

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 50TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2012-2013) OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 1.00 P.M.
ON WEDNESDAY, 17TH APRIL, 2013
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN.

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)

Speaker (1)

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

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (34)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. Ganga Persaud, M.P., Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.

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

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

***Non-Elected Minister**

3.

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

Mr. Odinga Lumumba, M.P.

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

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Members of the Opposition (33)

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

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

Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, M.P.

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

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

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

Dr. George Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

****Non-Elected Member**

4.

Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.

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

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Desmond Trotman, M.P.

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

Mr. James A. Bond, M.P.

Mr. Ronald A. Bulkan, M.P.

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

Mrs. Mabel Baveghems, M.P.

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

Mr. Christopher A. Jones, M.P.

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

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

Miss Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

5.

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

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

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

Mrs. Catherine Hughes, M.P.

Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P.

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

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

Mr. Trevor Williams, M.P.

OFFICERS

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

Mrs. Lilawtie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 2.03 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read the prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Invitation from the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment for Park Painting

The Speaker informed Members that he had received a letter from the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment inviting Members of Parliament to participate in a Paint the Parks Day on Sunday, 21st April, 2013 in the National Park and Botanical Gardens.

6.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Replies

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

Member Asking: Mr. Ronald Bulkan, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

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

(Notice Paper No.173 (Q 110 Opp 108) published on 2013-03-25)

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

2. PROTOCOL RELATING TO AN APPOINTED OFFICIAL OF A REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Member Asking: Mr. Ronald Bulkan, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

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

(Notice Paper No.174 (Q 111 Opp 109) published on 2013-03-25)

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7.

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

3. **COMMUNITY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT PROJECT**

Member Asking: **Mr. Ronald Bulkan, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development**

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

- (i) Could the Hon. Minister provide the relevant details for the Communities Services Enhancement Project, which was initiated in 2006 and give information on its current status?

- (ii) Could the Hon. Minister say which other communities have been added to the four previously identified and for similar upgrading in status, if any?

(Notice Paper No.175 (Q 112 Opp 110) published on 2013-03-25)

The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development did not pass copies of the answers to the above question to the Clerk of the National Assembly for circulation to Members at that sitting as required by Standing Order No. 22(4).

8.

4. **MEDICAL TEAM DEPLOYED TO REGION NO. 7**

Member Asking: **Mr. Ronald Bulkan, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of Health**

- (i) Could the Hon. Minister say why the medical team that was deployed to Region No. 7 in January and February, 2013 to the villages of Kamarang, Waramadong, Jawalla, Imbaimadai, Isseneru and Kato, among others, did not consult with or engage, either prior to their deployment, or subsequently, the RDC of Region No. 7?

- (ii) Could the Hon. Minister say if this practice referred to above, which now appears prevalent, is part of a campaign of Central Government to marginalize, usurp and bypass the authority of duly elected Regional Governments (RDCs) that are not under the control of the PPP/C?

(Notice Paper No.176 (Q 113 Opp 111) published on 2013-03-25)

Answers:

(Please see appendix)

PUBLIC BUSINESS

- (i) **GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS**

MOTION

BUDGET SPEECH 2013 – MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2013

The Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to consider the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2013.

(Moved by the Minister of Finance on 2013-03-25)

9.

In Committee of Supply

The following Agencies and Programmes in the Estimates of Expenditure were considered and approved by the Committee as presented with the respective amounts allocated thereto:

16 - MINISTRY OF AMERINDIAN

AFFAIRS

Current Expenditure

161 Amerindian Development

Capital Expenditure

161 Amerindian Development

14 - PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY

Current Expenditure

141 Public Service Management

Capital Expenditure

141 Public Service Management

Assembly resumed

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 4.50 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 5.56 p.m. the sitting was resumed.

In Committee of Supply

The following Agencies and Programmes in the Estimates of Expenditure were considered and approved by the Committee as presented with the respective amounts allocated thereto:

46 - GEORGETOWN PUBLIC

PUBLIC HOSPITAL CORPORATION

Current Expenditure

461 Public Hospital

Capital Expenditure

461 Public Hospital

47 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Current Expenditure

471 Ministry Administration

472 Diseases Control

473 Primary Health Care Services

474 Regional and Clinical Services

Capital Expenditure

471 Ministry Administration

472 Diseases Control

473 Primary Health Care Services

When the Capital Expenditure for Line Item 474 - Regional and Clinical Services was put, Mr. Carl Greenidge, M.P., moved the amendment which was standing in his name.

11.

