

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 30TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2020-2021) OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 10.00 A.M.
ON TUESDAY, 3rd AUGUST, 2021
IN THE DOME OF THE ARTHUR CHUNG CONFERENCE CENTRE,
LILIENDAAL, GREATER GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (71)

Speaker (1)

*Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (38)

Peoples Progressive Party Civic (38)

Prime Minister (1)

Hon. Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark A. Phillips, M.S.S., M.P., Prime Minister

Vice-President (1)

Hon. Bharrat Jagdeo, M.P., Vice-President (Virtual Participation)

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (1)

Hon. Mohabir A. Nandlall, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Senior Ministers (17)

Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni), Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip

Hon. Hugh H. Todd, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation

*Hon. Dr. Ashni K. Singh, M.P., Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance

Hon. Bishop Juan A. Edghill, M.S., J.P., M.P., Minister of Public Works

***Non-Elected Member**

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2.

Hon. Dr. Frank C. S. Anthony, M.P., Minister of Health

Hon. Priya D. Manickchand, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara),
Minister of Education (Virtual Participation)

*Hon. Brindley H.R. Benn, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

Hon. Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne), Minister of
Agriculture

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

Hon. Joseph L.F. Hamilton, M.P., Minister of Labour

Hon. Vickram O. Bharrat, M.P., Minister of Natural Resources

*Hon. Oneidge Walrond, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

Hon. Nigel D. Dharamlall, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam), Minister of Local
Government and Regional Development

Hon. Collin D. Croal, M.P. (Region No. 1 – BarimaWaini), Minister of Housing and Water

Hon. Vindhya V. H. Persaud, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Minister of
Human Services and Social Security

Hon. Charles S. Ramson, M.P., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

Hon. Sonia S. Parag, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

Junior Ministers (4)

Hon. Susan M. Rodrigues, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Minister within the
Ministry of Housing and Water (Virtual Participation)

Hon. Deodat Indar, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Public Works

Hon. Anand Persaud, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Local Government and Regional
Development

Hon. Warren K.E. McCoy, M.P., Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister

/...3

***Non-Elected Member**

3.

Other Members (14)

Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

Hon. Alister S. Charlie, M.P. (Region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

Hon. Dr. Vishwa D.B. Mahadeo, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Hon. Sanjeev J. Datadin, M.P.

Hon. Seepaul Narine, M.P.

Hon. Yvonne Pearson-Fredericks, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P.

Hon. Faizal M. Jaffarally, M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)

Hon. Dr. Tandika S. Smith, M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Hon. Lee G.H. Williams, M.P.

*Hon. Sarah Browne, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
(Absent)

*Hon. Vikash Ramkissoon, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture(Absent)

Hon. Bhagmattie Veerasammy, M.P.

MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION (32)

(i) A Partnership For National Unity + Alliance For Change (APNU/AFC) (31)

Hon. Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph F. Harmon, M.S.M., M.P., Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Roysdale A. Forde, S.C., M.P. (Absent)

Hon. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P. (Absent)

Hon. Dawn Hastings-Williams, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Hon. Dr. Nicolette O. Henry, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Karen R.V. Cummings, M.P.

Hon. Tabitha J. Sarabo-Halley, M.P.

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Hon. Christopher A. Jones, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip (Virtual Participation)

/...4

***Non-Elected Member**

4.

Hon. Annette N. Ferguson, M.P. (Virtual Participation)

Hon. David A. Patterson, M.P. (Virtual Participation)

Hon. Coretta A. McDonald, A.A., M.P.

Hon. Catherine A. Hughes, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Virtual Participation)

Hon. Haimraj B. Rajkumar, M.P. (Virtual Participation)

Hon. Amanza O.R. Walton-Desir, M.P.

Hon. Natasha Singh-Lewis, M.P.

Hon. Sherod A. Duncan, M.P.

Hon. Juretha V. Fernandes, M.P.

Hon. Vincent P. Henry, M.P.

Hon. Ronald Cox, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

Hon. Shurwayne F.K. Holder, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam)

Hon. Ganesh A. Mahipaul, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
Opposition Chief Whip (a.g.)

Hon. Nima N. Flue-Bess, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Hon. Maureen A. Philadelphia, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Virtual-Participation)

Hon. Deonarine Ramsaroop, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Hon. Vinceroy H. Jordan, M.P., (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)

Hon. Dineshwar N. Jaiprashad, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Hon. Richard E. Sinclair, M.P. (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)

Hon. Jermaine A. Figueira, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

Hon. Devin L. Sears, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

**A New and United Guyana, Liberty and Justice Party and The New Movement (ANUG,
LJP & TNM) (1)**

Hon. Lenox R. O'Dell Shuman, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (Virtual Participation)

Officers (2)

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

Ms. Deslyn West, Assistant Clerk of the National Assembly

5.

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 10.22 a.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk led in Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-

The Speaker made the following announcements:

1. Emancipation Greetings

“Honourable Members, first, let me take this opportunity to wish you, your families and our country, a Happy Emancipation. While we have witnessed the 1st of August Emancipation celebration passing a few days ago, we are still in that period of celebrating it and the freedoms that all peoples have enjoyed because of this occasion”.

2. Death of a Family Member of a Member of Parliament

“Honourable Members, while we take time to celebrate and reflect, since the last Sitting, it has been a very sad period for the staff of the National Assembly with the passing of many persons. First, let me acknowledge the passing of the wife of the Registrar of Births and Deaths, Mr. Raymon Cummings. She was the sister-in-law of the Hon. Bishop Juan Edghill, M.P., Minister of Public Works. We extend our condolences to Hon. Bishop Juan Edghill, M.P., Minister of Public Works and Mr. Raymon Cummings”.

