. I can supply the information to the Member, in writing, on what the Ministry would have done with last year's allocation and, as I said, the balance has now been added to this year's request. There is an amount from the \$100 million that has been rolled over. This year, there is \$143 million budgeted under this line item.

The projects which the Ministry has for this year...I can tell the Member that one of the things we are looking at is additional publication through the Caribbean Press and there are people who are working on some specific projects right now. The Ministry is open to other things that would come in during the year and based on those requests and needs it will then be able to make an allocation. I do not have a set of fixed projects that I can say to the Member that, "This is what we will be doing now", with the exception of the work that we are doing with the Caribbean Press.

Mr. Greenidge: Perhaps, I was at fault in wrapping too many questions in one request and I will take them separately, if I may. First of all, it is whether this is a statutory body with articles governing its scope.

Dr. Anthony: It is a fund that is administered through the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport.

Mr. Greenidge: Am I to take it that it is not a statutory body and it is just an organisation established by the Ministry without any specific legal standing? Is that what I am to understand from your answer?

Dr. Anthony: It is part of the Ministry. I do not know why the Member did say that it does not have legal standing. The Permanent Secretary would administrate the funds.

Mr. Greenidge: I think I need some guidance on this matter. These Estimates have an item called “Subsidies and Subventions to Local Organisations.” If it is listed as a local organisation, I am having difficulty understanding... Is the Minister telling us that the Ministry has established something which it comes to us here, in the House, with, designated as a local organisation, and yet it is a part of the Ministry? There is a second aspect. Under what authority is the Ministry enabled to roll over funds from one year to the next? I am not aware that that is permitted. Under what regulations is it done?

Dr. Anthony: As I said, Mr. Chairman, this is a fund which has been established and the Ministry has been using it for the development of culture and sports in the country. This is how it is being administered.

Mr. Greenidge: There are two things that I am trying to ascertain, both of which seem to be conflicting with my understanding of what is permitted. A fund cannot be established by the Ministry, and still be a part of the Ministry, and the House is asked to approve a subvention for it as a separate entity from the Ministry. At the same time, I have not been given an answer as to how the Ministry is able to roll over funds from one year to the next.

Dr. Anthony: There is \$143 million under this fund and it is basically used as a facility for the development of culture and sport. The Hon. Member would have requested what the Ministry has been using the funds for and I will provide that information to him. The Ministry would receive requests from cultural organisations for money for the development of culture and sport.

Mrs. Backer: Through you, Mr. Chairman, Hon. Minister, would you agree with us that the Sports and Art Development Fund ought not properly to be under line item 6321 which deals with “Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations”? Would you agree with us, Sir, that

this is not a local organisation in the way that the Theatre Guild of Guyana, the Rupununi Weavers Society and the National Trust are? Would you agree with us?

Dr. Anthony: Again, it is a facility to do this. For the last five years the Ministry has been coming to this House under this line item and there was not any objection as to where the funds were being placed. The Ministry could account for the funds that it has. This has been the way it has been budgeted for, for the last five years. If there is some difficulty with that I am sure that, at some point, it can be reexamined, but, at this point, this is where it is being allocated and this is what has been the historical practice.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Mr. Minister. Hon. Members, I indicated before that if any Member feels aggrieved personally or that procedurally, legally, statutorily, or constitutionally there are breaches, that Member may take the matter up by motions, or otherwise, or by questions put. Once the Minister has answered, you may be dissatisfied with his answer or feel that his actions are wrong, but he has said that this is the way it has been done and he has followed the precedent. Members are free to raise the issues by way of motion, or otherwise, at the appropriate time, using the proper procedures.

Mr. Greenidge: Might I suggest to the Minister that in the light of the answers he has given and the fact that, as far as we can ascertain from his answers, two breaches have been committed, that he may want to consider withdrawing this item.

Mr. Chairman: Minister, you have been asked to consider withdrawing the item.

Dr. Anthony: Mr. Chairman, I cannot do that. This here is a very important allocation and it is for the development of culture and sports in our country. The Ministry has shown by the projects, which it would have done with these funds, that they are very essential funds.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Hon. Minister explain which buildings are to be maintained?

Dr. Anthony: The money here are for works to be done at the National Museum, Museum of African Heritage, where some repairs will be done to the roof and gutters; the Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology, where there will be some works to repair the external wall; the National Archives, where works will be done to the western fence; the Burrowes School of Art,

where some repairs will be done on the eastern side of the building; the National Cultural Centre, where some painting will be done to the interior and exterior walls; the music school, where there will be some work, in terms of soundproofing, to be done and the National Dance School, where there will be repairs to the roof of Studio 1.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: Could the Hon. Minister explain what the infrastructure will be?