The following Members spoke to the amendment:

Mr. Moses Nagamootoo

The Minister of Finance

Ms Gail Teixeira

Mr. Basil Williams

A point of order was raised by the Minister of Finance and the Speaker ruled, in accordance with Standing Order No. 76 (1), that the amendment proposed by Mr. Carl Greendige did not satisfy the one day's notice.

Thereafter, Mr. Khremraj Ramjattan moved the following amendment which was put and carried on the following division:

“ **Agency Code 47** – Ministry of Health

Line Item 474 – Regional and Clinical Services

Account Code and Description 1213000 – Specialty Hospital Project be reduced to zero (0).”

FOR

Mr. T. Williams

Ms Marcello

Dr. Ramayya

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe

Mrs. Hughes

Mr. Nagamootoo

Mr. Ramjattan

Ms Ferguson

Mr. Morian

Ms Williams

Mr. Jones

AGAINST

Mr. Jafarally

Mr. Damon

Dr. Persaud

Rev. Gilbert

Dr. Mahadeo

Mr. Seeraj

Mr. Neendkumar

Mr. Lumumba

Mr. Chand

Bibi Shaddick

Mrs. Chandarpal

Mr. Adams
Ms Baveghems
Mr. Sharma
Mr. Bulkan
Mr. Bond
Ms Kissoon
Mr. Trotman
Ms Selman
Mr. Allicock
Ms Wade
Mr. Felix
Ms Hastings
Mr. Scott
Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Harmon
Mr. Greenidge
Mrs. Backer
Dr. Norton
Mrs. Lawrence
Mr. B. Williams
Ms Ally
Dr. Roopnarine
Brig.(Ret'd) Granger

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Mr. Nadir
Ms Teixeira
Bishop Edghill
Mr. Whittaker
Mr. Baksh
Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai
Ms Webster
Mr. G. Persaud
Ms Manickchand
Mr. Benn
Dr. Anthony
Mr. Ali
Dr. Ramsarran
Dr. Westford
Mr. R. Persaud
Dr. Singh
Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Mr. Nandlall
Dr. Ramsammy
Mr. Rohee
Mr. Hinds

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Line Item 474- Regional and Clinical Services under Capital Expenditure was then passed as amended.

47 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Current Expenditure

475 Health Sciences Education

476 Standards and Technical
Services

477 Rehabilitation Services

Capital Expenditure

475 Health Sciences Education

476 Standards and Technical
Services

477 Rehabilitation Services

Assembly resumed

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.33 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Thursday, 18th April, 2013.

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

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.

17th April, 2013.

APPENDIX

Answers to Questions from Mr. Ronald Bulkan, M.P., to the Minister of Health:

- (i) This statement made by the Honourable Member Mr. R Bulkan, M.P. is very much inaccurate and uninformed, since the matter was in the first instance reported by the Regional Health Officer (RHO) who is stationed at Bartica and immediate action was taken by the Ministry of Health (MOH) to deploy an emergency response team to Waramondong. This immediate response started with a telephone call by the Minister to Commodore Bess aimed at mobilizing the airlift capacity of the GDF Air Wing and its Medical personnel in a joint emergency response with the local Regional Health Sector workers and the National Malaria Control Services. The RHO of Region 7 was informed of the suspected outbreak of Malaria in the Waramadong School and Dormitory by the Regional Education Officer based in Bartica. The Head Mistress of that Institution had communicated the information about a suspected outbreak to the Regional Education Officer. The Director of the Regional Health Services Programme (Programme 4 of the MOH) was also informed of the evolving situation and took the most active part in the roll out of subsequent stages and components of the response activity. The Regional Health Services Programme (Programme 4) is charged with specific national responsibilities which each year are reaffirmed in the Budget and financed through the provisions of the said budget. The relevant sections can be perused in the *Volume 2 of the ESTIMATES of the PUBLIC SECTOR under Programme 474 – Regional and Clinical Services*.

Noting the significance of Malaria in our country the Minister invoked the War Room in his Office and placed on alert all the relevant officers with meetings key senior MOH personnel on a daily basis to keep abreast with the situation on the ground.

2.