3. Death of a Family Member of a Member of Staff of the Parliament Office

“Honourable Members, on 26th June, there was an unfortunate explosion on the East Bank of Demerara. In that explosion, the husband of my dear Confidential Secretary, Ms. Jaitun Haniff, died. We extend our condolences to Ms. Jaitun Haniff. Ms. Haniff has also asked me to express her thanks and appreciation to all of you who would have visited, called, and expressed your sympathies to her and her family, including the Honourable

6.

Member and former Speaker Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.”.

4. Death of a Parliament Office Staff Member

“Honourable Members, as if our woes continue, this morning one of our very kind, loved, young member of the parliamentary staff, Mr. Brandon Persaud, passed away. Those of you would have seen Mr. Persaud from the Information Technology (IT) Department, know he was a very small built young man. He was very young, and he is no longer with us. On behalf of you, my family and I, extend condolences to Mr. Brandon Persaud’s parents who are from Grove on the East Bank of Demerara. Thank you very much”.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES-

By the Speaker of the National Assembly (Chairperson of the Committee of Selection):

Minutes of Proceedings of the 4th Meeting of the Committee of Selection held on 14th June, 2021.

(Circulated)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Replies

1. UPGRADE AND CLOSURE OF DUMPSITES

Member Asking: Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

1. Can the Hon. Minister specify the cost attached to the closure of Dakoura Dumpsite, Linden, and what type of work will be done for the closure?
2. Can the Hon. Minister specify the cost attached for the upgrade of sites at Rose Hall, Port Kaituma, Belle Vue, Lethem, Lima, Charity, Lusignan and D’ Edward?
3. Can the Hon. Minister say why Dakoura, Linden, is being closed and which dumpsite or landfill site will be used in the absence of Dakoura?

7.

4. Can the Hon. Minister say what is the Government's policy on landfill sites?

(Notice Paper No. 82 (Q57 Opp.57) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. "Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
3. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
4. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly".

2. **GEORGETOWN ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME**

Member Asking: Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development
For Budget 2021, Georgetown Enhancement Programme a sum of \$100.719M was approved.
Can the Hon. Minister say how much will be allocated to City Hall and what are the works expected to be done with the sum allocated? Will the Mayor and City Council spearhead the work, or the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development?

(Notice Paper No. 83 (Q58 Opp.58) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWER

1. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.

3. **COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT WORKERS (CEWs)**

Member Asking: Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

1. Reference to Community Enhancement Workers (CEWs), can the Hon. Minister say what is the salary of a CEW?
2. Reference to the 70 NDCs and 10 Municipalities, can the Hon. Minister provide a list of the number of CEWs for each Local Authority Area?

(Notice Paper No. 84 (Q59 Opp.59) published on 2021-03-30)

8.

ANSWERS

1. “Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly”.

4. **STAFFING DETAILS IN REGION #3**

Member Asking: **Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.**

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

1. Can the Hon. Minister provide a list of the designations of office bearers that are currently acting in higher offices?
2. Can the Hon. Minister state the designations of the higher offices that are currently being occupied by acting appointments and the remuneration packages for all acting appointments for all Programmes in Budget Agency 73 – Region 3: Essequibo Islands – West Demerara?
3. Can the Hon. Minister say why is Region 3 rehiring retirees?
4. Can the Hon. Minister provide a list of the designations of officers that are rehired retirees?

(Notice Paper No. 86 (Q61 Opp.61) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. “Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
3. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
4. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly”.

9.

5. MAINTENANCE OF ROADS, BRIDGES, DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Member Asking: Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

1. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 733 – Public Works, Can the Hon. Minister provide a detailed breakdown of Line Items 6251 – Maintenance of Roads, 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges and 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure?
2. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 732 – Agriculture, Can the Hon. Minister provide a detailed breakdown of Line Items 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges, 6253 – Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works and 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure?
3. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 734 – Education Delivery, Can the Hon. Minister provide a detailed breakdown of Line Items 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges, and 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure?
4. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 735 – Health Services, Can the Hon. Minister provide a detailed breakdown of Line Items 6251 – Maintenance of Roads, 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges, and 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure?

(Notice Paper No. 87 (Q62 Opp.62) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. “Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
3. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
4. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly”.

6. INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS AND CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSING UNITS

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

It has been reported via an online report by the Department of Public Information, dated March 16, 2021, "the Central Housing and Planning Authority' has awarded some \$13.9 Billion in contracts to start infrastructural works and construction of Housing Units in Regions 3, 4, 5 and six.

(A) Can the Honourable Minister indicate when Infrastructural works are expected to commence?

(B) Can the Honourable Minister provide the following information:

- a. Number of Units to be constructed in Region 3?
- b. Number of Units to be constructed in Region 4?
- c. Number of Units to be constructed in Region 5?
- d. Number of Units to be constructed in Region 6?

(C) Can the Honourable Minister state where in the above listed regions Units are to be constructed?

(D) Can the Honourable Minister state what it will cost the Government of Guyana to construct each Unit within each Region?

(Notice Paper No. 100 (Q74 Opp.74) published on 2021-04-12)

11.

ANSWERS

(A) “In April 2021.

(B) &(C)

REGION	NO. OF UNITS	AREA
3	500	Edinburg, Anna Catherina, Stewartville, Meten-Meer-Zorg
4	5,000	Grove, Great Diamond, Little Diamond, Prospect, Providence, Cummings Lodge & La Bonne Intention
6	500	Hampshire, Ordinance Fortlands & Williamsburg

(D)Low Income – \$5,200,000

Middle Income – \$7,200,000

Middle – High Income - \$13,000,000 to \$18,000,000”.

