

National Assembly Debates

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION (2006-2007) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN

Part I of II

34th Sitting

14:00h

Thursday 15 November 2007

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (71)

Speaker (1)

The Hon Hari N Ramkarran SC, MP

Speaker of the National Assembly

Members of the Government (42)

People's Progressive Party/Civic (41)

The United Force (1)

The Hon Samuel A A Hinds MP

(R# 10 - U Demerara/U Berbice)

Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications

The Hon Clement J Rohee MP

Minister of Home Affairs

The Hon Shaik K Z Baksh MP

Minister of Education

The Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey MP - (AOL)

Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation

The Hon Dr Leslie S Ramsammy MP - (AOL)

(R# 6 - E Berbice/Corentyne)

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Minister of Health

The Hon Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett MP

(R# 9 - U Takutu/U Esseq)

Minister of Amerindian Affairs

*The Hon Dr Ashni Singh MP

Minister of Finance

*The Hon S Rudolph Insanally OR, CCH, MP - (AOL)

Minister of Foreign Affairs

The Hon Harry Narine Nawbatt MP

Minister of Housing and Water

The Hon Robert M Persaud MP

(R# 6 - E Berbice/Corentyne)

Minister of Agriculture

The Hon Dr Jennifer R A Westford MP

(R#7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Minister of the Public Service

The Hon Kellawan Lall MP

Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

*The Hon Doodnauth Singh SC, MP

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

The Hon Dr Frank C S Anthony MP

Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

The Hon B H Robeson Benn MP

Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

**The Hon Manzoor Nadir MP

Minister of Labour

The Hon Priya D Manickchand MP - (AOL)

(R# 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)

Minister of Human Services and Social Security

The Hon Dr Desrey Fox MP

Minister in the Ministry of Education

The Hon Bheri S Ramsaran MD, MP

Minister in the Ministry of Health

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*Non-elected Minister **Elected Member from TUF

The Hon Jennifer I Webster MP

Minister in the Ministry of Finance

The Hon Manniram Prashad MP

Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

Mr Donald Ramotar MP - (AOL)

The Hon Gail Teixeira MP - (AOL)

Mr Harripersaud Nokta MP - (AOL)

Mrs Indranie Chandarpal MP

Ms Bibi S Shadick MP

(R# 3 – Essequibo Is/W Demerara)

Mr Mohamed Irfaan Ali MP - (Absent)

Mr Albert Atkinson JP, MP

(R# 8 - Potaro/Siparuni)

Mr Komal Chand CCH, JP, MP - (AOL)

(R# 3 - Essequibo Is/W Demerara)

Mr Bernard C DeSantos SC, MP

(R# 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs Shirley V Edwards JP, MP

(R# 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr Mohamed F Khan JP, MP

(R# 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)

Mr Odinga N Lumumba MP

Mr Moses V Nagamootoo JP, MP

Mr Mohabir A Nandlall MP

Mr Neendkumar JP, MP

(R# 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

*** Mr Steve P Ninvalle MP

Parliamentary Secretary

Mr Parmanand P Persaud JP, MP

(R# 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)

Mrs Philomena Sahoye-Shury CCH, JP, MP

Parliamentary Secretary

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***Non-elected Member

***Mrs Pauline R Sukhai MP

Parliamentary Secretary

Mr Dharamkumar Seeraj MP

Mr Norman A Whittaker MP

(R# 1 - Barima/Waini)

Members of the Opposition (28)

(i) People's National Congress Reform 1-Guyana (22)

Mr Robert HO Corbin

Leader of the Opposition

Mr Winston S Murray CCH, MP

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl MP

Mr E Lance Carberry MP

Chief Whip

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer MP

Mr Anthony Vieira *(Absent)*

Mr Basil Williams MP *(Absent)*

Dr George A Norton MP

Mrs Volda A Lawrence MP - *(AOL)*

Mr Keith Scott MP

Miss Amna Ally MP

Mr James K McAllister MP - *(Absent)*

Mr Dave Danny MP

(R# 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr Aubrey C Norton MP

(R# 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr Ernest B Elliot MP

(R# 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Miss Judith David-Blair MP

(R# 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr Mervyn Williams MP

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(Re# 3 - Essequibo Is/W Demerara)

Ms Africo Selman MP

Dr John Austin MP

(R# 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)

Ms Jennifer Wade MP

(R# 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)

Ms Vanessa Kissoon MP

(R# 10 - U Demerara/U Berbice)

Mr Desmond Fernandes MP

(Region No 1 – Barima/Waini)

(ii) Alliance For Change (5)

Mr Raphael G Trotman MP

Mr Khemraj Ramjattan MP

Mrs Sheila VA Holder MP - *(AOL)*

Ms Latchmin Budhan Punalall MP

(R# 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr David Patterson MP

(iii) Guyana Action Party/Rise Organise and Rebuild (1)

Mr Everall N Franklin MP

OFFICERS

Mr Sherlock E Isaacs

Clerk of the National Assembly

Mrs Lilawatie Coonjah

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

PRAYERS

[The Clerk read the Prayer]

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(i) **World Diabetes Day**

The Speaker: Honourable Members, yesterday 14 November was World's Diabetes Day and the Ministry of Health has requested my permission to pin the Logo for World's Diabetes Day which is a blue sticker, which you see I am wearing and all Members by the Ministry's staff. I have no objection to this request and I would like to seek your cooperation for the pinning of the Logo during the suspension. You have the right to decline.

(ii) **Welcome back to the Clerk of the National Assembly**

Honourable Members, on behalf of the National Assembly and myself, I would like to welcome back the Clerk to the National Assembly who was away approximately for three months due to illness. *[Applause]*

(iii) Welcome back to Mr E Lance Carberry, MP

I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome back Mr E Lance Carberry, who was away for a short while.
[Applause]

(iv) Handing over of a Bus and ten Lap Top Computers by the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China

Honourable Members, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China would be handing over a bus and ten Lap Top computers, which you will recall were offered when Madame Ghu was here two months ago.

To me, this afternoon at 16:00h during the suspension of the Sitting the handing-over ceremony will take place in the compound of the Public Buildings and thereafter the Ambassador and his part will be invited to the MPs lounge for refreshments.

Members are asked to attend this important ceremony and in particular the Honourable Prime Minister if he is here at that time or I do not know if the Hon Clement Rohee is the acting Prime Minister, he can fill that place; Dr Ashni Singh, Mrs Indranie Chandarpal, Mr Odinga Lumumba, Mr Winston Murray, Mr Lance Carberry, Mr Raphael Trotman or their nominees

PUBLIC BUSINESS

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTIONS

**1. CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER
NO. 1/2007**

BE IT RESOLVED:

*That this Assembly approve of
the proposals set out in Financial
Paper No. 1/2007 - Supplementary
Estimates (Current and Capital)
totalling \$1,668,232,435 for the
period 2007-04-17 to 2007-11-07*

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

The Honourable Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, in accordance with Paragraph (2) of Article 171 of the Constitution, I signify that the Cabinet has recommended for consideration by the Assembly the Motion for the approval for the proposals set out

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in Financial Paper No. 1/2007, Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) for the period 2007-04-17 to 2007-11-07 totalling \$1,668,232,435 and I now move the Motion.

Question proposed

The Chairman: Honourable Members, we will consider the Paper as usual that is, the items will be taken from both the Current and Capital Estimates in the order for which the Minister is responsible.

Page 1

SECTION 'A' CURRENT ESTIMATES

ITEM 1 - AGENCY 03 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE, Programme 032 - Government Accounting Administration - Chart of Account 6292

Question is proposed that the sum of \$166,370,661 for Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance, Programme 032 - Government Accounting Administration - Chart of Account 6292 - Other - stand part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly what if any of the

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provision of the supplementary provision now being sought is money that was used to host foreign delegations attending either of these meetings and if any delegations were so hosted, which ones were and at what levels.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, the amount requested that is \$166,370,661 was as the narrative indicates incurred with the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting and the RIO Group Summit and includes, or would have covered a number of items of expenditure in relation to these events including expenditures associated with hosting of activities associated with these international conferences.

I am not exactly sure what the Honourable Member means in relation to hosting delegations. I believe all of us in this House would be aware; a number of delegations were led for the RIO Summit by Heads of State and where they were not led by Heads of State, they were led by Ministers of Foreign Affairs. In the case of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting a number of delegations were headed by Finance Ministers. *[Interruption: 'What is that?']* I was not quite finished with my answer.

In relation to the RIO Summit, I am advised that we did provide facilities or what one might describe as hosting or facilities for the Heads of State and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Co-ordinators where these were heads of delegations.

In the case of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting, the Government of Guyana did not meet costs associated with Heads of Delegations. I believe we did meet the cost associated with the Head of the Commonwealth Secretariat

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Delegation that is to say the representative of the Secretary General. In this case, it was the Deputy Secretary General, but we did not meet the cost of Heads of Delegations attending the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: For someone who did not understand my question, he gave a rather fulsome answer which I would interpret and he can correct me; does that mean Mr Minister that in fact the taxpayers of Guyana bore the cost of the presence of some of the high personages who participated in the Rio Summit. And it could be said that, we do not have a quarrel, but let us say it frontally that all this meandering. That is what I was asking, Sir, in case he did not understand. I hope that is now clear.

The second point is where we bore those costs of their presence, could the Honourable Minister guide this House as to whether they were recommended to stay at any particular hotel and if so which hotel?

Hon Dr Ashi K Singh: Mr Chairman, again in relation to the specific question that was asked, we did meet out of the public purse expenses associated with the presence of the Heads of Delegations. That is the answer to the specific question asked. In relation to where the Heads were accommodated, my recollection is that Heads were accommodated at a number of hotels in and around Georgetown.

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, was Buddy's one of hotels where Heads were accommodated?