Dr. Anthony: There will be repairs to be done to the back fence of the National Archives; repairs to fence of the National School of Dance and a bridge will be built there.

Mr. Ramjattan: Mr. Chairman, I wish to go back to line item 6321 – Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations. I just want to be clear, because I think that the Minister is under a misapprehension here. I had felt that this fund, when he answered my question, was like another agency that the Ministry is helping out. Now that it was stated that it is within the Ministry, if it is moneys now, as the Minister indicated, will be given for those people who apply for it, what is the criteria for the organisation which can apply for money for sports of \$143 million? And which organisations can apply? I want to understand that.

Dr. Anthony: Any cultural organisation or sports association can apply. For example, there was Guyana Rugby Association or Federation which had applied and it got moneys for its travel. As I said before, the University of Guyana, through the film project, was given an allocation. There are different groups which apply from time to time. In the case of the publications... because the Ministry has been funding the Caribbean Press through this mechanism.

Mr. Ramjattan: Does the discretion lie exclusively with the Minister as to who will be awarded upon an application?

Dr. Anthony: The Ministry will receive the applications, it reviews them and then it makes an allocation. So far, every organisation which would have applied to the Ministry would have benefited.

Ms. Kissoon: Under the same line item, could the Hon. Minister say if schools can apply since sports... and it is being done at the level of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) level – Physical Education?

Dr. Anthony: There is no barrier, once it relates to culture and sports.

Programme: 442 – Culture - \$493,895,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

9.39 p.m.

Programme: 443 – Youth - \$479,297, 000

Mrs. Backer: Line item 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations: We see a figure of \$7.58 million. When we turn to page 403, we see that there are two organisations - Commonwealth Youth Programme, \$2.58 million and President's Award, \$5 million. Is the President's Award an international organisation, Hon. Minister?

Dr. Anthony: Yes. The President's Youth Award is part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award programme. With the Duke of Edinburgh programme, in every country there are affiliates. So we are a part of that programme.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6294 - Others: Could the Hon. Minister please explain the \$45.74 million?

Dr. Anthony: Here the Ministry pays stipends to the students at Kurukuru Training College. They would receive a stipend of \$4,000. At the Sophia Training Centre, it also pays a stipend of \$3,000 and at the Smythfield Drop-in Centre, \$3000.

Mr. Jones: Supplementary. Could the Hon. Minister please give the number of persons being given the stipend at all of those institutions?

Dr. Anthony: At Kurukuru Training College, there is generally between two hundred and seventy and three hundred students. They would come in to the college every nine months. At the Sophia Training Centre, there is one hundred to one hundred and twenty students and they would rotate every six months. At the Smythfield Drop-in Centre, there is between twenty-five and thirty students and they would also rotate every six months.

In addition to funding stipends, under this line item for the students, there are also two farms. One is located at the New Opportunity Corps (NOC) and the Ministry spends from here, in terms of feed for the animals that are there. At the Kurukuru Training College, there is also a farm and the Ministry spends money from this line item for feed as well. At NOC, toiletries have to be

provided for the students and the Ministry is spending about \$6 million on such things. At NOC, students are also provided with uniforms and each student there will receive two pairs of uniforms. That is provided for here as well.

Ms. Selman: It is a question in with respect to stipend. Could the Minister say whether the stipend is per week or per month?

Dr. Anthony: It is a monthly stipend.

Mr. T. Williams: Through the Chair, to the Hon. Minister, under 6291- National and Other Events - what are some of the national and other events which are being budgeted for here?

Dr. Anthony: Here again, the Ministry has allocated this sum by the various institutions. So for example, the head office for Youth and President's Youth Award Republic of Guyana (PYARG), there are a number of training programmes for camp leaders and for expeditions because it would run a lot of expeditions. For the Kurukuru Training College, for it to observe various national events, there is an allocation of \$500,000. For the NOC, there is also an allocation for similar purposes, Smythfield and the Sophia Drop-in Centres. So it is spread across those institutions.

Mrs. Backer: Mr. Chairman, through you, I just want some further clarifications. I am going back to "Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations," 6322, page 403. Minister, would you agree that if this is a subsidiary or the local chapter of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award it should properly be so called and not be called the President's Youth Award? Because what the Minister has said to us was that this President's Award is the President's Youth Award. I am asking if the Minister would agree with me that this is a misnomer and it ought to be corrected. Would the Minister agree with that?