7. BENEFICIARIES OF THE HOUSING UNITS

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

It has been reported via an online report by the Department of Public Information, dated March 16, 2021, "the Central Housing and Planning Authority' has awarded some \$13.9 Billion in contracts to start infrastructural works and construction of Housing Units in Regions 3, 4, 5 and 6.

(A) Can the Honourable Minister provide a breakdown in the categories of allottees, who are expected to be beneficiaries from the construction of Housing Units, for example, Low Income, Middle Income, etc?

(B) What is the expected cost or final cost beneficiaries will pay for each category of the Housing Units?

(Notice Paper No. 101 (Q75 Opp.75) published on 2021-04-12)

12.

ANSWERS

(A) Beneficiaries from the construction of Housing Units, are Low Income, Moderate Income, Middle Income and High Income earners.

(B) The expected cost or the final cost beneficiaries will pay for each category of the Housing Units inclusive of land are:

Low Income – \$5,500,000

Middle Income – \$7,500,000

Middle – High Income - \$14,000,000 to \$19,500,000”.

8. 199 CONTRACTS AWARDED

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

In an online article carried by the Department of Public Information dated March 16, 2021, “the Central Housing and Planning Authority stated that some 199 contracts were awarded today at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre in keeping with the Government’s plan to deliver 10,000 house lots every year for the next five years”.

(A) Can the Honourable Minister state what method of procurement was used for procuring contractors?

(B) If by Public Tender, kindly provide copies of advertisements.

(C) Can the Honourable Minister provide a detailed list of the fifty-nine (59) contractors, brief profile inclusive of the year of establishment and the number of projects awarded to each contractor?

(D) Can the Honourable Minister indicate whether due diligence was done on the contracting entities?

13.

(E) From the 199 contracts awarded, can the Honourable Minister provide a disaggregation in works between infrastructure and the Housing Units, and the list of contractors that were awarded contracts for the construction of the Housing Units as against those who were awarded contracts for Infrastructural Development?

(F) Can the Honourable Minister indicate what is the contract period for the construction of the Housing Units?

(Notice Paper No. 102 (Q76 Opp.76) published on 2021-04-13)

ANSWERS

(A) “A National Competitive Building Process by public tender.

(B) These are available in the newspaper archives, available online.

(C) This is not within the responsibility of my sector. The Ministry does not do the evaluation of the tenders: this is within the mandate of the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB).

(D) This is a function of the NPTAB.

(E) This information is available in the daily e.g. Stabroek News dated March 20, 2021.

(F) Duration for the completion per unit is 6-8 months.

9. HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN GUYANA

Member Asking: Ms. Natasha Singh-Lewis, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Human Services and Social Security

1. Can the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly how many cases of Human Trafficking were investigated during the period August, 2020 to April, 2021? Can the Honourable Minister present this information as per Administrative Region?

2. Can the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly how many persons involved in Human Trafficking were prosecuted during the period August, 2020 to April, 2021? Can the Honourable Minister present this information as per Administrative Region?

14.

3. During the period August, 2020 to April 2021, can the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly how many cases of Human Trafficking reported were that of children? Can the Honourable Minister present this information as per Administrative Region?

4. Can the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly how many shelters across Guyana are active and operational for victims of Human Trafficking? Can the Honourable Minister present this information as per Administrative Region?

5. Can the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly how many staff are assigned responsibilities for the Human Trafficking operations across the Country?

(Notice Paper No. 108 (Q82 Opp.82) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWERS

1. “Statistical data was sourced from the Guyana Police Force. During the reporting period August 2020 to April 2021 a total number of twenty-eight (28) reports of suspected human trafficking were investigated by the Guyana Police Force. Please see table below:

<i>2020</i>											
Regions	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	Totals
August	-	-	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	4
September	-	-		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
October	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
November	-	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
December	-	-		-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>2021</i>											
January	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
February	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
March	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	3
April	-	-	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	1	5
Total											28

*Statistical information received from the Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Guyana Police Force.

15.

2. A number of factors contributed to the number represented in the table below:

- Lockdown and COVID-19 regulations which restricted the entertainment industry.
- Suspended raid operations by the GPF in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Alleged/suspended victims' unwillingness to cooperate with law enforcement.
- It is important to note, that some court trials were heard via the Zoom platform during the reporting period, August 2020 to April 2021.

During the period August 2020 to April 2021 a number of eight (8) cases of human trafficking were prosecuted in the Magistrates Court. Please see table below:

<i>2020</i>												
<i>Regions</i>	<i>#1</i>	<i>#2</i>	<i>#3</i>	<i>#4</i>	<i>#5</i>	<i>#6</i>	<i>#7</i>	<i>#8</i>	<i>#9</i>	<i>#10</i>	<i>Totals</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
August	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>1</i>	
September	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
October	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
November	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
December	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>2</i>	Matter rolled over from 2019
<i>2021</i>												
<i>Regions</i>	<i>#1</i>	<i>#2</i>	<i>#3</i>	<i>#4</i>	<i>#5</i>	<i>#6</i>	<i>#7</i>	<i>#8</i>	<i>#9</i>	<i>#10</i>	<i>Totals</i>	
January	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>1</i>	
February	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
March	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
April	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	<i>4</i>	
<i>Total</i>											<i>8</i>	

*Statistical information received from the Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Guyana Police Force and the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit.

3. A total of eight (8) suspected human trafficking cases involving twelve (12) children were reported to the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security's Trafficking in Persons Unit for the period August 2020 to April 2021. The cases by person are listed per Administrative Region:

<i>2020</i>												
Regions	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	Totals	Status
August												
September				1							1	Confirmed TIP Matter Being Prosecuted
October												
November		2									2	Under investigation
December												
<i>2021</i>												
January	1										1	Not TIP
February	3										3	Not TIP
March		2				1				2	5	Regions 2 & 10 confirmed TIP – matter being prosecuted Region 6 & 7 under investigation
April												
Total											12	

*Statistical information received from the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit.