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, Buddy's International Hotel was one of the hotels in question.

The Chairman: Yes, Mr Corbin, do you want to ask something?

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Mr Chairman, on the very item, I thought that Mr Murray would have received his answer. My concern was that we were informed in this House that certain advances were made out of the Treasury towards completion of this hotel and that that would be credited towards future accommodation and if that was so, then is that a real figure paid out or is it a figure which reflects the Government recouping what it had in fact advanced as was reported to us in this House some time ago to that particular hotel.

The Chairman: Mr Corbin, it is a matter for the Minister whether he wishes to deal with the question or not. I do not see how it is relevant to this provision.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Mr Chairman, I want to know whether it really reflects expenditure in a real sense or whether it is in fact just a book figure, because we are supposed to get back money, which has already been advanced.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, I have to say that like your good self, on this matter I do not particularly see how it is relevant, but that notwithstanding and Government not having anything to hide of course; the amount for which approval is being sought represents expenditure incurred.

Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance, Programme 032 - Government Accounting Administration - Chart of

Account 6292 - Other - \$166,370,661 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 2 - AGENCY 07 - PARLIAMENT OFFICE, Programme 071 - National Assembly - Chart of Account 6293

Question is proposed that the sum of \$5,200,000 for Agency 07 - Parliament Office 071 - National Assembly - Chart of Account 6293 - Refreshment and Meals - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: I take it that there is no question on the meals which Members enjoy every time we sit. *[Laughter]*

Agency 07 - Parliament Office, Programme 071 - National Assembly - Chart of Account 6293 - Refreshment and Meals - \$5,200,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 3 - AGENCY 48 - MINISTRY OF HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY, Programme 483 - Labour Administration, Chart of Account 6321

Question is proposed that the sum of \$54,000,000 for Agency 48 - Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, Programme 483 - Labour Administration - Chart of Account 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, from a look at the Estimates, would the Minister agree that this is a substantial, indeed an extremely substantial jump from the historical level of subvention and could the Minister kindly explain to the National Assembly since the legend is very bare and it is a six-fold increase. Sir, at least I think that we are owed an explanation, hence my question; what is this all about?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Labour

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman, in 2005 His Excellency President Jagdeo launched the National Training Programme for Youth Empowerment, which is an additional programme under the Board of Industrial Training. That Programme had the ambitious aim of giving over 5,000 of our unemployed young persons especially those who did not complete a full term of secondary education to give them a chance at acquiring a skill that can serve them through life. Fifty-four categories of skills were undertaken; 625 young persons were taken in the first batch and monies were pulled from different heads at that time to get the programme on stream. This \$54,000,000 is to meet \$4,000,000 of outstanding expenses for that first batch of 625 young persons who were taken into the programme. The additional \$50,000,000 will launch a second phase of the National Training Programme for Youth Empowerment. We have already interviewed over 550 young persons over eight of our geographical regions and December 1 will be the date when we will start placing them in business.

A second batch of 500 will be interviewed in January to February 2008 and placed from 1st March. So under this programme, the \$50,000,000 will facilitate that - close to 1,000

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of our young persons who did not complete secondary school education will have a second chance of acquiring a basic level of skill across a number of different areas.

Mr Chairman, we have the final report of the first batch and out of the 625 that were taken in, 487 completed the nine months of training and as of April 241 of them were gainfully employed on a permanent basis. *[Applause]* So this is a chance of working with our young people and this programme falls under the Board of Industrial Training, which has the mandate going back over eighty decades of placing apprentices in different industries. The Board of Industrial Training certifies training institutions like the Port Maurant Training Institute, The Linden Technical Institute and so forth. Thank you.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, listening to the Minister it seems clear to me that this is something that has a history going back some time and has been planned and programmed. Could he therefore explain why he did not find it possible to include this sum or some amount proximate to it in the budget for the year 2007 and why did he find it necessary to raid the Contingencies Fund, which the Constitution provides for to be used in urgent circumstances - very clear circumstances?

From his description this should have been planned for and catered, why is it such an abuse of the Contingencies Fund taking place?

Thirdly, if this is to follow-up and to give greater scope to the youth empowerment policy of the Government, why is this not put with other youth empowerment programmes? Why are

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these programmes so dispersed across agencies which would make it difficult for co-ordination and could the Minister explain why this particular approach to youth empowerment in this context? Why is it not put in one place where youth empowerment activities are placed?

Finally, could the Minister say if this is really about youth empowerment? Why they have cut off the subvention from the Critchlow Labour College which is also an agency to give people a second chance and to empower youth? *[Applause]*

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Labour

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman, you will agree with me that the second and the third points are policy issues and I would gladly take on the Honourable Member in a full debate on these two issues.

The first point he raised, this is no abuse of the Contingency Fund; it is not raiding the Contingency Fund. Mr Chairman, like every programme there is built in it a system of monitoring evaluating the programme. As I mentioned, the programme concluded around April of this year and we had to go through this monitoring exercise - re-evaluating exercise. And so at the beginning of the year when the national budget was being contemplated, postulate at that time, however, we did not want the programme to have a stop and start in it; we wanted to have some continuity, so we continued to interview people; we continue to help place those who were given the skills and now we have in our hands a substantive means of moving forward. What should we do; should we take the 550 young people who are waiting for placement and wait until next year's budget and tell them to hold on for another six months? We are looking after the interest of our young people

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now and their future cannot be postponed until next year. That is why we are coming to the Parliament now for this supplementary provision - not raiding, not abusing, but facilitating the people who need work.

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, it seems as though the Honourable Minister has completely missed my point. I am not talking about the postponement of expenditure to 2008. I am saying that since the programme was planned and being programmed for in 2007, he should have being a good Minister planned for and included in the budget of 2007 this huge sum of \$54,000,000 and not try to sneak it in through the Contingencies Fund for the year 2007. That is the question I posted.

Further, Mr Chairman, I do not understand how the Minister could deem the third question as a question of policy, when this National Assembly voted a sum of some millions of dollars for the Critchlow Labour College and all my inquiries, why has the subvention been cut, while here you are expanding a programme also for youth? That is not a policy issue; that is a failure to carry out the mandate of the National Assembly. *[Applause]*

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman, the Honourable Member is around in the National Assembly a long time and the principle is you asked questions pertaining to what is before you. Critchlow Labour College is not under this Subvention Head. In terms of the question he asked ... he asked a question and he did not listen for the answer, when I said, in April was when the first phase of this programme came to an end and we went into this process of monitoring evaluating. Thank you very much.

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Mr Winston S Murray: Is the Minister saying that he did not know that there would be a follow-up programme until the one ended in April and therefore only after that? So where were these 550 people; he was not planning for them; he was not interviewing them all the time? Have they come out like phantoms in the night suddenly to want \$54,000,000 of expenditure, Mr Minister?

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman, he and I could go on and on, but like no phantom in the night, as I said there was the monitoring and evaluating; we want to ensure that what we put in here - in the budget - reflected actualities. We did not want to pull numbers from out of thin air and that is why we waited, we evaluated, we continue the process of interviewing our young people and we have before us a number that can facilitate the training of an additional 500 persons immediately and coming in 2008 we will do an additional 500.

The Chairman: Thank you Honourable Member

The Honourable Member Mr Franklin first

Mr Everall N Franklin: Mr Chairman, I just need a clarification on this particular item. The budgeted amount according to Page 185 of the Estimates was \$10,920,000. I see here you have a voted provision for \$9,220,000; probably I was a bit cockeyed.

The Chairman: Discrepancy, Honourable Minister of Labour

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman, I did not look at the voted provision, so we have to match with what he is saying and what is placed here. I will look specifically at it.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Franklin

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Mr Everall N Franklin: Mr Chairman, it is a very simple matter to check Page 185. There are two different figures for what is voted for there is a lower figure in this document that you are proposing that was voted for and this National Assembly voted for a higher figure. That should be easily clarified.

The Chairman: Honourable Minister, if there is a mistake it will be corrected.

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Yes, it will be.

The Chairman: Thank you. The Honourable Member Mr Ramjattan:

Mr Khemraj Ramjattan: Mr Chairman, I want to ask the Minister if we will have a report in this Parliament from the Board of Industrial Training, because I cannot recall us having any reports from them as to how they are spending that money.

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman: Yes, you will.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, if I may offer a clarification on the issue in relation to the voted provision, the Honourable Member Mr Franklin is quite right that for the Chart of Account 6321 a total of \$10,920,000 is voted. However, if he would be do kind as to turn to Page 381 of the Estimates, he would see that that \$10,920,000 is in fact intended for three different agencies and the allocation for the Board of Industrial Training is in fact \$9,220,000. It is on Page 381 of the Estimates.

Agency 48 - Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, Programme 483 - Labour Administration, Chart of Account 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - \$54,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 4 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 511 - Secretariat Services - Chart of Account 6321

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,000,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 511 - Secretariat Services - Chart of Account 6321 -Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Actually I am ahead of my time; I am at the next line item. I am sorry about that.

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 511 - Secretariat Services - Chart of Account 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - \$1,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 5 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6231

Question is proposed that the sum of \$5,000,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police -

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Chart of Account 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Not that one either.

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - \$5,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 5 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6261

Question is proposed that the sum of \$33,090,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - \$33,090,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 5 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6264

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,000,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6264 - Vehicles Spares and Service - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6264 - Vehicles Spares and Service - \$1,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 5 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6282

Question is proposed that the sum of \$7,310,034 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6282 - Equipment Maintenance - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6282 - Equipment Maintenance - \$7,310,034 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 5 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6284

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,500,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6284 - Other - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Police - Chart of Account 6284 - Other - \$2,500,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 6 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 513 - Guyana Prison Service - Chart of Account 6294

Question is proposed that the sum of \$7,500,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 513 - Guyana Prison Service - Chart of Account 6294 - Other - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairperson: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, the Guyana Prison Service - \$7,500,000 - Under Chart of Account 6294 - Other - I see a figure of \$7,500, 000 and the Remarks say to supply additional feed and drugs for poultry, honorarium for facilitators for inmates training programme and gratuity for prisoners. So that \$7.5 takes care of those three items. I would just the Minister if he is kind enough to tell us how that \$7.5 is broken under those three heads?