Dr. Anthony: With this international body, every local affiliate could have its own name, and that is allowed. Since this award programme has been started in Guyana, we have opted for the name President's Youth Award Programme.

Mrs. Backer: Could you indicate, Minister, what criteria are used for someone to access this award?

Dr. Anthony: In Guyana it is very simple. There are a number of PYARG units across the regions. There are youth leaders who would be out there in the community. Every year, there would normally be about two thousand persons coming through this programme. There are three levels - bronze, silver and gold. Those who excel can then go on to represent the country. The sum here ... One of the benefits that there is..., because each one of the persons, if that person is at bronze level, would get a pin and that pin is universal across all the awards. The Ministry would normally have those pins coming in for the persons who would have participated, whether it is bronze or silver. Of all the countries, it a similar pin and there are some standard books and records which must be kept. So the Ministry will get those things coming from the international body.

Ms. Ferguson: As per line item 6284 – Other: Could the Minister advice this House on what are the classifications under “Other”?

Dr. Anthony: Under this line item, cleaning of compounds is being done and it is, again, under the various institutions’ allocations. For the compound at PYARG, half a million dollar has been allocated for the year. At Kurukuru Training College - \$400,000, at NOC - \$400,000, at Sophia Training Centre - \$500,000 and at Smythfield Drop-in Centre - \$50,000. There is also Madewini which is the youth campsite.

Mr. Jones: Going back to line item 6294 – Others - I would prefer if the Minister could supply with details as to the various amounts of money allocated to the students as well as to the farm, and so forth, but, just for now, could the Hon. Minister please inform this House how much money per student the stipend is?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister before you rise to give the answer, it is five minutes to 10 o’ clock. Our Standing Orders determine that all sittings shall conclude at 10 o’ clock unless a motion is moved and a resolution is obtained to allow us to go later. So Hon. Prime Minister may you please move the motion.

Assembly resumed.

Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs [Mr. Hinds]: I move that Standing Order 11 be suspended so that we can conclude the business that is listed for today.

Question put, and agreed to.

Standing Order suspended.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Hon. Prime Minister.

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed Hon. Minister.

Dr. Anthony: I think I would have answered that question, but it is just, maybe, for clarity. Through the central administration and PYARG programme the Ministry has allocated \$19 million there. For Kurukuru Training College, it is \$12,370,000. For the NOC, it is \$12,370,000. For Sophia Training Centre, it is \$1, 500, 000 and for Smythfield Drop-in Centre, it is \$500,000.

For students: Kurukuru Training College, the stipend is \$4,000 per month and for the Sophia Training Centre, it is \$3,000.

Programme: 443 – Youth - \$479,297, 000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 444 – Sport - \$250,952,000

Ms. Kissoon: Line item 6321- Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations: Could the Hon. Minister say how much of this money is allocated to Region 10?

Dr. Anthony: There is no regional breakdown under this allocation.

Mr. Chairman: May I, Mr. Minister, anticipate then that the question is: What is the basis on which moneys are allocated, if it is not regionally? Is it by sport or by the preference or ...?

Dr. Anthony: Actually under this line item there is an annex to the budget that stipulates the spending head for the National Sports Commission and there are a number of areas there on how that money has been allocated.

Ms. Ferguson: Under line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – that is Staffing Details, we have seen a reduction by one for contracted employees and what is noted, that is on page 162, under the same line item, is that there has been an increase in the budgeted amount for it. So could the Hon. Minister advice the reason for this increase?

Dr. Anthony: The increase is primarily due to the eight per cent increase from last year.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6242 - Maintenance of Building: Could the Hon. Minister inform this House whether the Den Amstel youth campsite is one of those facilities that will be maintained?

Dr. Anthony: The funding under this line item deals primarily with the National Stadium and the allocations there are for the maintenance work for it.

Mr. Jones: Could the Hon. Minister provide a bit more specificity as to exactly what would be the maintenance works which are to be done at the stadium?

Dr. Anthony: There are a number of things to be done at the stadium. Some repairs will be done to, maintenance repairs, to the inner wall of one of the buildings there, doing some maintenance on some seats of the stands, there are some electrical maintenance and maintenance to some of the washrooms there.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: Could the Hon. Minister inform this House if the Den Amstel Youth Centre will fall under this line item?