4. There are five active and operational shelters across Guyana that caters to the needs of victims of human trafficking. These shelters are located in the following Regions:
 - Region #2 – One (1) Shelter
 - Region #4 – Three (3) Shelters
 - Region #10 – One (1) Shelter

5. There are currently four (4) full-time staff employed within the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security's Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit who are directly responsible for human trafficking operations across Guyana. The Ministry is actively engaged in the process of expanding the staffing of the Unit in a bid to improve its capacity when responding to human trafficking across Guyana.

17.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has one (1) staff assigned to the Secretariat of the Ministerial Task Force. Importantly there are fifteen members of the Task Force who are trained in the area of TIP.

The Guyana Police Force has three (3) ranks assigned to its Trafficking in Persons Unit.”

10. SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Member Asking: Dr. Nicolette Henry, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

Can the Honourable Minister inform the House what mechanisms, if any, have been put in place for the academic year 2020-2021 for children with special education needs to benefit from remote learning during the pandemic?

(Notice Paper No. 109 (Q83 Opp.83) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWER

“During the period of the pandemic the Special Education Needs (SEN) Unit resorted to measures to sustain and advance student education within the home setting. The Special Education Needs Unit during September 2020 - June 2021 has worked directly with schools and teachers in the Regions where (SEN) Officers are stationed.

Mechanisms put in place September 2020 – June 2021:

- SEN Alternative Arrangements/Homeschooling
- Procurement of Assistive Devices (33.4% of SEN children have tablets)
- Procurement of Software for Tablets (e.g. kids connect the dots, Tablet talk, Kids basic opposites, Everyday sight, memory matching game, Swiped, Kids shapes, Speak-tionary)
- Parent education sessions on strategies for helping children with disabilities and coping with homeschooling during the pandemic (seven (7) sessions hosted)

18.

- Sign Language training for teachers, parents, families of children who are deaf (seventy (70) persons benefitted)
- Home visits to deliver learning packages and encourage students who were not engaged in region 3, 4, 5, 6 and Georgetown.

SEN Officers were assigned Special Schools along with the following responsibilities:

- Monitor the homeschooling arrangement and provide weekly updates to the NSENO.
- Participate in weekly virtual SEN meetings to provide information on the homeschooling practices – Tuesdays at 10am.
- Support and guide teachers in facilitating the teaching learning processes.
- Facilitate monthly Professional Development sessions for teachers of schools to which they are assigned.
- Provide weekly updates of homeschooling data (teachers and students engaged).
- Prepare and disseminate learning packages for students not virtually engaged.
- Review, approve and assist with worksheets prepared by teachers.

Structure of Homeschooling process for SEN schools 2020 - 2021:

Time	Days	Activities
09:00 - 12:00	Monday to Wednesday	Virtual teaching learning processes
		Completing learning packages Monitoring Home schooling
13:00	Tuesday	SEN Officers Virtual Meeting
09:00 – 15:00	Thursday	Planning
		Printing and Distributing Learning Packages NSENO Report
10:00	Friday	Feedback session with teachers Professional Development Sessions Sign Language Training SEN Head Teachers Meeting

Methodology employed in SEN Alternative Arrangements/Homeschooling:

- Utilizing the following platforms: Zoom, Facebook Rooms, WhatsApp

19.

- Short videos created by Teachers
- Programmes on Guyana Learning Channel
- Sign Language Sessions for Teachers, families, and the Public
- Evening parent meetings and information sessions

In addition, some students of Special Schools were provided with assistive devices (tablets) procured by the SEN Unit and donated by the United Women for Special Needs Children and other departments and agencies. The devices are used to support the homeschooling activities”.

11. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS/PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Member Asking: Dr. Nicolette Henry, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

Can the Honourable Minister inform the House of the number and percentage of students/pupils with special education needs that were engaged during the current academic year for a minimum of 50% of the time to date? Please disaggregate by gender, region, and level of schooling?

(Notice Paper No. 110 (Q84 Opp.84) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWER

“The Minister made clear at the very beginning of her tenure that as far as we could, given the limitations extant, including the worldwide unavailability of devices, internet connectivity at the local level, training in usage of same and the absence of any policy guidance left by the member asking the question, that the Ministry of Education must engage as many of the country’s learners for as many hours as possible during school closure. The table below reflect the effect of that policy and consequential financial and other support.

	School	Total Enrollment		Total Consistently Engaged		Percentage Engaged		Level of Schooling					
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys %	Girls %	Nursery		Primary		Secondary	
								Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
3	Schoonord Learning Centre for Diverse Needs	21	20	14	18	67	90	5	1	11	12	5	7
4	Diamond Special School	37	29	14	10	38	34	-	-	37	29	-	-
	B/V Special School	23	15	19	12	83	80	4	7	13	3	6	5
5	No. 8 Special Class	17	6	16	5	94	83	2	1	15	5		
6	New Amsterdam Special School	36	11	17	6	47	55	5	1	31	10	-	-
7	Bartica Special School	11	12	6	2	55	17	1	2	3	4	7	6
10	Resource Unit for the Blind	25	13	25	13	100	100	9	3	9	5	7	5
	Linden Special Needs School	15	6	9	6	60	100	-	-	11	2	4	4
Georgetown	Resource Unit for the Blind	2	8	2	8	100	100	-	1	-	3	2	4
	Harold B Davis	28	22	28	22	100	100	-	-	28	22		

St. Barnabas	30	14	20	14	67	100	-	-	-	-	30	14
Sophia Special School	74	31	28	15	38	48	-	-	-	-	74	31
David Rose Special School	77	44	50	40	65	91	15	7	43	33	19	4
TOTAL	13	396	231	248	171		41	23	201	128	154	80
%		63%	37%	62%	74%		10%	10%	51%	55%	39%	35%
TOTAL		627		%			64 - 10%		329 - 52%		234 - 37%	

Note: Fluctuations between September to date, in the current enrollment at schools are as a result of:

- New admission of learners
- Learners have transitioned to developing manual skills with The Open Doors Centre
- Learners have completed the secondary level and are of age and ready to enter the world of work.