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The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Home Affairs

Hon Clement J Rohee: Mr Chairman, I have to confess that I am not in a position to disaggregate the number in such a way as the Honourable Member requested, but this could always be provided at a later date.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, I find that very strange. The Honourable Minister of Finance just showed us how it is done. You have a figure of \$10.something million, but really only \$9.2 million. I am particularly interested in how much is the gratuity for prisoners comes to in this figure of \$7,500,000. You can use one of the Legends. That is there in the Legend.

The Chairman: Do you have anything further to add, Honourable Minister?

Hon Clement J Rohee: Sir, I am sure there is no mystery about this. There is always an explanation. That is what I am saying. Mr Chairman, with due respect, I do not have the explanation to give, I can give that at a later day.

The Chairman: Are there any other questions?

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 513 - Guyana Prison Service - Chart of Account 6294 - Other - \$7,500,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 7 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 515 - Guyana Fire Service - Chart of Account 6261

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,112,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 515 - Guyana Fire service - Chart of Account 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 515 - Guyana Fire Service - Chart of Account 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - \$2,112,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account 6221

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,530,847,000 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6231 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - \$1,530,847,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6222**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$3,976,450 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6222 - Field Materials and Supplies - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6222 - Field
Materials and Supplies - \$3,976,450 - agreed to and
ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6223**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,626,938 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6223 - Office Materials and Supplies - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6223 - Office
Materials and Supplies - \$1,626,938 - agreed to and
ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6224**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$815,116 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6224 - Print and Non-print Materials - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6224 - Print and Non-print Materials - \$815,116 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6231**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$51,452,315 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - \$51,452,315 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6261**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$582,179 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6261- Local Travel and Subsistence - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6261 - Local
Travel and Subsistence - \$ 582,179 - agreed to and ordered
to stand part of the Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6263**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$518,050 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6263 - Postage, Telex and Cablegram - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6263 - Postage
Telex and Cablegram - \$518,050 - agreed to and ordered to
stand part of the Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6265**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$95,963,409 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6265 - Other Transport, Travel and Postage - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6265 - Other,
Transport, Travel and Postage - \$ 95,963,409 - agreed to
and ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6271**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$15,811,891 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6271 - Telephone Charges - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6271 -
Telephone Charges - \$15,811,891 - agreed to and ordered
to stand part of the Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6282**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$21,634,809 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6282 - Equipment Maintenance - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6282 -
Equipment Maintenance - \$21,634,809 - agreed to and
ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6283**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$4,032,273 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6283 - Cleaning and Extermination Services - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6283 - Cleaning
and Extermination Services - \$ 4,032,273 - agreed to and
ordered to stand part of the Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6284**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$3,785,050 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6284 - Other - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6284 - Other -
\$3,785,050 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the
Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6294**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$134,600,000 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6294 - Dietary - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6294 - Dietary -
\$134,600,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the
Estimates**

**ITEM 8 - AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE,
Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters, Chart of Account
6294**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$148,324,676 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account - Other - stands part of the Estimates.

**Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 -
Defence Headquarters - Chart of Account 6294 - Other - \$
148,324,676 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the
Estimates**

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**ITEM 9 - AGENCY 55 - SUPREME COURT, Programme
551 - Supreme Court of the Judicature - Chart of Account
6261**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$182,800 for Agency 55 - Supreme Court, Programme 551 - Supreme Court of the Judicature - Chart of Account 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence – stands part of the Estimates

The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, I hope I meet with more success under this Head. \$182,800 - the remarks say to meet additional travelling expenses resulting from the

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supervision of the City Magistrate Night Court activities. I would be very happy if the Honourable Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs would bring us up-to-date on these activities - what is the nature of the supervision of these night courts carried out by the Supreme Court?

Hon Doodnauth Singh: May it please you, Mr Chairman, the notes I have, Sir, is that these Night Courts were established at Georgetown and Providence in keeping with Act No. 25/2006 during World Cup and that the Courts were held between the 19 March to 14 April. I do not have the figures as to the actual cases that were heard, but that is the note which I have been given.

Agency 55 - Supreme Court , Programme 551 - Supreme Court of the Judicature - Chart of Account 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - \$182,800 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 10 - AGENCY 55 - SUPREME COURT, Programme 552 - Magistrates' Department - Chart of Account 6261

Question is proposed that the sum of \$556,800 for Agency 55, Programme 552 - Magistrates' Department - Chart of Account 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - stands part of the Estimates.

Mrs Deborah Backer: Mr Chairman ...

The Chairman: Are you on Item 10?

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Mrs Deborah J Backer: Yes, Sir - the Supreme Court, the Magistrates' Department and these remarks are more or less similar, the only difference being that it speaks about establishment whereas the other one speaks about the supervision. So in fact they relate to the same thing and we have a grand total of \$739,600. I would just like to ask the Honourable Minister, because he indicated a court in Georgetown and a court at Providence, what travelling took place in that month that could have come to a half million dollars,

The Chairman: Fuel is expensive, Mrs Backer. Yes, Honourable Member

Hon Doodnauth Singh: May it please you, Mr Chairman, it is in relation to the Magistracy as well as the administrative and clerical staff.

Agency 55 - Supreme Court, Programme 552 - Magistrates' Department - Char of Account 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - \$556,880 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 11 - AGENCY 56 - PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS, Programme 561 - Public Prosecutions - Chart of Account 6231

Question is proposed that the sum of \$624,000 for Agency 56 - Public Prosecutions, Programme 561 - Public Prosecutions - Chart of Account 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - stands part of the Estimates

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, would the Honourable Minister please share with us the reason for that cost; it is like a 500 or 600 percent increase of additional fuel cost that the DPP would have been involved in during the period.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: May it please you, Mr Chairman, I am advised that those additional costs were to meet excessive that resulted in transportation difficulties by the DPP Chambers.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Is the Honourable Attorney General saying that in budgeting we have \$100,000 and then there is this major jump in six months of \$624,000, an additional figure of \$524,000? Were these trips unforeseen that they just came upon the DPP Chambers by night? The DPP Chambers routinely go to fixed courts in any given year, so I do not see how you could have had that increase unexpectedly.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Mr Chairman, I hope my learned friend appreciates that we were able to have additional staff at the DPP Chambers.

Agency 56 - Public Prosecutions, Programme 561 - Public Prosecutions - Chart of Account 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - \$624,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: That concludes the current. We will now go to a few items on the Capital Estimates.

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SECTION 'B' CAPITAL ESTIMATES

ITEM 1 - AGENCY 11 - GUYANA ELECTIONS COMMISSION - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2501000

Question is proposed that the sum of \$206,888,782 for Agency 11 - Guyana Elections Commission - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2501000 - Guyana Elections Commission - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Corbin

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister indicate to us whether this sum of \$206,000,000 represents the total need of the Guyana Elections Commission to provide all the equipment in terms of ...and I want to itemise this particularly in terms of the cameras, photographic materials and materials for new ID cards that have been requested by the Elections Commission in order to ensure that they carry out their mandate of the decision arrived at by all parties in this House in the presence of the diplomatic community?

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Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, I am advised that this provision meets the needs for this year to the end of December - 31 December, 2007 - and I am further advised that the needs at the beginning of next year would be met.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Corbin

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Would the Honourable Prime Minister indicate whether this allocation in any way takes care of the recent request for cameras and whether the cameras would arrive in time to commence the photographic exercise for ID cards this year?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes, I am advised that the cameras are included here and they would be here during the first week of December.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Corbin

Mr Robert HO Corbin: What about the materials for the ID cards?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: The materials for the ID cards have not been included in this submission at this time.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Does the Prime Minister plans to ensure that it is included in the new budget?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think that when we get to that bridge we will cross it. *[Applause]*

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Ramjattan

Mr Khemraj Ramjattan: Mr Chairman, can the Minister state ... now that the commencement of the House to House

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registration is all there, what would be the provision for party scrutineers? Is that included in this \$200,000,000?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: There is no provision in this submission for any party scrutineers

Agency 11 - Guyana Elections Commission - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2501000 - Guyana Elections Commission - \$206,888,782 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 2 - AGENCY 13 - MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2400100

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,000,000 for Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government Regional Development - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2400100 - Land Transport - stand part of the Estimates.

Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development - Capital Expenditure Chart of Account 2400100 - Land Transport - \$1,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 3 - AGENCY 21 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1700800

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Question is proposed that the sum of \$12,000,000 for Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture - Capital Expenditure -, Chart of Account 1700800 - Rural Support Project-Administration and Management - stands part of the Estimates

**Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture - Capital Expenditure
Chart of Account 1700800 - Rural Support Project-
Administration and Management - \$12,000,000 - agreed to
and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

**ITEM 3 - AGENCY 21 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
- CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2100107**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$550,000,000 for Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2100107 - Hydrometeorology - stands part of Estimates.

**Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture - Capital Expenditure
- Chart of Account 2100107 - \$550,000,000 - agreed to and
ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, I thought you would have put the Rural Support Project - Administration Management, because I had a question on Hydrometeorology. I did not realise that you put them all together. Anyway I will let it ride.

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The Chairman: I would have allowed you, Mr Murray - only you, no other Member of the Opposition.

Mr Winston S Murray: Alright, I will let it ride.