Dr. Anthony: Again, the works that will be done here ...Let me say something. Most of the allocations here are primarily for the National Stadium. Again, under line item 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - the works that will be done there... For example, some maintenance work will be done to the fence of the National Stadium. It is also an allocation where weeding and cleaning of the compound will be done. Some special work will be done on the grass mound. So that is what this allocation is for.

Mr. Jones: Could the Hon. Minister just give us some specifics as to exactly what will be done on the grass mound?

Dr. Anthony: From time to time when people use the mound they bring, what must I say, foreign grass onto it, because the grass itself, on the mound and the field, is of a special type and therefore the foreign grass has to be removed, if you like, and weeds that people would bring on their shoes, and it has to be replanted. So that is one of the things that will be done, because if it is not maintained in that way there will be different varieties coming up and it would not be good for the aesthetic of the mound.

Mr. Jones: Noting the Hon. Minister said that the Den Amstel Youth Centre does not fall under either of the two items. Could the Hon. Minister inform this House whether the Den Amstel Youth Centre is scheduled for any maintenance work to be done there?

Dr. Anthony: Our understanding, in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, is that, that facility was once under this Ministry, but it is no longer under it. Since the question was raised, we are looking into the matter and if it is the Ministry's property then I will assure the Member that Ministry would put funds to ensure that it is kept and can be used for the young people there. The reason why it had not allocated anything is because on its list of assets we did not see that as a part of the Ministry's assets, but we will look into that concern and remedy the situation.

Mr. Ramjattan: I want to come back to the "Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations." The Minister indicated that \$146 million is going to go towards the National Sports Commission. I want to ask the question: Is the National Sports Commission functioning?

Dr. Anthony: Yes. The National Sports Commission is functioning. The Chairman of the National Sports Commission is Mr. Conrad Plummer.

Mr. Ramjattan: It is just a follow-up. What actually this sum of money, \$146 million, then goes towards?

Dr. Anthony: There is an annex here which stipulates all the details, but I can go through some of it.

10.09 p.m.

Mr. Ramjattan: It is just to go through some of it.

Dr. Anthony: Let me go through some of it. There is, for example, the employment of the staff of the National Sports Commission. There is an allocation here for about \$43 million for the employment of staff. In terms of material and equipment and supplies that will be needed, for example, there is need chlorine for the National Aquatic Centre. There is an allocation there for that, to buy chlorine, and so forth. There are a number of vehicles under the National Sports Commission. Fuel has to be brought for those vehicles. The Ministry also has to do maintenance of the buildings that it has. For example, there is the Cliff Anderson Sports Hall; there is the

National Gymnasium; there is the National Aquatic Centre; there is the Racquet Centre at Woolford Avenue. So allocations are made there for maintenance of those facilities and the Ministry will do different things depending upon the needs. Then too, the telephone charges have to be paid for all those facilities. Electricity bill has to be paid. In the case of the National Aquatic Centre, the water charges there have to be paid. Apart from that one, there is also the Colgrain Swimming Pool where water charges have to be paid and other things have to be done to maintain it. Of course, at all those sites there is security, so it has to be paid for at those places. This is how the money has been allocated.

Programme: 444 - Sport – \$250,952,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: I think we are making very good progress. There has been no reference to any cutting, trimmings or implements tonight.

Capital Expenditure

Programmes: 441 - Ministry Administration - \$12,900,000, 442 – Culture - \$53,700,000, 443 – Youth – \$27,000,000, 444 – Sport – \$451,000,000

Mrs. Lawrence: Mr. Chairman, you did not hear me. I was asking if you are putting both page 434 and page 435, since there is only one item on page 435.

Mr. Chairman: Is it pages 434 and 435?

Mrs. Lawrence: It is pages 434 and 435.

Mr. Chairman: Do you mean the pages?

Mrs. Lawrence: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, thank you. There is just one item.

Mrs. Lawrence: Yes. So are you going to put it, page 435 too?

Mr. Chairman: Yes. It is deemed put.

Mrs. Lawrence: Thank you Mr. Chairman, under project 4501800 – National Sports Commission - I would like to ask the Minister - this is the third year I am asking the Minister -

the St. Stephen's Ground, the High Palm Road Ground, Sun Flower Circle Ground, Field 'B' Sophia Ground and West Ruimveldt Sports Ground, whether there is any allocation here for their upgrading.

Dr. Anthony: Thank you very much Hon. Member. There is an allocation where this can be funded. The Ministry has allocated a sum of money there for community grounds. Let the communities apply to the National Sports Commission and there are grants which vary from half million to one million dollars. If we get those requests I am sure that something can be done for those grounds.