12. ELIMINATION OF THE NATIONAL GRADE SIX AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

Member Asking: Dr. Nicolette Henry, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

Can the Honourable Minister inform the House what are the reasons for exploring the possibility of eliminating the National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA)?

(Notice Paper No. 111 (Q85 Opp.85) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWER

“The question is premised on a misunderstanding of what is actually being explored. To be clear, any policy that is promulgated or that is explored would be grounded in doing what is in the best interest of the children said policy seeks to serve. The Ministry is currently examining how to make sure students get a high-quality education regardless of which high school they attend. NGSAs play a part in how children are placed in high school, at this point, and would necessarily be under any review that addresses movement from primary to high school”.

13. BUDGET 2020 ALLOCATION OF \$70,781,000 FOR REGION #5, MAHAICA-BERBICE

Member Asking: **Mr. Vinceroy Jordan, M.P.**

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

“Budget 2020 provided an allocation of \$70,781,000 for the provision of health facilities, security hut, oxygen supply system, incinerators, and checkpoints for Region #5, Mahaica-Berbice. With specific reference to the construction and installation of incinerators at Fort Wellington and Mahaicony Hospitals”.

Could the Honorable Minister provide the answer to the following questions:

- (a) The total contract sum spent on the projects mentioned above?
- (b) When were the contracts awarded?
- (c) Date of completion for both projects?
- (d) The source and make of both incinerators?

(Notice Paper No. 112 (Q86 Opp.86) published on 2021-06-07)

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ANSWERS

- (a) “Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
- (b) Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
- (c) Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
- (d) Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly”.

14. CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES IN REGION #5, MAHAICA-BERBICE

Member Asking: **Mr. Vinceroy Jordan, M.P.**

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

1. Can the Honorable Minister of Local Government and Regional Development with oversight responsibility for Mahaica-Berbice, Region #5, inform this Assembly of the total number of persons who were fifty-five (55) years of age and older working on contract as at August, 2020 to January, 2021, and how many of those contracts were terminated or not renewed, the designations of the staff, their salaries and dates of contractual agreements (start and end)?

2. Can the Honourable Minister state how many workers fifty-five (55) years and older were employed on contract as at August, 2020 to January, 2021, the designations of the staff, the salaries and the dates for contractual agreements (start and end)?

(Notice Paper No. 113 (Q87 Opp.87) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWERS

1. “Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.”

15. BUDGET 2021 ALLOCATION OF \$170,500,000 FOR MAHAICA/MAHAICONY/ABARY

Member Asking: Mr. Vinceroy Jordan, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Agriculture

“Budget 2021 provided an allocation of \$170,500,000 for the provision of drainage and irrigation structures, dams and equipment for Mahaica/Mahaicony/Abary. The Honourable Minister in his Budget presentation detailed that all communities would benefit from the allocation”.

Can the Honourable Minister provide the following:

- (a) A list of all dams listed to be constructed or maintained?
- (b) The drainage and irrigation structures to be constructed or repaired?
- (c) The areas where new drainage pumps will be installed?

(Notice Paper No. 114 (Q88 Opp.88) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWERS

- a) “The dams are currently being constructed/heighted and maintained (Work in Progress)
 - Abary flood embankment – between AD 22 and 52 No. Acres dairy plots – 3 miles long.
 - Main Canal Embankment – Along the Main Canal from Main Canal Head Regulator – 4 miles long.
 - Construction of Secondary drain within the 5000 acres – Between Main Canal and Abary River – 6 miles.
 - Conservancy dam – Heighted on the Left and Right Bank of the Abary Conservancy Dam – 3 miles long.

- b) Contracts awarded for the structures to be constructed or repaired are as follows:
 - Constructions of the Bridge across Yankee Canal, Mahaica.
 - Construction of the Bridge across Basket Plimper Drain and Strath Campbell.

25.

- Construction of Check Structure across Burma Main Drain.
(Contractor (s) are mobilizing to commence work)

c) There is no pump for installation:

The other items that made up the 170.5 million are:

- Procurement of two (2) excavators. *(Contract Awarded, will be delivered by the end of July 2021)*
- Procurement of one (1) drone. **(At National Procurement and Tender Administration Board)**

16. GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 VACCINES

Member Asking: **Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of Health**

- A. Can the Honourable Minister inform the Assembly if the Ministry of Health procured adequate vaccines to be given to the citizens of Guyana as efforts are being made to contain this SARS-COV2 Virus and achieve herd immunity?
- B. Can the Honourable Minister state what were some of the factors that influenced him to purchase Astrazeneca, Sputnik V, and Sinopharm in preference to Pfizer or Moderna for the Nation's citizens?
- C. Could the Honourable Minister also inform this Noble Assembly how much money has been spent to purchase COVID-19 vaccines so far?
- D. Honourable Minister of Health, since the Johnson and Johnson (J&J) single dose vaccine can be kept for three months at temperatures between 2 to 8 degrees Celsius and has a long shelf life of two years, is there any storage facility in the Ministry of Health or in the Administrative Regions that can accommodate the storage of the J & J vaccine at the optimal temperature of minus 20 degrees Celsius?