ITEM 4 - AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1205900

Question is proposed that the sum of \$17,300,000 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1205900 - Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1205900 - Nursery Primary and Secondary Schools - \$17,300,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 4 - AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1207500

Question is proposed that the sum of \$60,000,000 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1207500 - BEAMS-Civil Works - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Ms Ally

Ms Amna Ally: Can the Honourable Minister say what entails the completion of the BEAMS Project

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Education

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: The provision of \$60,000,000 is for the ongoing works at the new secondary school at Bartica.

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1207500 - BEAMS-Civil Works - \$60,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 5 - AGENCY 44 - MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORT - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1800100

Question is proposed that the sum of \$9,500,000 for Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport - Capital Estimates - Chart of Account 1800100 - Youth - stands part of the Estimates.

Ms Vanessa Kissoon: Mr Chairman, I have three questions.

The Chairman: Ask one at a time, Honourable Member

Ms Vanessa Kissoon: Okay. Could the Honourable Minister define the term holding centre? Is it a live-in centre?

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

Hon Dr Frank CS Anthony: Mr Chairman, you will recall that we pass a Bill, I think, in May dealing with Holding Centres and in that Bill the provision is made to have a

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temporary facility for persons - children between the ages of twelve and seventeen, who have committed an offence to be there in temporary custody. So that is the intention of the place. When persons are coming out from NOC, they can be there temporary until they are re-integrated with their families.

Ms Vanessa Kissoon: How many persons are you catering for at one time?

Hon Dr Frank CS Anthony: The facility caters for about fifteen males and fifteen females approximately.

Ms Vanessa Kissoon: Would it only be for Sophia youths or from around the country?

Hon Dr Frank CS Anthony: This caters for all young persons who are wards of the court.

The Chairman: Are there any other questions.

Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1800100 - Youth - \$9,500,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 6 - AGENCY 47 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1201700

Question is proposed that the sum of \$119,942,781 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1201700 - Ministry of Health - Buildings - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Murray

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Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, this is an increase over the original voted provision of over thirty percent and would the Minister agree that the project profile for these diagnostic centres, which is contained in 2007, does not name any particular centre. Is it the case therefore that these centres were not originally catered for in the sum of \$400,000,000 and these are now going to be additional centres or is it that they were catered for, but these are additional sums required for them, because there is no guidance provided in the project profile?

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister in the Ministry of Health

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: To answer the member's question, these are funds that are needed additional to the sums already expended to make these centres good - four centres and the ophthalmological centre are stated here at Leonora, Mahaicony, Suddie , Daimond and the hospital at Port Mourant, which we are now making into a national eye care centre and ophthalmological. So these are funds that are needed to bring those works to conclusion so that we can press them into service.

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, does this mean then that the original estimates for these projects do not hold and these represent cost overruns for these projects?

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: In effect these are additional sums needed to complete the works already done.

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, the Minister has no obligation to answer me, but I think he is being unduly evasive. Could the Minister say whether this additional sum refers to additional works for these projects not originally

contemplated in the profile or are they cost overruns for the projects as originally conceived?

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: What I would like to point out is the answer is simple. In many cases the cost for materials have gone up - the escalation cost of building materials - this is included in that and of course in some cases where we might have made some minor changes as works went on. So it is a combination of those, but as that Member would note the cost of materials has increased significantly more so as you would have known the explanation given by the Minister of Finance for example the impact of the increase of fuel cost have sent up practically all costs and this has not spared the cost of building materials.

Mr Winston S Murray: Could the Honourable Minister kindly tell the National Assembly when these four diagnostic centres are likely to be at the point of completion?

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: I would like to correct the Member, one is already completed and in service; as a matter of fact that is the Diamond Diagnostic Centre, which is in the first nine days of operation was able to diagnose and treat some 2,000 patients. That is already in the public domain; it is already in newspapers, television and so on. So this obviously is visible even on the East Bank corridor, where people would be seeing the addition of that new building and the impact that it is having on the population there. So basically the Member's question should be restructured to say the other three centres.

The three centres that he would be referring to would be Suddie, Leonora and Mahaicony and is also public knowledge, the Ministry has indicated that the contractor had said that he

would be able to complete civil works by the 15th that is today. Unfortunately, several checks by top level teams from the Ministry of Health have indicated that there are still some aspects of the civil works to be completed. We are pressing the contractor to finish this by month end. They have indicated that they will take seriously our urging and try to have those civil works completed by month end, which means the Ministry of Health very much hopes to have these things in operation by the end of the year.

Mr Winston S Murray: Would the Minister not agree that he is the one who has restructured his answer, because originally he told me that the money was additional for these four centres and it was he who changed his answer in the second round by saying that Diamond is now completed, when I asked for an answer to the status of these centres. So it is the Minister who is restructuring. That is the point I want to make, Sir. Could the Minister tell the National Assembly, when, if ever, they are going to set up similar centres at places like New Amsterdam and Linden?

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: Mr Chairman, let me clear up something. The Member was using his terms loosely. That is why I had to restructure his question. He was referring to the Port Mourant Hospital as a diagnostic Centre and that is what I had to bring some clarity to that. The three centres that he referred to, I have given the answer to that. Similar arguments applied to the Port Mourant Hospital, where we are having delays in the delivery of the civil works. So that too hopefully will be up by the end of the year.

Now the answers that he wants for the other two locations, only recently this government within the past two years commissioned a state-of-the-art hospital at New Amsterdam.

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That could not have been missed by the Member asking the question. Of course, that hospital is located on the new site not far from the Canje Bridge and of course it replaced the old structure of which is 120 or 130 years old. We have decommissioned that old structure and built a very good hospital near the Canje Bridge. So that was a redundant irrelevant question. There will be no diagnostic centre added to that at New Amsterdam or the other site he mentioned. *[Interruption: 'Linden']* Oh sorry, Mr Chairman, here again the good Member is busy with other works, but he would know following the Press; following the media generally that Linden is having a new hospital being built. That is under construction; it is very much visible and it is very much been announced and ventilated in the media and in the public. So we will not be adding another diagnostic centre to Linden. We are going to try to have one of the best hospitals in Linden and the plan of course meshes with the bigger plans since Linden will become a hub of activities on the road from Brazil via to Georgetown. So that answers clearly the Member's question.

Mr Winston S Murray: Is the Honourable Minister aware that Leonora has a hospital and yet it is one of the places slated to receive diagnostic and ophthalmology centres and that Port Mourant also has a hospital and the emphasis has not been on refurbishing and expanding these and that is the context of my question; that hospitals per se are not a means of avoiding setting up ophthalmology or diagnostic centres? They are not unnecessary, because of their presence.

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: Mr Chairman, the Member is confused. As was explained long ago, in an effort to consolidate our structures, the Leonora Cottage Hospital was specifically selected, as was the Port Mourant Hospital specifically identified to be improved, because like the

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Mahaicony hospital, these were structures existing, but under-utilised. As a result, we found that the Georgetown Hospital, our premiere referral centre, chronically was over-worked with diseases that could be treated on the periphery. In other words, not wanting to create redundant structures, this government took a decision to upscale existing facilities which we were maintaining, but not getting the service out of. For example, Leonora Cottage Hospital that was a glorified health centre; we are now making it into a modern state-of-the-art treatment and diagnostic centre. We must be lauded for that. The Member obviously was not following the discussions in this Parliament when we discussed this issue saying specifically that we had selected these densely populated areas with their under-used infrastructure so as to bring these new centres building on what existed. That is rational planning.

Agency 47 - Ministry of Health - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1201700 - Ministry of Health - Buildings - \$119,942,781 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 7 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1200600

Question is proposed that the sum of \$41,100,000 for Ministry of Home Affairs - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1200600 - Buildings - Prisons - stands part of the Estimates

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Deborah J Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, I would be very grateful if the Minister could explain - I see the remarks - but while in the budget the original provision voted in the Capital Estimates was \$30,000,000 and now supplementary provision has been sought of over one hundred percent. When that is done, is the Minister prepared to state unequivocally that our prison will now be absolutely safe from break-outs.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Home Affairs

Hon Clement J Rohee: I noticed the emphasis the Honourable Member put on the word *absolutely*, but I would not fall into that trap. There is no way that I can stand in this Honourable House and say unequivocally that the prison will be absolutely safe after this amount of money have been spent on this capital project. Mr Chairman, what we are working to do here is to reinforce the capital division of this prison and to ensure that the inmates and the staff - because we have to take care of the staff too - the inmates are securely behind the cell doors and the staff members are also securely protected. Renovations are also being done to the trade shops, the dining hall and a number of other facilities that are within the prisons.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I know that the Minister does not usually like to give us breakdowns, but could he tell us what portion of that \$41,100,000 has been used for the renovation/re-construction of the capital division.

Hon Clement J Rohee: Mr Chairman, it is not that I do not like to give breakdowns, but it is not something that I am fond of either. If I had the number, I would have offered it to the Honourable Member, but I do not have it right now.

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Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, the Minister is saying that he does not have it, but it really to an extent makes this an exercise in futility if we have a figure and we are told that the figure is for three things and we cannot get an answer on what portion of the money is going to which of the three things, so we are really none the wiser, because it may well be that only \$100,000, because it is \$41.1 million, it is just the \$0.1 million is going to the capital division. We do not know. So it leaves the opposition at a disadvantage as to how rational the additional money being sought is and then we could feel comfortable.

Hon Clement J Rohee: Mr Chairman, I have a difficulty with what the Honourable Member is seeking to impugn.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member made a statement.

Hon Clement J Rohee: Well there is no attempt to hide anything or to cover up anything.

Mr Chairman, one of the hallmarks of the PPP/C ...
[Interruption]

The Chairman: I take it Honourable Member that you will provide the Honourable Member with the answer as soon as possible.

