

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 85<sup>TH</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**  
**SESSION (2012-2014) OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 2.00 P.M.**  
**ON THURSDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2014**  
**IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,**  
**BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN.**

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)**

**Speaker (1)**

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

**MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (34)**

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

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

Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs (Absent – on leave)

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.

Hon. Dr. Bheri S. Ramsarran, M.P., Minister of Health (Absent – on leave)

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. Pauline Campbell-Sukhai, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs (Absent – on leave)

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.

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

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

Mr. Ganga Persaud, M.P.

**\*Non-Elected Minister**

3.

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

Mr. Odinga Lumumba, M.P.

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

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Members of the Opposition (33)**

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

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

Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, M.P.

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

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Deputy Speaker  
of the National Assembly

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

Dr. George Norton, M.P.

**\*\*Non-Elected Member**

4.

Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.

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

Mr. Ronald A. Bulkan, M.P.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

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

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

Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P.

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

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

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

Mr. Desmond Trotman, M.P.

Mr. James A. Bond, M.P.

Mr. Ernest Elliot, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

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

Mrs. Mabel Baveghems, M.P.

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

Mr. Christopher A. Jones, M.P.

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

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

Miss Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

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

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

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

Mrs. Catherine Hughes, M.P.

Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P.

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

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

Mr. Trevor Williams, M.P.

**OFFICERS**

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

Ms Hermina Gilgeours, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly (a.g.)

**COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING**

The Sitting commenced at 2.30 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk read the prayers.

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### **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**

The Speaker made the following announcements:-

#### **Soft Launch of Parliamentary Website, Livestreaming and handing over of Electronic Tablets**

“Hon. Members, I wish to apologise for the delay in the commencement of today’s Sitting. This was due to “soft launch”, as I think the phrase had been used earlier today, of our newly developed website along with the E-Streaming project and the handing over of a number of electronic tablets to Members as part of our E-Parliament project. On that note, I would just like to say that it may be noted by some that the Alliance For Change’s (AFC’s) Member did not receive a tablet, but that was an omission and that is being rectified even as I speak.”

#### **Leave**

“Hon. Members, excuses have been received and, therefore, leave has been granted to two Hon. Members; Hon. Dr. Bheri Ramsaran, M.P., Minister of Health and to Hon. Priya Manickchand, M.P., Minister of Education from today’s Sitting.”

#### **Attendance at Overseas Conferences by Members**

“Hon. Members, I wish to state as well, that over the next few weeks several Members of this House will be representing the Assembly at various Conferences abroad beginning with the Hon. Member, Bishop Juan A. Edghill who will attend the 25<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Annual Parliamentary Seminar in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from the 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2014.

Hon. Member, Mr. Ronald Bulkan will represent us at the 11<sup>th</sup> CPA Canadian Parliamentary Seminar in Ottawa, Canada, from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2014. Also, our Hon. Members, Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal and Mrs. Catherine Hughes will represent the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarian at a special meeting in Nassau, Bahamas, from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2014.

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Members, I have also issued a letter of invitation to the female Members of Parliament for us to have a meeting on Monday so that we can send our two delegates off in fine style and, hopefully, it will be the beginning of a process that leads to the formalised meeting or the formation of a women's caucus of the CWP of our Parliament.

A delegation is likely to represent the Parliament at the World Summit of Legislators in Mexico also in June of this year.”

### **Parliament to take up Membership in Several Organisations**

“Hon. Members, by agreement of the Parliamentary Management Committee (PMC) and the work done by the Government's Chief Whip, Ms. Gail Teixeira, and Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph Harmon, the Parliamentary Management Committee has decided that this Parliament will take up membership in several organisations, the first being the ParlAmericas, the second being the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the third being the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and the fourth being the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).”

### **Mentoring Programme**

“Hon. Members, sometime ago some Members of the House were invited to pair themselves with other Members in other parts of the Commonwealth as part of a mentoring programme. Some Members, we know, have been paired with others from CPA countries and are participating. Those Members we know to be are Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph Harmon, Mr. Joseph Hamilton, Mr. Desmond Hugh Trotman and Mrs. Catherine Hughes. Those Members are actively involved in the mentoring programme.”