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- E. In light of the COVID-19 deaths, can the Minister of Health explain to this National Assembly if the Ministry of Health is equipped to perform a quick response to vaccine safety signals or to engage in vaccine pharmacovigilance to identify the rare instances where real adverse reactions occur so that their effects can be diminished?
- F. Could the Honourable Minister of Health inform this August Assembly if there is a Communication Strategy in place to address vaccine hesitancy in some areas of the populace, as well as to promote awareness of the vaccine risks and benefits?

(Notice Paper No. 115 (Q89 Opp.89) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWERS

- A. “The Ministry of Health has procured enough vaccines for all persons 18 years and over who live in Guyana. The Ministry is currently securing vaccines for persons between the ages of 12 to 18 years.
- B. The Ministry of Health did not purchase AstraZeneca vaccines. The AstraZeneca vaccines were donated by the Government of Barbados, India, the United Kingdom and COVAX. The factors influencing the Ministry of Health’s decision to purchase Sputnik V, SinoPharm and Janssen vaccines were:
- To ensure that every Guyanese adult can get access to a vaccine as quickly as possible.
 - Agreement with COVAX was for 20% of our population. COVAX had difficulty fulfilling this commitment because of the global shortage and funding difficulties. So far, that quota is not filled.
 - In the early part of the year, Moderna could not export the vaccine to other countries because of export restrictions and supply commitments to the US government. That is changing now.

27.

- Pfizer's had made bilateral commitments with more affluent countries, and doses from the company would only become available in 2022.
- The global shortage of vaccine raw materials that resulted in lower vaccine production.
- Increase domestic demand for vaccines as manufacturing countries experiences surges of cases due to new variants. This has led to countries stopping exports and fulfill domestic demand. This further compounded global shortages.
- While different prices for vaccines have been suggested, the true price is not known. Since countries were required to sign confidentiality agreement that prevents the disclosure of the price, governments have been outbidding each other to get access to the vaccines.
- Poorer countries had difficulties getting access to the vaccines.
- Poorer countries had difficulties getting vaccines on time.
- Many developing countries did not have the resources to buy the vaccines at company prices.

These factors have been contributed to vaccine inequity, where many of the richer countries have been able to vaccinate their population while poorer nations struggle to acquire vaccines. In this context, the Government of Guyana decided to buy vaccines so that every adult can be vaccinated expeditiously to reach the herd immunity.

- C. The Government of Guyana has spent approximately \$2.2 Billion Guyana Dollars on Vaccine purchase and logistics of getting the vaccines to Guyana.
- D. The JJ vaccine can be stored at -20 degrees Celsius for 24 months or at 2 degrees Celsius to 8 degrees Celsius for three months. The Ministry of Health can store at both temperature ranges.

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- E. There have been no deaths due to vaccination. Anaphylactic shock is an extremely rare event that occur. To prevent anaphylactic shock, persons who received a vaccine is observed for 15 minutes. If anaphylactic shock developed during this period, the nurses giving the vaccine could diagnose and treat it. So far, no person who has received a COVID-19 vaccine has had an anaphylactic reaction. The persons are also given a hotline number to call if they develop any problems over the next twenty-four hours. The Ministry of Health has a pharmacovigilance committee that monitors for rare adverse events. The national committee is obligated to report any adverse findings to regional and international pharmacovigilance bodies.
- F. The Ministry of Health has a community strategy that addresses vaccine hesitancy.”

17. PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Member Asking: **Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of Health**

Can the Honourable Minister inform the Assembly how the Government plans to inform the citizens on how to address mental health issues, stigma, and discrimination, and how the Government will leverage digital health technology to lend support to the delivery of primary health care?

(Notice Paper No. 117 (Q90 Opp.90) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWER

“The Government of Guyana is addressing citizens mental health issues through information education and communication programs, behavior modification programs, counselling, psychological and psychiatric services. The Ministry of Health’s clinical departments is capable of diagnosing and treating 22 major categories of mental health disorders, comprising more than 150 discrete illnesses as outline by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (DSM). The Ministry of Health has been working with several governmental, non-governmental and faith-based organizations to help reduce stigma and discrimination.

The Government of Guyana has leverage digital technology to improve healthcare at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Currently the Ministry of Health has been using:

- Cloud-based Picture Archiving Communication System (PACS) to share digital images from regional hospitals (New Amsterdam and Bartica) with the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporations (GPHC) for interpretation. A recently signed MOU with RAD AID would assist the Ministry of Health to expand this system.
- Telehealth – doctors in hinterland areas can consult cases with colleagues at the GHPC internal medicine departments.
- Clinical Webinars are held regularly to update healthcare workers. Examples of these include CME programs that are managed by the Medical Council, Southern Regional AHEC and others.
- Integrated Management of Childhood Illness software that is being deployed to improve surveillance of childhood illness.
- Ministry of Health and the Indian Technology Institute is currently engaged in discussions to deploy an electronic medical records system.
- Discussion is ongoing with the Government of India on the acquisition of the CoWin Software that would be used to digitalize COVID-19 vaccination records.

These are just some of the areas how digital technology is being used to improve health care at the primary level.”

18. CONTACT TRACING

Member Asking: **Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of Health**

Honourable Minister of Health, owing to there being in excess of 1500 members of the populace in home isolation, is robust contact tracing being done in the 10 Administrative Regions of Guyana, especially at the epicenter, Region #4 and at the other regional hot spots to identify persons who are at high risk of COVID-19 or who may have had the P1 variant?