Hon Clement J Rohee: Mr Speaker, I simply want to say that one of the hallmarks of the PPP/C Administration has always been to be transparent and to be accountable when it comes to public funds. If the Honourable Member wants to be much wiser on the amount of money that will be used ...
[Interruption: 'Not me.'] Well the Honourable Member is asking the question, so I have to address my answer to the

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Honourable Member; it is about \$26.5 million. If that is to your satisfaction in that respect, please ...

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1200600 - Buildings - Prisons - \$41,100,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 7 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2600100

Question is proposed that the sum of \$348,596,801 for Ministry of Home Affairs - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2600100 - Equipment - Police - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2600100 - Equipment - Police - \$348,596,801 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 7 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2600400

Question is proposed that the sum of \$24,200,000 for Ministry of Home Affairs - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account

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2600400 - Other Equipment - Prisons - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2600400 - Other Equipment - Prisons - \$24,200,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 7 - AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2600500

Question is proposed that the sum of \$ 5,200,000 for Ministry of Home Affairs - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2600500 - Agri. Equipment - Prisons - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2600500 - Agri. Equipment - Prisons - \$5,200,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 8 - AGENCY 55 - SUPREME COURT - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2403900

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,300,000 for Agency 55 - Supreme Court, Chart of Account - 2403900 - Land and Water Transport - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister say whether this additional sum of \$1.3 million is in respect of additional cost for the same vehicle or is this for the purchase of an additional vehicle, because the Legend is very vague?

Hon Doodnauth Singh: May it please you, Mr Chairman, my instructions are that that sum is required for the purchase of a motor; it is an additional sum for motor vehicle PKK 5455 for the Supreme Court.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Agency 55 - Supreme Court - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2403900 - Land and Water Transport - \$1,300,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 8 - AGENCY 55 - SUPREME COURT - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2501400

Question is proposed that the sum of \$ 4,498,000 for Agency 55 - Supreme Court - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1501400 - Furniture and Equipment - stands part of the Estimates

Mr Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, I see here a figure of \$4.498 million to purchase furniture and equipment for Fort Wellington Magistrate's Court - to furnish on court. I mean I am very happy; I must go to Fort Wellington soon. But could

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the Honourable Minister indicate what type of furniture is costing us \$4.5 million? Are we buying computers?

Hon Doodnauth Singh: I am advised that that court is going to serve as an Administrative Centre for the West Berbice Magisterial District so that the furniture and equipment will not only be for the facility of the court, but for the facility as well for the Administrative area.

Mr Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, will the Honourable Minister then accept that the remarks - the Legend Column - is misleading and that is the point. If we want to have a Legend column, it must speak for itself almost, because it says clearly here Magistrate's Court. We are now hearing that it is for the Magistrate's Court and the Registry. Because my question if it was so worded would have been, what portion of the \$4.498 million is going for furniture and equipment for the court itself?

Agency 55 - Supreme Court - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2501400 - Furniture and Equipment - \$4,498,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Honourable Members, this completes consideration of all the items on Financial Paper No. 1

Question -

That the Committee of Supply approves the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 1 of 2007 Supplementary Estimates for the period 17-04-2007 to 7-11-2007 totalling \$1,668,232,435.

Put and agreed to.

Motion Carried

Assembly Resumed

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Speaker, I have to report to the Assembly that the Committee of Supply has considered Financial Paper No. 1 of 2007 and passed it without amendment. I now move that this Assembly doth agree with the Committee's Resolution.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

The Speaker: We will now move to the next Item on the Order Paper.

**2. CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER
NO. 2/2007**

BE IT RESOLVED:

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

That the Assembly approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 2/2007 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$7,011,179,821 for the period ended 2007-12-31

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, in accordance with Article 171 (2) of the Constitution I signify that Cabinet has recommended for consideration by the National Assembly the Motion for the approval of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 2 of 2007, Schedule of Supplementary Provisions for Current and Capital Estimates for the period ended 31 December 2007 totalling \$7,011,179,821 and I now move the Motion.

Question proposed

Page 1 ...

SECTION 'A' - CURRENT ESTIMATES

The Chairman: My apology! Honourable Members, we will continue the paper as usual. Items will be taken from both the Current and Capital Estimates in order for which the Minister is responsible. There is only one Current item.

**ITEM 1 - AGENCY 03 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE,
Programme 031 - Ministry Administration - Chart of
Account 6321**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,100,729,220 for Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance, Programme 031 - Ministry Administration - Chart of Account 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister of Finance confirm that the rate of the rice levy applicable in 2007 is the same as it was in 2006?

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, to the best of my information it is, but of course these being Guyana dollars denominated amounts they vary not only with the quantity of rice exported, but also with the movement in exchange rate and in particular movement in the Euro exchange rate.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, I thank the Minister for that answer, because like him I believe the level of the levy

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

has not changed. Could the Minister therefore confirm that even given the change in exchange rate between the Guyana dollar and the Euro that this sum of \$2.1 billion which represents more than a 100 percent increase over the amount for last year suggests that our exports of rice to the European Union have increased significantly in 2007 as compared with 2006.

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, I can confirm that in strict volume terms there has been a significant increase in rice exports to the European Union, but I would further indicate that there is also been as I believe the Honourable Member would be aware of the very significant movement in the Euro to US dollar and in consequence the Euro to Guyana dollar exchange rate. These two factors together contribute to the increase that the Honourable Member has observed.

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister also confirm that since this is an essentially a coming in with the one hand and going out with the other, there is going to be a similar level of adjustment in a positive direction for the revenue part of the budget?

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, I can so confirm.

Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance, Programme 031 - Ministry Administration - Chart of Account 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - \$2,100,729,220 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: We will now turn to the items on the Capital Estimates

Page 2

SECTION “B” CAPITAL ESTIMATES

ITEM 1 - AGENCY 02 - OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2601100

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,200,000,000 for Agency 02 - Office of the Prime Minister - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 260110 - Electrification Programme - stands part of the Estimates

The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, I know the Honourable Prime Minister would be aware that this supplementary provision represents more than a 200 percent increase over the originally voted provision and would the Prime Minister agree that for such a massive increase which not catered for in the project profile for rural electrification as contained in the Capital Projects’ Profiles of the Estimates for 2007, that in the interest of transparency if nothing else there should have been a supplementary Project Profile that would enable this National Assembly to clearly see the context in which such a massive amount of money was being expended.

The Chairman: The Honourable Prime Minister

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, to tell you truly in my years here I have not encountered a supplementary project profile, but we would have had no problem on such a document.

Mr Winston S Murray: But, Mr Chairman, this is not the first time that the People's National Congress Reform-One Guyana has raised this issue pointing out that it is quite possible to undermine the integrity of the budget and the budgetary process by putting a nominal sum in the budget and writing up a project for that and then moving a massive sum of money under the Capital in a supplementary provision without a concomitant transparent mechanism such as a project profile that enlightens the National Assembly as to the content of the project. Mr Chairman, whether or not there is a precedent for so doing, I am suggesting to the Honourable Prime Minister that the time has come given the talk about transparency and accountability for that procedure and process to be followed.
[Applause]

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, I can and I will consult with people who know much more on this matter than me. I have here a document that lists how the money is spent and it even has a break out, but up to this point the Honourable Member has asked that question.

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, in pursuit of the invitation just issued by the Honourable Prime Minister, I wish to inquire of him whether in fact this large sum of money of \$1.2 billion is intended to be spent on the projects already identified or identified at the time of the presentation of the budget in the Capital Projects' Profiles and so there is more expenditure on those given areas or are these monies intended to be spent on new and additional areas?

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, it actually has a bit of both. There is \$490.2 million that has to be met that were for some areas that were connected hitherto and there is an estimated cost for an additional 6,000 lots of G \$575 million and there are some related transmission and distribution upgrades for \$170 million giving a total of \$1.235 billion..

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Prime Minister inform the National Assembly as to whether the determination of the areas to benefit from the unserved electrification programme any feasibility or other study is done to determine the extent to which that service would be viable or to which it has to be subsidised so the rest of the electricity users in the country will be aware of the additional burden that will come their way if a subsidy is involved in maintaining those expansion programmes?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, that is a pretty difficult question particularly seeing that over the last so many years fuel price which is the main portion of electricity cost has moved from \$20 per barrel to \$90 plus per barrel. So I would say at this time, yes, we are facing an issue where in all places the argument could be paid right now that the costs are exceeding the current tariff for all places. But we did study the issues of extending electrification to unserved areas and we did seek to assure ourselves that it would not bring any greater burden to GPL than any other existing customers.

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, would the Prime Minister agree to the proposition that in a general sense the cost of electricity across various areas would be the same or would there be differential tariffs depending on the viability or non-viability or is there going to be a universal tariff in which some people are going to subsidize others.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, I would have expected that the Honourable Member Mr Murray, a former Minister would have known the particulars of electricity provision in Guyana. I am sure that he knows it. We have one tariff for four groups across Guyana that are served by GPL, but the costs vary that if you want to calculate very detailed costs, they may vary from customer to customer, but generally they vary. In some places, some customers are subsidised and some others make a positive contribution. I am pretty sure the Honourable Members knows that and I rather doubt the Honourable Member is questioning the need or questioning the government extending electricity to people who do not have now. Every day still people come rapping on my door asking for electricity to be extended to think and I think he knows the rules. The rules are that the GPL provides a certain length of cable and beyond that for the first connection, it has to be provided separately and I can tell you that in our studies that we generally look at a cut off point of some no more that \$200,000 as the capitalisation cost per household for extended electricity.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Ramjattan

Mr Khemraj Ramjattan: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Honourable Prime Minister this question, in view of the massive blackouts in Berbice, it must be reclassified as an unserved area. *[Applause]* How much of this sum is going to go to Berbice?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I have been advised by GPL that their problems of the last week should have been overcome and therefore by tomorrow Berbice will be restored as a served area.