### **Death of Mr. Basil Rodrigues**

“Hon. Members, some of you may have seen in today's newspapers that the nation and a Member of this House have lost a relative. We lost Mr. Basil Rodrigues of Moruka, of Region 1,

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and those who have travelled to Moruka would have been entertained from time to time by “Uncle Basil” on his little banjo and his Spanish songs. As we learn of the passing of the Hon. Member and I am told the brother of our own Hon. Minister Mrs. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkette, he was a teacher who has a fantastic love of music and people, well respected in his community, loved to entertain all, he was a recipient of two national awards; the Medal of Service and the Golden Arrow of Achievement. On behalf of all of us, we extend to the Hon. Minister, the Rodrigues family and all of Region 1, and Moruka, in particular, our sincerest condolences on his passing.”

**Visit by the Deputy High Commissioner of the British High Commission**

“Hon. Members, this afternoon in our presence we have visiting with us the Deputy High Commissioner (a.g.) of the British High Commission, Ms. Sarah Corscadden. We welcome you and be assured that our debates are as robust as the debates in the House of Commons. So welcome to Guyana and our Parliament.”

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-**

(1) By the Speaker of the National Assembly (Chairman of the Committee of Selection):

Minutes of Proceedings of the 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Selection held on Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2014.

(Circulated)

(2) By the Minister of Labour:

Annual Report of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee for the year 2012.

(Circulated)

(3) By the Minister of Finance:

(i) Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana Securities Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2013.

(Circulated)



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(ii) Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana Office for Investment for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2012.

(Circulated)

(iii) Audited Financial Statements of the Integrity Commission for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2012.

(Circulated)

(iv) Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana Energy Agency for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2010.

(Circulated)

(v) Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana Energy Agency for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011.

(Circulated)

(vi) Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana Energy Agency for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2012.

(Circulated)

#### **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES-**

(1) By Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P. (Chairperson of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Social Services):

Sixth Periodic Report of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Social Services for the period 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2012 to 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2014.

(Circulated)

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(2) By Dr. George Norton, M.P. (Chairman of the Committee on Appointments):

Second Report of the Committee on Appointments in relation to the Appointment of Members of the Public Service Commission.

(Circulated)

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-**

**For Written Replies**

1. **ESTABLISHMENT OF A LIBRARY AT THE MADHIA SCHOOL**

**DORMITORIES**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Education

Whereas the Madhia School Dormitories do not have a library, hence, students living in these facilities are denied the opportunity of reading for relaxation and enjoyment and for the expansion of their consciousness;

And whereas it is the duty of the State to create a good study environment for these students.

Could the Hon. Minister say if her Ministry has any plans of setting up a library in the Madhia School Dormitories anytime soon and, if so, how soon would that be?

**(Notice Paper No. 305 (Q 206 Opp. 203) published on 2014-03-20)**

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

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2. **CONSTRUCTION OF THE PARAMAKATOI PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. June Marcello, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Education

- (i) Could the Hon. Minister tell this House why construction of the Paramakatoi Primary School, Region 8, that started in April, 2012, has not been completed?
- (ii) Could the Hon. Minister tell this House when construction of the Paramakatoi Primary School would be completed?

**(Notice Paper No. 293 (Q 195 Opp. 193) published on 2014-02-13)**

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

3. **HIRING OF A STEEL BAND TUNER**

**Member Asking:** Mr. Christopher Jones, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

Could the Hon. Minister inform this House why a steel band tuner was contracted/hired by the Culture Department to tune up the state owned steel pan instruments?

- (i) How much was this individual paid and what are the other costs attached, if any, for travel and accommodations?
- (ii) Are there no tuners attached to the Ministry's Culture Department?

**(Notice Paper No. 309 (Q 209 Opp. 206) published on 2014-04-02)**

**Answers**

(i) “It is recommended by the musicians that chording and blending of the instruments be done periodically or especially when preparing for a major performance. Since the major steel band competition is in February of every year tuners are recruited to prepare the bands for competition. Over the years Ivan Chapman, Aubrey Bryan, Oliver Pross and Mario Joseph were engaged as tuners.

(ii) In 2013, Mr. Oliver Pross was recruited and he was paid-

- \$300,000 for chording the instruments for the orchestra’s participation in CARIFESTA XI;
- \$250,000 for chording the instruments for Independence Celebrations; and
- \$250,000 for chording and blending for the Mashramani Competition.