(Notice Paper No. 118 (Q91 Opp.91) published on 2021-06-07)

ANSWER

“Persons who have tested positive for COVID-19, are usually interviewed to identify who they might have been in contact with over the past seven (7) days. Once these persons are identified they are contacted and informed that they might be at risk of COVID-19. Persons who have been exposed within the last seven (7) are asked to quarantine and have a PCR Test done on the 5th day to determine their COVID-19 status. If the person is tested positive, they are asked to isolate. If they develop symptoms such as dyspnea this might require hospitalization. In every region there is a team that does follow up of all patients that tested positive to identify their contacts and to alert those persons on the precautions to be taken.

The PCR test that is used identifies SARS COV 2, which is the pathogen that causes the COVID-19 disease. PCR cannot specifically identify the variants of concern (Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta) or the variants under investigation (Zeta, Eta, Theta, Kappa, Lambda, Epsilon and Lota). Contact Tracing is done for anyone who tested positive for COVID-19. To determine which variant has infected a person who tested positive for COVID-19 requires a gene sequence be done on the sample. The turnaround time for a gene sequence usually takes a long time which means it is inappropriate as a tool of contact tracing”.

19. **ILLEGAL MIGRANTS IN GUYANA**

Member Asking: Ms. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

In light of the continued influx of Venezuelans and other migrants into the country, can the Honourable Minister indicate what measures are being taken to efficiently and effectively control the flow of illegal migrants at a time of the COVID-19 pandemic?

(Notice Paper No. 121 (Q92 Opp.92) published on 2021-06-30)

ANSWER

“The National land borders are closed due to the COVID – 19 Pandemic, Illegal migrants are processed via the courts for illegal entry”.

20. **AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND FORMER UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE**

Member Asking: Ms. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

Following an agreement signed between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the former United States Secretary of State in September of 2020, on Joint Maritime and Air Patrols between Guyana and the United States to interdict drugs, can the Honourable Minister state whether any arrest and charges were made as a result of the patrols?

(Notice Paper No. 122 (Q93 Opp.93) published on 2021-06-30)

ANSWER

“This work is in progress and details will be provided in due course”.

21. **REPORTS OF CRIMES, MURDERS AND OTHER SERIOUS OFFENCES**

Member Asking: Ms. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

Given the recent reports of crimes, murders and other serious offences as published in the articles and on websites listed below “PRESS RELEASE: GCCI Statement on National Crime Situation – Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry” dated the 22nd April, 2021, “US Embassy warns of Georgetown’s situation after visitor robbed in parking lot published by News Source Guyana on the 24th May, 2020”, “Mattai’s owner stabbed during attempted robbery outside home” Guyana Chronicle dated the 19th April, 2021, “Eleven (11) years old boy shot dead in Sophia during robbery”, Demerara Waves dated the 11th March, 2021, “Businessman robbed twice in one day”, Kaieteur News 2nd June, 2021. Can the Honourable Minister state what steps are being taken to address and prevent such reoccurrences and explain the Government’s long term policy and plans to address the rising levels of crime within the country?

(Notice Paper No. 123 (Q94 Opp.94) published on 2021-06-30)

ANSWER

“The Government’s efforts to redress the grave crime fighting deficit it inherited from the past administration and has resulted in twenty-four (24) percent reduction in serious crimes year to date compared to 2020”.

22. ILLEGAL/ CONTRABAND ITEMS FOUND IN GUYANA’S PRISONS

Member Asking: Ms. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

Given reports published of several illegal and/or contraband items found within the Guyana Prisons and contained in the article and website listed below, among several other publications including : - (a) “Prohibited items found at Mazaruni Prison”, published in Stabroek News dated the 17th May 2021, (b) “Contraband found during Camp Street prison exercise”, Kaieteur News dated the 23rd January, 2021, “Ganja among contraband items found at Lusignan Prison”, published on the Inews website <https://www.inewsguyana.com/> dated the 5th January, 2021. Can the Honourable Minister indicate what steps are being taken to prevent such activities in the Guyana Prison system and explain the Government’s long-term policy to prevent such reoccurrences?

(Notice Paper No. 124 (Q95 Opp.95) published on 2021-06-30)

ANSWER

“The Ministry of Home Affairs has been vigorously requiring frequent Joint Services searches of the Prisons and both inmates and officers who are found culpable are further sentenced and dismissed respectively”.

23. PRISON ESCAPEES FROM GUYANA'S PRISONS

Member Asking: Ms. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

Given the recent published reports of several prison escapees from the Guyana Prison system contained in published articles and websites, listed below “Prisoner escapes from Lusignan jail during kitchen duties”, published on News Source Guyana (newssourcegy.com) dated 30th September, 2020, “Three more inmates escape from Lusignan Prison – use bedsheets to get over fence”, published in the Stabroek News dated the 22nd November, 2020, “Four escaped from Mazaruni Prison”, published in Stabroek News dated the 16th February, 2021. Can the Honourable Minister indicate what steps are being taken to prevent such reoccurrences at the Prisons in Guyana and additionally explain the Government’s long-term policy to address the situation?

(Notice Paper No. 125 (Q96 Opp.96) published on 2021-06-30)

ANSWER

“The Ministry of Home Affairs is undertaking: the completion of new, modified prison units at Mazaruni, the construction of a New Prison at Lusignan and the construction of a New Prison in Berbice. For physical security camera surveillance, and better integrity training, selection and management of prison officers are being pursued”.

For Oral Replies

CONVERSION OF QUESTIONS

Hon. Annette Ferguson, M.P., in accordance with **Standing Order No. 19(4)**, requested that the following questions to the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Minister of Housing and Water for Oral Replies be converted to questions for Written Replies:

***24. DOMESTIC COMPONENT OF BORROWING IN BUDGET 2020**

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Senior Minister in the Office of the President with
Responsibility for Finance

1. Can the Honourable Minister provide a detailed breakdown of the amount, by source, of the domestic component of the borrowing that was projected in Budget 2020?
2. With respect to (1), can the Honourable Minister provide the latest estimate of the amount, by source, for year ended December 31, 2020?