Agency 02 - Office of the Prime Minister - Chart of Account 2601100 - Capital Expenditure - Electrification Programme - \$1,200,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 2 - AGENCY 03 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1900400

Question is proposed that the sum of \$99,700,240 for Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1900400 - Basic Needs Trust Fund 5 - stands part of the Estimates

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Fernandes

Mr Desmond Fernandes: Mr Chairman, I observed that the Mabaruma Hospital is at a stand still. I would like to know how much of this fund of \$99,700,240 is allocated to Mabaruma Hospital.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, of the amount of \$99.7 million being requested, an amount of \$48.1 million is intended for Mabaruma Hospital.

Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1900400 - Basic Needs Trust Fund 5 - \$99,700,240 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 2 - AGENCY 03 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2601200

Question is proposed that the sum of \$162,292,200 for Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2601200 - Statistical Bureau - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2601200 - Statistical Bureau - \$162,292,200 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 3 - AGENCY 08 - AUDIT OFFICE - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 4401000

Question is proposed that the sum of \$12,186,567 for Agency 08 - Audit Office - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 4401000 - Institutional Strengthening - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 08 - Audit Office - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 4401000 - Institutional Strengthening - \$12,186,567 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

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TEM 4 - AGENCY 13 - MINISTRY OF LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT -
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1900200

Question is proposed that the sum of \$614,275,175 for Agency 13 Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1900200 - Community Enhancement Services Project - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1900200 - Community Enhancement Services Project - \$614,275,175 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 5 - AGENCY 21 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
- CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1700800

Question is proposed that the sum of \$4,421,000 for Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1700800 - Rural Support Project - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, an inquiry here: why was it that the original project did not provide for a monitoring and an evaluation mechanism including a consultant? Could that be explained please?

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

Hon Robert M Persaud: Mr Chairman, in response, as some Members may know, this project was originally intended to be a five-year project then it was extended to nine years and was being funded by IPAD with counterpart funding. What has happened because of this additional time required funding for that person or that consultant who came under IPAD ran out and the government is now seeking to have these resources compensated for, to have the M and E personal so that the projects which are on-going can be properly evaluated and monitored.

Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1700800 - Rural Support Group - \$4,421,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 6 - AGENCY 31 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE, Chart of Account 1206900

Question is proposed that the sum of \$120,000,000 for Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure, Chart of Account 1206900 - Bridges - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1206900- Bridges - \$120,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 6 - AGENCY 31 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE, Chart of Account 1207100

Question is proposed that the sum of \$ 160,000,000 for Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure, Chart of Account 1207100 - Mahaica - Rosignol Road/Studies - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1207100 - Mahaica - Rosignol Road/Studies - \$160,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 6 - AGENCY 31 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE, Chart of Account 1207800

Question is proposed that the sum of \$180,000,000 for Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure, Chart of Account 1207800 - West Demerara/Four Lane Road - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1207800 - West Demerara/Four Lane Road - \$180,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 6 - AGENCY 31 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE, Chart of Account 1207900

Question is proposed that the sum of \$587,000,000 for Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure, Chart of Account 1207900 - NA/Moleson Creek Road - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1207900 - NA/Moleson Creek Road - \$587,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 6 - AGENCY 31 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE, Chart of Account 1500404

Question is proposed that the sum of \$43,424,500 for Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure, Chart of Account 1500404 - West Coast Berbice - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1500404 - West Coast Berbice - \$43,424,500 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

**ITEM 7 - AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION -
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1207500**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$306,700,000 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education -Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1207500 - Basic Education Access and Management Support Programme - stands part of the Estimates

**Agency 41 - Ministry of Education - Capital Expenditure -
Chart of Account 1207500 - Basic Education Access and
Management Support Programme - \$306,700,000 - agreed
to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

**ITEM 7 - AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION -
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1206600**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$29,153,309 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education -Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1206600 - University of Guyana - Turkeyen - stands part of the Estimates

**Agency 41 - Ministry of Education - Capital Expenditure -
Chart of Account 1206600 - University of Guyana -
\$29,153,309 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the
Estimates.**

**ITEM 7 - AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION -
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2602900**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

Question is proposed that the sum of \$165,005,376 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education -Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2602900 - Guyana Basic Education Training - stands part of the Estimates

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Ms Amna Ally

Ms Amna Ally: Could the Honourable Minister say whether this sum includes the payment of cluster advisers and what are the categories of administrative expenses?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: Yes, it includes the payment for cluster advisers, master trainers and cluster trainers and to go ahead with the literacy programme in the schools in all regions

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Ms Ally

Ms Amna Ally: A supplementary question - Could the Minister say how much for each category is listed - cluster training and cluster advisers, et cetera, for the country?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: For cluster trainers, there are 186. I am unable to give you the number for the cluster advisers. There are twelve master trainers.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Ms Ally

Ms Amna Ally: Could the Minister undertake to provide that information as soon as possible.

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: Yes

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2602900 - Guyana Basic Education

Training - \$165,005,376 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 7 - AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 4502200

Question is proposed that the sum of \$ 41,959,453 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education -Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 4502200 - Education for All Fast Track Initiative - EFA/FTI - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 4502200 - Education for All Fast Track Initiative - EFA/FTI - \$41,959,453 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 8 - AGENCY 45 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1900800

Question is proposed that the sum of \$276,042,082 for Agency 45 - Ministry of Housing and Water - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1900800 - Low Income Settlement Programme - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 45 - Ministry of Housing and Water - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1900800 - Low Income

Settlement Programme - \$276,042,082 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 8 - AGENCY 45 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2800700

Question is proposed that the sum of \$402,000,000 for Agency 45 - Ministry of Housing and Water - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2800700 - Assistance/Rehab - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 45 - Ministry of Housing and Water - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2800700 - Assistance/Rehab - \$402,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

ITEM 9 - AGENCY 47 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 2501900

Question is proposed that the sum of \$110,455,200 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2501900 - Equipment - Medical - stands part of the Estimates

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Murray

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, is the Honourable Minister aware that the project defines in the Capital Projects Profile for medical equipment for the Ministry of Health does

not include any provision whatever for medical equipment for Lethem and Mabaruma.

Secondly, since this is five times that is increasing from \$22,000,000 voted at the beginning of the year, now being sought \$110,000,000 that is five times the original amount, whether similar to the Rural Electrification Programme, it would not have been prudent in the interest of transparency for there to have been a fully developed project profile that would have enabled the National Assembly to have seen in a transparent manner exactly what is being undertaken here in respect of these two hospitals?

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister in the Ministry of Health.

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: I thank the Member for that question. Yes, these sums are for the equipment for these two hospitals which are practically completed - the civil works. These two hospitals are part and parcel of the eight new hospitals being built across the country. We spoke of a few others earlier and these are new equipment, which we hope to install in these facilities, which were not previously budgeted for. So basically we are going to be having in Lethem and Mabaruma two State-of-the-Art hospitals to cater for massive improvement in the services there. You will note again that these are at key and critical points of our country.

Mr Winston S Murray: Mr Chairman, my question is, since these were not originally budgeted for, but since they are going to be such huge consumers of capital resources whether it would not have been in the interest of transparency to have included for submission to the National Assembly a project profile that would have outlined how this expenditure of

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

\$110,455,200 having done for other projects in the national budget. That was one of the questions.

The Chairman: Project Profile Honourable Member.

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: Yes, I appreciate the question. This information as to the equipment we intend to purchase that information could be made available to the Member and generally it could be made public, because it would be obvious and visible in the hospitals when they are purchased.

Mr Winston S Murray: No, Mr Chairman, he does not want to apparently deal with the question, whether in the interest of transparency when it comes to the National Assembly in a supplementary budget for a sum that is five times the original sum voted that an accompanying project profile should be given to the National Assembly so that in the interest of transparency it can better see the undertaking of that expenditure.

The Chairman: Project Profile, Honourable Member. I am reminding you again.

Hon Dr Bheri S Ramsaran: I have taken note of the Member's question and of course we could provide that information.

Agency 47 - Ministry of Health - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 2501900 - Equipment - Medical - \$110,455,200 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

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ITEM 9 - AGENCY 47 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH -
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 4400200

Question is proposed that the sum of \$227,313,195 for Agency 47 - Ministry of Health - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 4400200 - HIS/AIDS - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 47 - Ministry of Health - Capital Expenditure -
Chart of Account 4400200 - HIS/AIDS - \$227,313,195 -
agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

ITEM 10 - AGENCY 48 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR,
HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY -
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Chart of Account 1901800

Question is proposed that the sum of \$18,615,528 for Agency 48 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account 1901800 – SIMAP, PHASE III - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 48 - Ministry of Labour, Human Services and
Social Security - Capital Expenditure - Chart of Account
1901800 – SIMAP, PHASE III - \$18,615,528 - agreed to
and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Thank you very much. That concludes this Financial Paper

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

The Hon Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Chairman, am I to take it that we are resuming the Assembly so that I can report the outcome of the work of the Committee of Supply?

The Chairman: Sorry, my apology.

Question -

That the Committee of Supply approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 2/2007 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$7,011,179,821 for the period ended 2007-12-31

Put and agreed to

Motion carried

Assembly Resumed

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Speaker, I have to report to the Assembly that the Committee of Supply has considered Financial Paper No. 2/2007 and passed it without amendment.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

I now move that this Assembly doth agree with the Committee's Resolution.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NOS.13 and 54

The Speaker: The Hon Prime Minister

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Speaker, with your leave I move that Standing Orders Nos. 13 and 54 be suspended to enable the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 1 for 2007) Bill No. 24/2007 to be introduced at this stage.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried

BILL - FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD READINGS

- 3. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (NO. 1/2007) BILL 2007 - Bill No. 24/2007 published on 2007-11-15**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

A Bill intituled, an Act to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sums necessary to meet the expenditure (not otherwise lawfully charged on the Consolidated Fund) of Guyana for the fiscal year ending 31 December 2007, estimates whereof have been approved by the National Assembly, and for the appropriation of those sums for the specified purposes, in conformity with the Constitution.