In 2014, Trinidadian Tuner Mario Joseph was engaged to chord and blend the instruments for the Mashramani Competition. He also did a professional tuners workshop for all local tuners. The resort to Mr. Joseph was the unavailability of the local tuners-

- \$260,000 for chording and blending of instruments;
- \$63,000 was spent on airfare; and
- \$37,000 was spent on accommodation

(iii) No”

4. **REPAIRS TO THE NURSING SCHOOL AT EAST STREET AND THE ANNEX TO KINGSTON NURSING HOME**

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

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Health

Could the Hon. Minister kindly indicate –

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- (i) Whether works have been completed on the Nursing School at East Street and the Annex to Kingston Nursing Home? If yes, the nature of works completed to date?
- (ii) If no, why and what is the timeline to complete works in both areas?
- (iii) Provide a breakdown and costing of works completed and the nature of works to be completed at both locations?

**(Notice Paper No. 310 (Q 210 Opp. 207) published on 2014-04-02)**

**Answers:**

See Appendix

**5. CENSOR BOARD**

**Member Asking:**

**Ms Annette Ferguson, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:**

**The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport**

Could the Hon. Minister explain:-

- (i) Whether the Censor Board is still in place?
- (ii) If yes, how effective is the system as it relates to the monitoring of music?
- (iii) If no, what has caused the delay in putting this body in place?
- (iv) Assuming that the censor body is not in place, when citizens need to ventilate an issue regarding local lyrics, to whom and where can they refer their complaints?

**(Notice Paper No. 311 (Q 211 Opp. 208) published on 2014-04-02)**

**Answers:**

- (i) “There is no censor Board in place at the moment. The former boards focused almost exclusively on films so with the disappearance of the cinema it was not deemed necessary to appoint a board in recent times.
- (ii) There is no system for official censoring of music at this time.
- (iii) The caution currently displayed results from the fact that we are dealing with creative licence. Capping of the thought processes is not desirable. Music is art and lyrics are a form of poetry. Censorship could be perceived as an attack on the right to free expression.

There is also a strong school of thought (lobby) that suggests that governments should not be allowed to censor the lyrics of violent or explicit songs, because of the possibility of selective implementation and enforcement.

At this stage I would be more inclined to go after the industry standard demanding that they put a warning on these songs and CDs letting parents know that there is explicit content on the CDs.

The BBC employs a pip to block out what is deemed inappropriate and perhaps local stations can be persuaded to do likewise.

If we are persuaded that there is a sufficient strong demand for censorship of local music we would be prepared to adopt any and all appropriate measures in response to strong public sentiments.

- (iv) The law of the land censures indecent, lewd and explicit language. The Broadcasting Authority is provisioned to treat with lewd and inappropriate language on the air.

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Additionally provisions in the Postal and Telegraph Act may also be equipped to censure language that is considered gross and unacceptable.”

**6. THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO WALTER RODNEY ASSASSINATION**

**Member Asking:**

**Ms Annette Ferguson, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:**

**The Minister in the Ministry of Finance**

In view of the provision of \$48 million dollars approved by the National Assembly, with respect to the Commission of Inquiry into Walter Rodney Assassination; could the Hon. Minister state:-

- (i) What constitutes Other under Account Code 6294?
- (ii) Give a breakdown what the \$31,400,000.00 was utilised for under Account Code 6249?
- (iii) The percentage of work completed as of to date for the designated area (Supreme Court) to facilitate the Commission of Inquiry into Walter Rodney assassination?
- (iv) Provide a breakdown of the nature of works completed and its costing?

**(Notice Paper No. 312 (Q 212 Opp. 209) published on 2014-04-02)**

**Answers:**

- (i) “Miscellaneous expenditure not captured under any other budget line.
- (ii) Unable to determine from question which Programme, Agency Code or Budget Year is being referred to.

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- (iii) The area utilized by the Walter Rodney COI is fully prepared and in use.
- (iv) A wall was erected for the registry and accommodation of the COI at a total cost of \$342,780.00.”

**7. BITUMEN PLANT OPERATIONS – TRANSPORT AND HARBOURS DEPARTMENT**

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

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Public Works

Could the Hon. Minister state:-

- (i) For what purpose(s) did the Transport and Harbours Department purchase Bitumen at a cost of \$65,616,830.00?
- (ii) Does the T&HD still operates the Bitumen Plant?
- (iii) If no, what has led to the cessation of the operation of the Bitumen Plant by T&HD?
- (iv) When did the cessation of the operation of the Bitumen Plant operation take place?
- (v) Under whose responsibility the Bitumen Plant falls?