During that period the Ministry was in constant contact with the medical personnel in Bartica, giving updates on the immediate plans that were being put in place to address the perceived emergency. ***In the very initial stages of these arrangements a stop-over in Bartica by the GDF Sky Van was contemplated.*** This would have allowed the pick-up of the RHO and possibly additional health care providers to join the local workers already in Waramadong. This diversion which would have taken time and reduced cargo capacity for more critically anti-malaria supplies and equipment was discarded since the team from Georgetown was among the best and headed by the Director of the National Malaria Services himself. The cargo capacity that would have been lost to accommodating Health care providers from Bartica was instead used for the airlift of insecticides, treated bed-nets and spray cans. ***This decision was communicated with the RHO who saw the wisdom in it and supported it.***

In keeping with good administrative protocols and practices, it is expected that the RHO reported to the REO who would then have apprised or adequately informed the Regional Chairman. The RHO and the MOH were in constant contact as the emergency response progressed. The RHO of Region 7 is one of the most experienced and long-serving among Regional Health Officers and is one of the best over the past decade. The Regional Executive Officer of Region 7 has unreserved confidence in the RHO and these two senior Regional Democratic Council Officers work and collaborate professionally.

The Ministry of Health brings to the attention of Parliament and the Nation the swift and effective response of Commodore Bess and the GDF Air Wing. This was a highly successful joint activity. This is an excellent example of the various elements of the Government of Guyana working together to achieve the benefits of synergies, optimal use of the tax payers' dollar and delivery of services.

3.

The Ministry of Health wishes to recognize the contribution of GDF pilots Captain Patrick Nicholas and Captain Azeez Nizamudeen.

The Ministry of Health also wishes to recognize the effective and professional support given by *Medex Chavez Edwards* who led the local Mazaruni health care provider component of the joint emergency response team.

The emergency response team discovered a very small number of children with Malaria at the School and treated these. There are over 900 children enrolled at the School and living at the Waramadong Dormitory. Only 13 were found to be infected with Malaria. These students hail from four surrounding Amerindian Villages. The children had returned to School from various Amerindian Villages following the Christmas Holidays and had most likely been infected in their respective home communities. That is to say there was no outbreak at the School or Dormitory.

The emergency response team executed microscopy investigations, did mass screening, treated those ill with malaria and distributes health literacy material. The team also conducted training in the safe and effective use of spray cans and the insecticide used in the spraying exercises. The training benefited the Toshao and leading residents of the Community. The team conducted spraying exercises along with the recently trained residents. The Team donated to the Village Council spray cans and insecticide. The MOH committed to a return visit.

This return visit was started over the over the past week-end by four persons from Georgetown and their efforts will be strengthened by the addition of seven more persons from Georgetown during the current week. Extended training of two persons from each of the communities from where the infected students hail and from other communities will be done in use of spray can and chemicals and other anti-malaria work.

4.

The MOH/Regional/GDF emergency response team comprised the following persons:

Dr. Reyaud Rhaman, Director of the National Malaria Control Services (NMCS)

Dr. Irv Chan, Director Regional; Health Services (Programme 4)

Corporal Bouyeam Medec, Guyana Defence Force

Mr. Marvin Roberts, Microscopist, NMCS

Mr. David Williams., Microscopist, NMCS

Ms. Rina Marks, Senior Microscopist, NMCS

Nurse Patricia Singh, RN, BSc (Nursing); and former Coordinator, Indigenous Peoples' Communities

Captain Patrick Nichols, GDF

Captain Azeez Nezamudeen, GDF

This response effort demonstrated the capacity of the Central Ministry through its Programme 4 to effectively execute its mandate **to assist in the provision of specialist health care services to any Region(s) of the country this is deemed necessary; and to support the regional health service in provision of quality care for the residents.**

I would like to remind the honorable Member Mr. R Bulkan M.P. that the PPP/C Government is a caring Government. The caring PPP/C Administration will continue to work according to its mandate with all stakeholders at the National and Regional levels to effectively and efficiently address any emerging Public Health Threat

- (ii) The Honourable Mr. Bulkan's reference to attempts to marginalize, usurp and bypass are misplaced and misinformed. This reference indicates a profound lack of understanding of how the Government and Country the Honourable Member and his Party aspire to lead legitimately works. I posit that the real reason for this question the discomfort Mr. Bulkan experiences when he recognizes the swiftness of the effective

5.

response and the positive impact it has created among the leaders and residents of the Mazaruni Amerindian Communities, the hard working senior Officers of Region 10 and the health care providers of that Region.

Yes, Mr. Bulkan the Government of Guyana, including its Ministry of Health, intend to continue to execute its legitimate mandate in this swift, effective, efficient and sustainable manner

(See photographs below)”

PICTURES OF MINISTRY OF HEALTH TEAM TO WARAMADONG VILLAGE, REGION 7



MOH TEAM DEPARTING OGLE AIRSTRIP



MOH TEAM EDUCATING STUDENTS ON USE AND CARE ON TREATED BED NETS