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Speaker, in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Article 171 of the Constitution, I signify that Cabinet has recommended the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 1/2007) Bill 2007 - Bill No 24/2007 for consideration of the National Assembly and I now present the Bill to the Assembly and move that it be read the first time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the First time.

The Speaker: The Hon Minister of Finance

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Speaker, I now move that the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 1/2007) Bill 2007 - Bill No. 24/2007 be read a Second time.

Question put and agreed to

Bill read the Second time.

The Speaker: The Hon Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Speaker, I now move that the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 1/2007) Bill 2007 - Bill No. 24/2007 be read a Third time and passed as printed..

Question put and agreed to

Bill read the Third time and passed as printed.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, please bear with me, we have to go through the identical procedure and everybody has to say the identical words for a second time.

The Hon Prime Minister

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NOS. 13 and 54

The Speaker: The Hon Prime Minister

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Speaker, with your leave I move that Standing Orders Nos. 13 and 54 be suspended to enable the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 2/2007) - Bill No. 25/2007 to be introduced at this stage.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried

The Speaker: The Hon Minister of Finance

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Mr Speaker, permit me to seek a clarification. Supplementary Appropriation (No. 1/2007) - Bill No. 24/2007 is a single Bill that incorporates the provisions of Financial Paper No. 1 and Financial Paper No. 2, so I would have thought that having read for the First, Second and Third times and having passed the Bill which incorporates the two Financial Papers, it would not be necessary to repeat this process. It is a single Bill; it has everything in it, if you ... check the total.

The Speaker: You are right Honourable Member, my apologies.

Hon Dr Ashni K Singh: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, we can now proceed with the next item on the Order Paper

(see PART II of II Page 81)

BILLS - Second Readings

**3. DEEDS REGISTRY AUTHORITY
(AMENDMENT) BILL 2007 - Bill No. 22/2007
published on 24 October 2007**

*A Bill intituled, an Act to amend the
Deeds Registry Authority Act*

The Hon Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

I do not have a list of speakers. Are you the only speaker on this matter on the Government's side, Hon Attorney General?

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Yes, Sir.

The Speaker: I do not have a list of speakers. *[Pause]*

Very well, Hon Attorney General, you may proceed.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: May it please you, Mr Speaker - On 23 April 1999, the Deeds Registry Authority Act - Act No. 2/1999 was assented to by President Janet Jagan.

Section 3 of the said Act provides that the Registry is hereby established as a body corporate from the appointed date.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

Mr Speaker, in Section 2 the Minister was defined as the Minister of Legal Affairs.

In Section 5 of the said Act, the Registry shall consist of the following designated members namely:

- The Registrar;
- The Deputy Registrar;
- Such Senior Officers of the Registry not exceeding five as may be designated by the Registrar with the approval of the Minister.

And Subsection (2) stipulated that the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar shall be appointed by the Minister on such terms and conditions including emoluments as specified in the instrument of appointment.

Mr Speaker, I had indicated that this legislation was enacted on 23 April 1999. It is stated that for it to be operational the Minister has to promulgate an order. That has not yet taken place, Sir ... [*Interruption: 'Eight years!'*] ... You want it to be done?

Mr Speaker, Act No. 6/2001 - Constitutional Amendment Act No. 4, et cetera, provided in Section 20 - Article 199 of the Constitution is hereby altered by the substitution of Paragraph 3 thereof the following paragraph and this is how that paragraph now reads:

- (3) *This article applies to the Office of the Commissioner of Title, Magistrate, Director of Public Prosecutions, Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions,*

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES 15 NOVEMBER 2007

*Registrar of the High Court, Deputy
Registrar of the High Court ...*

Others are included, Sir. The result of that Article in the Constitution is that whenever the Deeds Registry Authority Act is brought into force that provision will collide with Section 5 (2). It is as a result of that situation, Sir that this Bill has been brought before the National Assembly.

Mr Speaker, I am grateful to my learned colleagues The Honourable Members Mrs Riehl and Mrs Backer for drawing to my attention that we ought to consider an amendment to Section 5 (4), which was not provided for in the Bill. At the relevant stage Sir, I will seek to move a minor amendment in conformity to what has been drawn to my attention and with which we are in agreement.

In the circumstances, may it please you, Sir, I wish that this Bill be read for the Second time.

Motion proposed

The Speaker: The Honourable Member Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Speaker, the Hon Attorney General has just told us that the Deeds Registry Authority Bill which was passed in this National Assembly in February 1999 and assented to on 23 April 1999 has not yet come into force. And that in fact it has to come into force by an Order which he himself must promulgate. My question to the Hon Minister is when will such an order be made? Because it is no use that we

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pass legislation in this Honourable House and for eight years it is dormant and un-enforceable. This legislation - the Deeds Registry Authority Act of 1999 - I believe, was passed at the time of the very first Justice Improvement Project, which was funded by the USAID.

Now that we have the second Justice Improvement Project being funded by the IDB this time around, I think that may have galvanised the Government to come to this House and to do the tidying up of this legislation and I hope that that will also galvanize the Order according to Sections 1 and 2 of the said Deeds Registry Act 1999 - this Act shall come into force on such a day as the Minister may by Order appoint and I hope that that may galvanize the appointment of that Order, because as I said, it is no point bringing legislation and then putting it down to rest.

It seems that we can only act when we have some money funding some thing.

The Deeds Registry is a very pleasant place to be right now. If you walk into it, it is fully air- conditioned. The staff seem very happy with their new working environment, but that is as far as the Deeds Registry Authority Act went, because perhaps that is as far as the Justice Improvement Funds catered for.

So, Mr Speaker, that is the very first point that we should really seek to have this Act brought into force.

Now I turn to the amendments that are made. The first amendment that the Bill speaks of and these amendments according to Clause 1 of the Deeds Registry Authority Amendment Bill say that these amendments shall also come into force when the principal Act comes into force. So we are

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waiting, we are going through these motions again with the hope that that order will be made.

Section 4 of the Principal Act is amended by the deletion of Paragraph (a) (ix). Let us see what Section 4 of the Principal Act, which the Hon Attorney General outlined, how it is put together. Section 4 says the functions assigned to the Registrar and to the Registry and there under is listed a number of functions and one of those functions is to look at the Land Registry Act. Sir, now this Section 4 is amended by the deletion of that (a) (ix); so no longer within the purview of the Registrar of the Deeds Registry will have jurisdiction over that Land Registry Act. When you look at what was done between the Deeds Registry and the Land Registry, there is something of a problem or at least it seems to pose a problem, because what the government has in fact done is divide up the functions which were hitherto and still is under the Land Registry Act. The functions performed by the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar of Deeds are those functions of the Registrar of Lands and the Deputy Registrar of Lands. They have divided up the Deeds Registry to have a Land Registry and a Deeds Registry, but the law does not accommodate that situation today. So they now bring Section 4 - taking out Section 4 of this Act which is not yet in force and they have a Land Registrar and a Deputy Land Registrar functioning. I do not understand what the government is doing. They are putting the cart before the horse; before amending the legislation, they have severed the entities. We have a Registrar of Land and a Registrar of Deeds, but the law does not seem to be in sync with that situation. I think this situation was highlighted by Mr Rockcliffe in a letter to the Press sometime ago. I was trying to get that letter, unfortunately I could not, showing that this situation must be remedied and it cannot be remedied properly, because the laws are not yet in

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force. This Deeds Registry Authority Act has not yet come into force and the amendment, we are told, which we are now engaging in doing will not also come into force until the principal Act is come into force. So we have that problem with the two situations and I hope that the Attorney General can throw some light on that situation in his winding up.

The other section that we sought to amend is the Deeds Registry Authority Act of 1999, Section 5 and indeed I am happy that the Attorney General has taken cognisance of subsection 4 which was deficient and which there was no amendment for in this amending Bill, because subsection 4 deals with the Deeds Registry as if it was still under the Minister. I am happy that he has taken cognisance of our amendment and will amend at the particular time.

Mr Speaker, I really feel that this is not a really large Bill, as I said, it is just a tidying up process, but I really feel that the government should get its act together and if they are going to tidy up legislation, they should also seek to bring it into force, because we cannot sit in this Parliament and go on and on with legislation that we just passed and argue and put down. Already, we have a set that is not even assented to and we cannot come to this Parliament and day after day or occasion after occasion to treat with legislation, which is not going to be enforced.

So I hope that the learned Attorney General takes cognisance of these few words and seek to bring about that Order. Thank you, Sir. *[Applause]*

The Speaker: Thank you Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member Mr Khemraj Ramjattan

Mr Khemraj Ramjattan: Mr Speaker, if I may say, the amendment in relation to correcting the collision course with the Minister and the Judicial Service Commission as to the appointment is very much in order. I support that very much, because obviously, we do not want to have an unconstitutionality being in our laws when it is so patently the case. And so for that remedial action, I commend the Minister.