**(Notice Paper No. 313 (Q 213 Opp. 210) published on 2014-04-02)**



**Answers:**

- (i) “The Transport and Harbours Department did not purchase bitumen. However, a total sum of \$65,616,830.00 as detailed below was paid by the Ministry of Public Works and six Contractors to this Department for supply of asphaltic concrete which the Department failed to honour:

Ministry of Public Works:	\$37,170,830
Six Contractors:	\$28,446,000

These amounts were subsequently refunded to the Ministry of Public Works and the Contractors.

- (ii) No.
- (iii) The lack of competent and experienced personnel within this Department to manage the Bitumen Plant.
- (iv) 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2013.
- (v) Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation from 1/8/2013 – this was a decision of the Cabinet.”

**8. CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR ENGINEERING DESIGNS AND SUPERVISION OF WORKS FOR THE PARIKA TO GOSHEN ROAD**

**Member Asking:**

**Lt. Col. (Ret’d) Joseph Harmon, M.S.M., M.P.**

**Minister Answering:**

**The Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment**

18.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2014, the following notice was published in the Guyana Chronicle Newspaper –

“Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC) requests for proposals: Consultancy services for engineering designs and supervision of works for the Parika to Goshen Road; Lot 1, Parika to Aliko, Lot 2”, Aliko to Itaka, Lot 3, Itaka to Goshen.”

Could the Hon. Minister state –

- (i) On what basis was it determined that GGMC should be the executing Agency for this proposed road (Parika to Goshen)?
- (ii) On what basis was this project determined to be a mining road, thus qualifying it for GGMC funding?
- (iii) What consultations, if any, have taken place with stakeholders in the mining sector to determine that this is a priority mining sector project, worthy of GGMC funding?
- (iv) What role, if any, has the Ministry of Public Works played in developing the technical scope of works for this project?
- (v) Has the Cabinet formally approved this project and its execution through the GGMC?

**(Notice Paper No. 314 (Q 214 Opp. 211) published on 2014-04-02)**

**Answers:**

- (i) “Mining is highly dependent on the availability of suitable infrastructure such as roads, bridges and landings to access resources. The design, execution and maintenance of

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hinterland roads have long been supported by the Ministry's regulatory agency, the Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC). With the fluctuations in gold prices, miners have been forced to find means of reducing cost. Under the Government's programme of support to miners, a number of initiatives have been explored with the relevant stakeholders. One of the measures is the reduction in transportation cost by exploring a more direct route into the main mining communities.

- (ii) Hinterland roads play a pivotal role in the mining sector. To ensure coordination of the Hinterland Road works, a Hinterland Infrastructural Committee (HIC) for mining areas was established since 2012 and is involved in reviewing and making recommendations for improving institutional arrangements for hinterland infrastructure management and development; reviewing and making recommendations for improving operational and procedural arrangements for the management and development of hinterland infrastructure and developing a national infrastructure plan with specific emphasis on forestry and mining.

The work on the conceptualisation and preparation of the various documents leading to the call for proposals was guided by the HIC. This project will undoubtedly enhance access for miners.

- (iii) It should be noted that the Hinterland Infrastructure Committee comprises a number of stakeholders: the Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association (GGDMA), Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC), Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) and the Ministry of Public Works (MPW).
- (iv) The Ministry of Public Works is involved in every aspect of this project through its representation on the HIC. Additional support is provided by the Ministry of Public Work's Works Service Group.

(v) The project has been discussed at the level of the Cabinet.”

9. **OVERSEAS TRIPS MADE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT AND DELEGATIONS**

**Member Asking:** Mr. Desmond Trotman, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

Would the Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs tell this House:-

- (i) The number of official overseas trips made by the President and delegations since taking office in 2011?
- (ii) The total dollar cost of each trip made by the President and delegations individually (destination, accommodation, transportation) since taking office in 2011?  
(Notice Paper No. 315 (Q 215 Opp. 212) published on 2014-04-07)

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

10. **BENEFITS GUYANA STANDS TO GAIN FROM OVERSEAS TRIPS UNDERTAKEN BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT AND DELEGATIONS**

**Member Asking:** Mr. Desmond Trotman, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

21.

Would the Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs tell this House:-

- (i) The immediate and medium term benefits to Guyana associated with each of the trips undertaken by the President and delegations since taking office in 2011 to February, 2014?
- (ii) What benefits Guyana stands to gain in 2014 from each of the overseas trips undertaken by the President and his Delegations in 2012?
- (iii) What benefits Guyana stands to gain in 2016 from each of the overseas visits made by the President and his Delegations in 2012 and 2013?