Mrs. Lawrence: I will be very happy to follow up on that, Mr. Minister. May I ask the Minister whether he can tell us how much of this allocation is for sports gear? And who will benefit from those gears?

Dr. Anthony: The Ministry is going to be using \$10 million from this allocation to buy sports gears. Again, its policy, basically, is that clubs would apply and once there are gears it will give to them. It will also be using this project to buy gym equipment. One of the places which is priority for gym equipment is the boxing gym.

Mrs. Lawrence: Could the Minister further tell me, with regards to these sports gears, which department is responsible for those? Do I call Mr. Neendkumar?

Dr. Anthony: It is the National Sports Commission.

Ms. Kisoorn: Under the same project 4501800, the Hon. Minister said community grounds. Could I ask again if schools can apply?

Dr. Anthony: Schools can apply. Again, I know the Hon. Member has spoken to me because she has some concerns with her school ground. Again, we will take those requests. I know there are a number of requests. We have heard that there were requests from Kamarang and I think some other area that the Hon. Member mentioned. I know of the request in Linden. There are some requests in Georgetown. Let us get those requests in so that they can be on file and be processed.

Ms. Hastings: Out of this amount budgeted, for the same project 4501800, could the Hon. Minister say how much is allocated towards the completion of the Bartica Community Centre?

Dr. Anthony: There is \$23 million allocated for the completion of that centre.

Ms. Hastings: The same project 4501800, Minister, am I to believe that the Kamarang Sports Ground and Jawalla Sports Ground, when they make an application to the National Sports Commission, that allocation can be made for the upgrading of theirs?

Dr. Anthony: It is with one caveat, because grants which that the Ministry is giving are between half million and one million dollars.

Mr. Chairman: It is a matching funds project.

Dr. Anthony: That is the range.

Dr. Ramayya: I would really like to ask the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, project 4501800, the amount of money that is being allocated to Region 6 that I am on behalf of. Most of the cricket grounds are in a very deplorable state, especially Whim. I would like the Minister to tell us if money is being allocated to do some rehabilitation at that special ground.

Dr. Anthony: Again, there is no specific regional allocation, but under this project the communities can apply and they can either benefit from a half million dollars or a one million dollars grant.

Mr. Ramjattan: I notice that there is provision for consultancy under the capital project profile, the same one, project 4501800. How much money is being provided for consultancy and it is consultancy for what? It is at reference 162 of Volume 3 of the Estimates, capital project profile...

Mr. Chairman: I am hearing you, Minister. Go ahead Mr. Ramjattan. There are some comments being put out here which I attribute to the lateness of the hour.

Mr. Ramjattan: ...where the Ministry will be spending \$451 million. The description of the projects indicates from 1 to 8. At 8, there is the provision of consultancy.

Dr. Anthony: The people who designed the National Aquatic Centre, there are some payments for them which would be \$8.9 million. Those are the people who would have designed the centre and the Ministry is right now awaiting some reports from them before it will do the final

payment to them. It is something that was held back until the Ministry is satisfied with all the reports and information that they have to provide to it. That is why this sum is allocated here. When the Ministry gets those reports and is satisfied it will release the money to them.

Mr. Ramjattan: Just one more question. The money for the warm-up pool, what is the sum allocated or estimated for the warm-up pool to cause?

Dr. Anthony: There is an estimated \$73 million.

Mr. Jones: Project 2505800 - Museum Development: Could the Hon. Minister give this House a breakdown on the allocation of \$16 million?

Dr. Anthony: I have quite a long list here, but maybe I could just break it down in subheads for the Member. That is: the National Museum will be spending \$11.3 million, the Museum of African Heritage - \$2.3 million, Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology - \$2.3 million. Then I have the things which will be done with the money. For example, the National Museum wants to continue its outreach to schools so the Ministry will be buying a vehicle for it so that it could have its outreach programme, taking out those cases to various schools. One of the new exhibits that the Ministry wants to construct at the National Museum is a walk-through aquarium and it has a budgeted sum for that. There is an exhibit there with the giant sloth and a number of persons would go there to visit. We want to maybe make a bit of money. Therefore people have been restricted from taking photographs, but it is when they go there their photograph would be taken and when they come out, in front, they can choose whether they want the photograph. It could be framed for them. The Ministry has allocated some money for that type of system to do some cost recovery.