(Notice Paper No. 81 (Q56 Opp.56) published on 2021-03-30)

***25. FUNDING FOR THE AWARD OF CONTRACTS**

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

Budget 2021 has an appropriated sum of \$6B under "Capital Expenditure" for Infrastructural Development and Buildings, (**Budget Estimate Volume 3, profile 225**). The sum of \$1,254,187B under "Current Expenditure" for "Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organizations" to Central Housing and Planning Authority for Housing Development and Management (**Budget Estimate Volume 1, page 599**).

In an online reporting by the Department of Public Information, dated March 16, 2021, "\$13.9B in contracts was signed for housing development."

*Can the Honourable Minister state where the shortfall of \$7.9B was funded from for the awarding of some \$13.9B in contracts to commence infrastructural works and construction of housing units in Regions 3, 4, 5 and 6, respectively?

(Notice Paper No. 99 (Q73 Opp.73) published on 2021-04-12)

CONVERSION OF QUESTIONS

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P., in accordance with **Standing Order No. 19(4)**, requested that the following questions to the Minister of Education and Minister of Home Affairs for Oral Replies be converted to questions for Written Replies:

***26. DIRECT SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS IN REGIONS #1-10**

Member Asking: Mr. Jermaine Figueira, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

(A)*Can the Honourable Minister inform the House what direct support (free data, devices, electricity cost, allowances, or training, etc.) was given to Teachers delivering online classes from their homes over the last two terms in Regions (1-10) for nursery, primary and secondary schools?

(B)*Please state whether anywhere in Budgets 2020 and 2021 addressed direct support for Teachers who delivered online classes from their homes using their personal computers, data, and electricity, given that both Budgets were delivered amidst the COVID-19 pandemic?

(Notice Paper No. 97 (Q71 Opp.71) published on 2021-04-12)

***27. ABSENTEES FROM VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL CLASSES IN REGIONS #1-10**

Member Asking: Mr. Jermaine Figueira, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

(A)*Can the Honourable Minister inform the House how many students (number & percentage) by gender in Regions (1-10) did not attend online classes but were required to, over the last two terms for nursery, primary and secondary schools?

(B)*Can the Honourable Minister further inform the House how many students (number & percentage) by gender in Regions (1-10) did not attend face to face classes but were required to, over the last two terms, for primary and secondary schools?

(Notice Paper No. 98 (Q72 Opp.72) published on 2021-04-12)

*28. **NUMBER OF REPORTS OF MISSING CITIZENS**

Member Asking: Mr. Jermaine Figueira, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

(A) *For the period 1st August 2020 to 12th April 2021, can the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly how many reports of citizens going missing were dealt with by the Guyana Police Force?

(B) *For the period 1st May 2015 to 12th January 2016, can the Honourable Minister also inform the National Assembly how many reports of citizens going missing were dealt with by the Guyana Police Force?

(C) *Can the Honourable Minister further inform the National Assembly by Region, the number of citizens in A & B above (state separately) that were discovered dead? Please state their names.

(Notice Paper No. 103 (Q77 Opp.77) published on 2021-05-06)

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS, INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS-

1. Emancipation Day Greetings

The Prime Minister made a statement in Honour of Emancipation Day.

2. First Anniversary of the Swearing in of His Excellency Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip made a statement re. First Anniversary of the swearing in of His Excellency Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS-

Post Emancipation Greetings

The Leader of the Opposition joined the Prime Minister in extending Emancipation Greetings and spoke briefly on the history of Emancipation.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-

Introduction and First Reading

PETROLEUM (EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021

Bill No. 14/2021

The Minister of Natural Resources, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS – Second Readings

ITEM 1 - ADOPTION OF CHILDREN (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 3/2021
published on 2021-02-11

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Adoption of Children Act.

(Read a first time on 2021-02-11)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Hon. Natasha Singh-Lewis, M.P.

Hon. Sonia Parag, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

Hon. Maureen Philadelphia, M.P.

Hon. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 12.58 p.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 2.20 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

The Assembly resumed the debate on the Bill.

The Hon. Nima Flue-Bess, M.P., also spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the Minister of Human Services and Social Security replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

In Committee

Clause 1 was passed as printed.

Clause 2

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security moved the following amendment:

By substituting for section 35C the following:

Central Authority “35C. For the purposes of discharging the duties imposed by the Convention, the Minister shall, by order, establish the Central Authority or designate an entity to carry out the functions of the Central Authority.”.

Clause 2 was then passed as amended.

Clauses 3 to 5 were passed as printed.

The Second Schedule was passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Human Services and Social Security, the Adoption of Children (Amendment) Bill 2021 was read a third time and passed as amended.

ITEM 2 - REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 10/2021 published on 2021-06-07

The Minister of Home Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Registration of Births and Deaths Act.

(Read a first time on 2021-06-10)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Hon. Amanza Walton-Desir, M.P.

Hon. Alister Charlie, M.P.

Presiding by Hon. Lenox Shuman, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

At 3.41 p.m., while Hon. Alister Charlie, M.P., was speaking to the motion, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Lenox Shuman, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly took the Chair.

Hon. Alister Charlie, M.P., continued and concluded his speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip

Speaker's Return to the Chamber

At 4.22 p.m. while Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip was speaking to the motion, the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip continued and concluded her speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Hon. Deonarine Ramsaroop, M.P.

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 7 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill 2021 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.41 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to 10:00 a.m. on Monday, 9th August, 2021.

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HON. MANZOOR NADIR, M.P.,
Speaker of the National Assembly

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.

3rd, August 2021.