**(Notice Paper No. 316 (Q 216 Opp. 213) published on 2014-04-07)**

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

11. **BENEFITS FOR THE FORMER PRESIDENT, DR. BHARRAT JAGDEO**

**Member Asking:**

**Mr. Desmond Trotman, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:**

**The Minister of Finance**

Would the Minister of Finance tell this House:-

- (i) What is the electricity charge paid under the Act for former President, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, for each month since he demitted office in 2011 up to the end of February, 2014?

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- (ii) What is the total health expenses/claims met under the Act for former President, Bharrat Jagdeo and/or his dependents for each month since he demitted office in 2011 to 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2014?
- (iii) What is the cost of providing transportation (local and overseas) inclusive of cars and drivers, including air cost and road under the Act for former President, Bharrat Jagdeo and/or his dependents for each month since he demitted office in 2011 to 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2014?
- (iv) What is the monthly cost of providing security for personal and property(s) under the Act for former President, Bharrat Jagdeo since he demitted office in 2011 until 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2014?

**(Notice Paper No. 317 (Q 217 Opp. 214) published on 2014-04-07)**

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

## 12. LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN GUYANA

**Member Asking:**

**Mrs. Catherine Hughes, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:**

**The Minister of Finance**

- (i) Can the Hon. Minister say whether his Government or any of its Agencies compiles data on levels of unemployment in Guyana?
- (ii) Can the Hon. Minister provide the National Assembly with data showing the levels of unemployment in Guyana for each of the last ten years?

23.

- (iii) Can the Hon. Minister inform the National Assembly whether his Government's economic policies are aimed at reducing the levels of unemployment in Guyana, and if so, what data is used to assess the impact of those policies on the level of unemployment?

**(Notice Paper No. 318 (Q 218 Opp. 215) published on 2014-04-07)**

**Answers:**

- (i) "Data on the levels of unemployment is compiled by the relevant Agency with appropriate periodicity.
- (ii) The most recent available data on unemployment is in relation to 2006, in which year unemployment was measured at 10.7 percent.
- (iii) This Government's economic policies are aimed at creating jobs and reducing unemployment. Data used to assess the impact of these policies on the level of unemployment include macro statistics such as the overall unemployment rate in addition to sector-specific and project-specific data."

13. **2012 NATIONAL CENSUS**

**Member Asking:**

**Mrs. Catherine Hughes, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:**

**The Minister of Finance**

- (i) Can the Hon. Minister say when the results of the 2012 National Census will be released?
- (ii) Can the Hon. Minister also say whether or not his Ministry or any of its officers has been given access to any of the data from the 2012 National Census?

**(Notice Paper No. 319 (Q 219 Opp. 216) published on 2014-04-07)**

**Answers:**

- (i) “As stated in the 2014 Budget Speech, the Preliminary Report will be available by the end of the first half of 2014. For clarification, let me say that the Preliminary Report will contain inter alia the following information:
- a. The Preliminary Population Count, by Geographical Area
  - b. The Preliminary Population Count by Gender Distribution
  - c. The Population Count by Coastland/Hinterland Distribution
  - d. The Sex Ratio (Male/Female Ratio)
  - e. The Population Density by Region
  - f. The number of households and average household size by Region
  - g. The current building stock and number of dwelling units by Region
  - h. The number of business places by Region
  - i. The number of occupied, vacant and closed dwelling units by Region
  - j. Regional population growth rates

The more detailed analyses on such parameters as the age distribution of the population, ethnicity, educational levels, economic activities and labour force, migration patterns, fertility patterns (for females 14-54 years), marital/union status, quality-of-life indicators, internet access, to name a few, follow in the larger and final Report which is expected to be completed in December, 2015, and completion of all other diverse topics and analyses including Population projections to 2014 by December, 2016.

- (ii) The Bureau of Statistics is the sole custodian of the database generated from this Census and all previous Censuses. Data from a Census is only disseminated in summarized and aggregative formats (e.g. Total Population by Gender, by Region, etc.) as is required by law. The answer to this question therefore is an unequivocal no.”