At the Museum of African Heritage, a number of things will be done there, such as getting an overhead projector, a screen, because a number of lectures are done there, and so. There will be an air conditioning unit added, the ceiling of the lecture hall will be done, buying some conference desk and chairs, a photocopier, and so forth.

At Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology, again, there is a lecture hall there and an air conditioning unit will be put in, and buying some desks and chairs, and so. I have the details here I can share it with the Member if he likes.

Mr. Jones: Just a follow-up. Could the Minister name the type of vehicle which is being purchased for the National Museum?

Dr. Anthony: It will be an off-road vehicle. I am told by the Permanent Secretary that it will be a four-wheel drive.

Mr. Jones: Just a follow-up. If I am correct, the Hon. Minister told the House earlier that the vehicle is going to be used to take exhibits to schools, and so forth. It will be an off-road vehicle. Does the Minister think that that will be an ideal vehicle to do that?

Dr. Anthony: I am told that it will be one of those pickups with the open back, so some of the bigger exhibits can be placed in the tray.

Mr. Jones: I am just trying to get specifics, in terms of the exact vehicle. It cannot be a four-wheel vehicle - just a four-wheel vehicle.

Dr. Anthony: I am told that it will be a type of a Toyota Hilux.

Mr. Jones: Sorry. It is just a follow-up again. Would the vehicle be used to take exhibits to schools? Note that a Toyota Hilux is not a vehicle one would dub as ideal to take those exhibits to schools.

Dr. Anthony: I think the term is a double cab in which there is a tray at the back. So that is the kind of vehicle which will be bought. It will be taking out the exhibits to various schools. The current programme there is, as the schools in Linden, is that they will come and collect their exhibits and take them up and then return them. But now the National Museum will have the capacity to take them out. There are many other schools which want to benefit from this programme, so as to allow us to do this.

Mrs. Baveghems: To the Cde. Minister, is a heritage building comes under his Ministry? What does the Minister have plan for the heritage church in Leguan, the Anglican church in Leguan - the National Trust?

Dr. Anthony: The National Trust which deals with heritage matter is one of the agencies under the Ministry. I cannot say that there is a specific allocation this year for the church. I am aware that there are some issues there and that is something that we will look into.

Mr. Jones: Sorry Cde. Chairman. It is just to come back to the vehicle. Seriously Cde. Chairman, I know it is late into the night.

Mr. Chairman: You proceed.

Mr. Jones: I just do not see a Toyota Hilux, double cabin, which has a tray at the back, is ideal to take exhibits to schools. I am asking the Minister, again, is he sure that that is the type of vehicle being purchased?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Jones, could I ask that if you could recommend a suitable vehicle.

Mr. Jones: Well actually, Cde. Chairman, I am thinking about a thirty-seater bus, retrofitted, so that person would step up into it and view exhibits, but a double cabin Toyota Hilux is ...

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. I do not know if the Ministry would have the money for that. Go ahead Hon. Minister.

Dr. Anthony: Let me explain how the thing works. There are more than one hundred, or so, exhibits in cases at the National Museum, so out of that pool schools will normally come and borrow the exhibits. They will be taken to the schools and stay for maybe a week or two. The teachers will conduct their classes, if there are exhibits of interest to the science curriculum and so. Basically, it is to move the exhibits from point A to point B, pick up from this school take to that one. That is basically what it will be doing. The idea, I think the Member is referring to, maybe, is like a travelling museum. That is something to consider, but not under this allocation.

Programmes: 441 - Ministry Administration - \$12,900,000, 442 - Culture - \$53,700,000, 443 - Youth - \$27,000,000, 444 - Sport – \$ 451,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Assembly resumed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, this concludes our business for today. I wish to thank you, again, very much for your patience, your tolerance and for your excellence spirit of nationalism.

Hon. Members, tomorrow, just by way of announcement, there will be four Ministries to consider. It is going to be a long day, so we would need to start promptly. There will be the Ministry of Health, including the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs. Then we will know who is bitter and who is sweet. If we make good progress we are going to ask the Ministry of Public Works to stand by. But I think we would get a gauge, but it will be a heavy day tomorrow. So with that Hon. Members, have a good evening. Hon. Prime Minister, could you move the motion please?

Mr. Hinds: Mr. Chairman, I move that the House be adjourned to 2 o'clock tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman: Most grateful. Hon. Members, the Assembly stands adjourned to tomorrow, Thursday, 19th at 2.00 p.m. Thank you very much.

Adjourned accordingly at 10.32 p.m.