However, I wish to state and again it is a continuation of the point that I have been making on several occasions now that we pass laws in this Parliament only to get them not being promulgated. In the last Parliament some ten Bills and they were not assented to in the context of this Bill, in which it was made an Act; there was a concomitant veto power in the sense that the Minister had to promulgate the operational date and did not do that. It could not be because a Judicial Service Commission now appoints a Registrar and a Deputy Registrar, because that came into being from 2002 or thereabout. This Bill was since 1999 that was made an Act and the Minister literally (not this Minister, probably another one) did not want to promulgate it. What is the position, the operational date did not come into being. Why did it not come into being? So we come here hot and sweaty, pass a Land Registry Bill, make it into an Act, give the Minister an operational date and somehow even if it is not the Minister, at least Cabinet or the President or whosoever is supposed to give that order to the Minister to ensure that the date of its operationability comes into effect, is it not? And so I am wondering again. At that time, I recall the urgency of the Bill was because we were

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going to facilitate then to qualify for HIPC Funds. That was the reason why; you come quickly, pass the Land Registry Bill, the Deeds Registry Bill to the extent that we have HIPC Funds coming, we have all the readings and so on happening at the same. Good, it was done and what happened after. It would appear now that we are having some other funds coming from some place and we want to get the thing going so that we are being motivated here by the acceptance of the obtainance or the procurement of some amount of funding. That is not the way we should make our laws. We, as a matter of principle had stated we want to make an autonomous if not semi-autonomous Land Registry. We wanted to make the Deeds Registry that also.

However, we went into a big muddle and that muddle has to also do with ... is there any (what you call) genuine intention to give effect to this law? Is there a genuine intention? Up to now we have not seen the necessary legislative framework in relation to whether we are going to deal with a Land Registrar or the Deeds Registrar and Deputy Registrar. We are not coming around to whether we are going to accept one of the two, but we are in a quandary. I am making this point that we also are giving the impression that when we pass this Bill today ... we are going to pass it, but we do not have the Judicial Service Commission to make the appointments for the Deputy Registrar and Registrar in any event. *[Interruption]*

The Speaker: Maybe you should inquire of Mr Corbin whether that is so. *[Laughter]*

Mr Khemraj Ramjattan: But that again will be a bug-bear for the implementation, so if it is not the Presidential assent or the Ministerial veto in that context of not bringing up the operational date, we are putting it into an institution that is not

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established; its life finished since February of this year; we do not have a Commission. Who is going to appoint these two persons and we do not know when that will happen. So are we giving teeth to that which we pass here as a matter of principle and a matter of policy.

I also want to make this additional point and it was made by the Honourable Member Mrs Riehl and that is, we have a separate Registrar of Lands who is appointed in 2004 and by the way it was in contravention of Section 4 of the Land Registry Act. Now this continuing illegality has to be brought to an end. I understand that this has been conveyed by the Bar Association and also one of the experts in land law Mr Gun Rockcliffe and what that means then is that we also have to have an amendment to the Land Registry Act to effectuate this kind of regularisation of that procedural irregularity if we do not want to call it an illegality. That is not forthcoming. Coming with this Bill ought to be that amendment to the Land Registry Act that I am talking about. That too has not been forthcoming. So could we really be serious about this or is it because DIFID or one of them donor community is going to fix up some funds for judicial reform that we quickly bring it here and we are going to show the donors that look here, we fix up something, give us some more loans or give us some more grants. That is what this thing is and I am urging that that should not be as a matter of principle how we operate in this Legislature. It should not be. Those are my comments. Thank you very much. *[Applause]*

The Speaker: Thank you Honourable Member

The Honourable Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Mr Speaker, I have seen the opinion that was written by Mr Rockcliffe and I believe a Member of your Chambers as well, Sir.

With the greatest respect I do not share the views which have been expressed in those opinions. In fact, the Land Registry is operating independently of the Deeds Registry and I will if assuming these allegations about illegality and words of that nature, but if there is that view, then I expect steps ought to be taken to challenge the position of the Land Registrar. Until such time, the Land Registry and the Deeds Registry operate independent.

With respect to the allegations both by Mrs Riehl and my learned colleague Mr Ramjattan, I cannot answer as to why this legislation which was enacted on 23 April 1999 was enacted or was passed in this National Assembly. The former Attorney General, I was hoping that it would have been Mr De Santos in which case I would have asked him to speak, but I was told that he was not the relevant person.

Mr Speaker, with respect to the rationale as to why the law which has been assented to and Mrs Riehl seems to take the view that it is within my province to take steps to pass the necessary Order. As you will appreciate, Mrs Riehl that is an inaccurate statement, because it is not within my province although administratively I am obliged to do it, but it has to be a decision taken at the highest level, Sir. And as I say, I cannot give an explanation as to why that Order has not been made.

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Mr Speaker, in the circumstances, Sir, I am going to seek an amendment to the Bill to include the words in Section 5 (4) to delete reference to Subsection (2) notwithstanding any\thing ... *[Interruption]*

The Speaker: Are you going to add another clause to the Bill?

Hon Doodnauth Singh: No Sir, it is just a few words.

The Speaker: What Section are you talking about in the Bill? *[Pause]* You are amending the Bill that is before us.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Yes.

The Speaker: But you have to add another clause to it?

Hon Doodnauth Singh: No Sir.

The Speaker: Are you amending Clause 3?

Hon Doodnauth Singh: It will have to be Section 5.

The Speaker: Just a minute! *[Pause]* The Bill Before us the Deeds Registry Authority (Amendment) Bill does not have a Clause 5.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: It does not have reference to Clause 5

The Speaker: No, no, no, it does not have a Clause 5, so you cannot amend Clause 5. You are amending Clause 5 of the Deeds Registry Authority Act

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Mr Speaker, the Bill that you have before you Sir, in Clause 3 ...

The Speaker: Exactly!

Hon Doodnauth Singh: ... Section (5) makes reference to Section 5 and it says Section 5 of the principal Act is amended by the substitution for Section 2 of the following. So that is an insertion.

The Speaker: Yes!

Hon Doodnauth Singh: So reference is made to Section 5. What I am seeking to do is have reference made to Section 5 (4). So it is a minor amendment. So Section 5 is already referred to in the Bill and what I am seeking is an amendment to Subsection (4). There is already a request to amend Section 2 by its deletion. So this is an amendment to Subsection (4). It is a further amendment, Sir to Sections 5 (2) and 5 (3). There is a further amendment to Clause 3 which makes reference to Section 5 by the inclusion of the words *other than the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar*.

The Speaker: Including it where?

Hon Doonauth Singh: After the word *Registrar*. Notwithstanding anything, et cetera ... A Minister may terminate, et cetera ... failure ... after the words *of any designated member of the Registry other than the Registrar and Deputy Registrar*. Those are the words I wish to add.

The Speaker: I am hopelessly confused, Honourable Member. What you are doing, you are looking at the Deeds Registry Authority Act and reading Section 5 from that Act and telling us how you want to amend that Act.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Yes!

The Speaker: I do not have that Act before me.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Oh, I see, Sir.

The Speaker: What you need to do, is look at the Bill before us and tell us how you want to amend the Bill to effect that amendment to the principal Act.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Sir, you have before you the Bill ...

The Speaker: Yes!

Hon Doodnauth Singh: ... and the Bill makes reference in Clause 3 to Section 5. So it is an additional amendment to that Section.

The Speaker: Frame that amendment for us.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: I will have to frame it, because you do not have the original Bill.

The Speaker: Do you have it ready there?

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Yes, Sir.

The Speaker: Well, could you hold it and you will make it at the appropriate stage. We are not at that stage.

Hon Doodnauth Singh: Very well, Sir. We will write it out, Sir.

The Speaker: Thank you Attorney General.

Honourable Members, that brings our debate to an end.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE

Clauses 1 and 2

Question proposed, put and agreed to.

[Clauses 1 and 2, as printed, stands part of the Bill]

Clause 3

Question proposed

The Chairman: Now the Honourable Attorney General has to propose his Amendment

Hon Doodnauth Singh: The Amendment I seek to Clause 3; Section 5 of the Principal Act is amended by -

- (a) The substitution for Section 2 of the following subsection; and
- (b) In subsection 4 by the deletion of 2 and by the insertion after the word *Registry* of the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar.

Mr Chairman, regrettably you do not have the Act; could I pass up the Act to you, Sir? *[Pause]*

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The Chairman, Honourable Members in relation to Clause 3, there are two amendments, I will propose them one at a time.

Amendment -

(a) Insert immediately after the word *amended* the letter - (a)

Question proposed, put and agreed to.

Amendment carried

Amendment -

(b) Immediately after the word *Registry* insert the words *other than the Registrar and Deputy Registrar*.

Mr Murray are you following that?

Mr Winston S Murray: Yes.

The Chairman: Mrs Riehl, is that clear?

Question proposed put and agreed to

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Mr Winston S Murray: *Subsections* will now have to read subsection, because we are taking out the figure 2 and there is one subsection.

The Chairman: Yes. So that is the third amendment.

Amendment -

In subsection (4) for the words *subsections (2)* and substitute the word *subsection*

Question proposed, put and agreed to.

Clause 3 as amended

Question put and agreed to.

[Clause 3, as amended, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill]

Bill reported with amendments, read the Third time and passed as amended.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, we have now come to an end of our Business for today. I am happy to say at a very early hour.

VISITS TO THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER

- (i) **Ms Deborah Misir, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labour, USA**

I would like to acknowledge the presence of Ms Deborah Misir and friend Mr Grant Lallee of the United States. Ms Misir is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labour of the United States Government. She is here on a private visit from Washington. I am sure he will be able to return and inform Washington of the businesslike manner in which we conduct our business.

(ii) Ambassador Zhang of the People's Republic of China to the Parliament Chamber

I would like to acknowledge the presence of Ambassador Zhang of the People's Republic of China and to remind you that we are going to have a brief handing-over ceremony before Members attend the Lobby where as usual tea is available. So I invite all Members including those who have been named; those who have been named will be in the photograph. Thank you very much.

The Hon Minister of Home Affairs

Hon Clement J Rohee: Mr Speaker, I wish to move that the Honourable House stands adjourned to a date to be fixed.

The Speaker: Thank you Honourable Members; the House is adjourned to a date to be fixed.

Adjourned Accordingly At 16:19 H