14. **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPARATIONS COMMITTEE OF GUYANA**

**Member Asking:** **Ms Vanessa Kissoon, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:** **The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport**

- (i) Could the Hon. Minister inform this National Assembly when was the Reparations Committee of Guyana formed?
- (ii) What criteria were used to select the Members of the Guyana Reparations Committee?
- (iii) Could the Hon. Minister inform this House who are the Members of Guyana's Reparation Committee?
- (iv) Could the Hon. Minister tell this House what are the Terms of Reference/Role of the Reparations Committee of Guyana?
- (v) Could the Hon. Minister say what representations have been made to the Caricom Reparations Commission with respect to claims for Africans and Amerindians in Guyana?

**(Notice Paper No. 320 (Q 220 Opp. 217) published on 2014-04-14)**

**Answers:**

- (i) "In Guyana the case for reparations has never been a distant thought. It has been a central theme since the 1970's. Guyana's African Cultural and Development Association has for years requested that President Jagdeo add his voice to their reparations campaign, and for his government to sponsor a resolution in parliament, like Jamaica did, calling for reparation.

He subsequently responded in kind when in 2007 while addressing a commemorative ceremony for the bicentenary of the abolition of the transatlantic trade in captive Africans he denounced as mere lip service, recent comments from the metropole condemning slavery. He demanded more from them and therefore suggested that:

“Now that some members of the international community have recognised their active role in this despicable system, they need to go one step further and support reparation”

In 2011, President Jagdeo in launching the year of celebratory activities commemorating the International Year for People of African Descent restated his claim for reparations noting that:

“The international community was quick to recognise the Jewish holocaust, rightfully so. They must also now recognise that there was an African holocaust.”

This consistency was reflected in the tone of his successor when in 2013 in launching the UNESCO Slavery Museum in Guyana one of the many events on the year long programme to recognise the 250 anniversary of the great 1763 Berbice Slave Revolt President Donald Ramotar ordered the establishment of a National Reparation Committee to collaborate with regional bodies to advance the case for regional reparations.

The National Reparations Committee was formed in February, 2014.

- (ii) The Committee was conceptualised in October, 2013, using the Jamaican model that has been in place for 5 years and which has been recognised as being fairly well represented. The National Committee in its attempt to be inclusive as possible includes Pan African Groups, the Rastafarian Community; Historians; the Indigenous community; the Church; Youth; Gender Representatives; the Legal fraternity; an economist and social scientists.

(iii) Mr. Eric Phillips, Chairman

Professor Emeritus (Ret'd) Dr. Winston Mc Gowen, Vice Chairman

Ras Leon Saul, Guyana Rastafarian Council

Mr. Noah Yahsharun, Kingdom of the Manumitted Africans of Guyana

Mr. Dimitri Nicholson, Youth Challenge Guyana

Mr. Jonathan Adams, Linden

Mr. Royston Peters, Essequibo

Ms Jenny Daly, Curator, Museum of African Heritage

Mr. Eric Welcome, Berbice Reparations Committee

Mr. Deon Abrahams, Pan African Organisation, Guyana Branch

Ms Ethel Majorie McCaskey, Land Rights Activist

The University of Guyana Departments of History, Economics, Social Sciences/Law

Ministry of Amerindian Affairs

Ms Jean La Rose, Amerindian Peoples Association

(iv) The Terms of Reference of the National Reparations Committee include:-

To develop and implement a National Strategy to pursue Reparations, including the following actions:

- Undertake relevant historical research;
- Undertake legal research to inform case preparation and litigation strategies;
- Coordinate national public education campaigns;
- Coordinate and/or conduct national public consultations on Reparations;
- Develop and recommend diplomatic strategies to advance the case for Reparations in multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, African Union, CELAC and with other supportive governments;
- Identify and recommend the appointment of eminent spokes persons and champions for the cause of Reparations among artists, attorneys, scholars, indigenous peoples, Rastafarians, youth, women and politicians;

- Engage and partner with national and regional civil society organisations involved in the Reparations Movement, especially the Rastafarian and Pan Africanist formations of the Caribbean;
- Develop and recommend decisive political action at the national and regional levels through Parliamentary debates, Resolutions and popular mobilisation;
- Conduct consultations to develop proposals on appropriate forms of redress through reparative programmes and projects;
- Coordinate and/or undertake the preparation of a detailed brief on the cost of the damages and current manifestations of such damage on indigenous people and their descendants and on enslaved Africans and their descendants, in the following and other relevant areas:
  - (a) Economic (including land deprivation)
  - (b) Social, Cultural and Psychological
  - (c) Spiritual and Religious
  - (d) Demographic
  - (e) Medical
  - (f) Educational

Serve as a quick response mechanism to address negative publicity on Reparations that may arise in regional or international media, and develop a proactive media campaign to raise public awareness and canvas support.

- (v) The National Reparations Committee has made no formal representations to the CARICOM Reparations Commission. The Committee is expected to present the Guyana case for Reparations in June, 2014. The Committee is therefore currently engrossed in the preparation of the Guyana case with is to:
1. Create a detailed historial narrative of Indigenous genocide and African slavery.
  2. Link past discrimination to present day inequality.

3. Define and prove the nature of modern day inequality. And
4. Denote policies adopted by Europe to continue this process.”

**For Oral Reply**

15. **LINDEN ENTERPRISE NETWORK (LEN) BOARD**

Ms Vanessa Kisson, M.P., asked the Minister of Finance the following questions:

\* (i) What criteria were used to select the Members of the Linden Enterprise Network (LEN) Board?

\* (ii) Who were the persons responsible for this selection?

**(Notice Paper No. 321 (Q 221 Opp. 218) published on 2014-04-14)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Finance replied.

Ms Vanessa Kisson, M.P., asked the Minister of Finance supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Finance replied.

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS, INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS-**

**International Day for Families**

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security made a statement on the Observance of International Day for Families.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

(i) **GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS**

**BILLS – Second Readings**

**ITEM 1 - MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) BILL 2014 –  
Bill No. 4/2014 published on 2014-01-29**

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act.

**(Read a first time on 2014-02-10)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Basil Williams

Mr. Khemraj Ramjatta

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj

Mr. Winston Felix

Thereafter, the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs replied.

The Bill was a second time.

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

**In Committee**

**Clauses 1 to 8** were passed as printed.

**The Schedule** was passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill 2014 was read a third time and passed as printed.

**SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 4.07 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

**RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 5.26 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

**ITEM 2 - GUYANA CRICKET ADMINISTRATION BILL 2012 – Bill No. 31/2012**  
**published on 2012-12-20**

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport moved the second reading of the following Bill, which was referred to a Special Select Committee:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to make provisions for the incorporation of autonomous national cricket administrative organizations in Guyana and to provide for other matters connected therewith.

**(Read a first time and committed to the Special Select Committee on 2012-12-20)**

*Please note that the abovementioned Report was laid in the National Assembly on 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2013.*

Dr. Rupert Roopnarine spoke to the motion.

**Presiding by Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.**

At 6.09 p.m., the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Mr. Keith Scott, M.P., took the Chair.

Mr. Odinga Lumumba spoke to the motion.

**Return of Speaker**

At 6.15 p.m., the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport replied.

The Bill was read a second time.

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

**In Committee**

**Clauses 1 to 18** was passed as amended.

**The Schedules** was passed as amended.

**Assembly resumed**

On a motion by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, the Guyana Cricket Administration Bill 2012 was read a third time and passed as amended.

**SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 7.29 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.



**RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 8.14 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

(i) **PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**BILLS – Second Readings**

**ITEM 3 - THE MARRIED PERSONS (PROPERTY) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2013 –  
Bill No. 9 of 2013 published on 2013-06-14**

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., on behalf of Mrs. Deborah Backer (former Member), moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A Bill intituled AN ACT to amend the Married Persons (Property) Act.

**(Read a first time on 2013-06-13)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Bibi Shadick

Mr. Moses Nagamootoo

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Thereafter, Mrs. Volda Lawrence replied.

The Bill was read a second time.

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

**In Committee**

**Clauses 1 and 2** were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by Mrs. Volda Lawrence, the Married Persons (Property) (Amendment) Bill 2013 was read a third time and passed as printed.

**ITEM 4 - BROADCASTING (AMENDMENT) BILL 2013 – Bill No. 19/2013 published on 2014-02-28**

At the request of Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph Harmon, M.S.M., M.P., the second reading of the following Bill was deferred:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Broadcasting Act.

**(Read a first time on 2014-02-28)**

**MOTION**

**ITEM 5 - BERBICE RIVER BRIDGE**

Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph Harmon, M.S.M., M.P. moved the following motion:

WHEREAS the Berbice Bridge was built with significant investment by the Government of Guyana on behalf of the People of Guyana;

AND WHEREAS the Berbice Bridge is owned and operated by the Berbice Bridge Company Inc (BBCI), a company incorporated under the provisions of the Companies Act No. 29 of 1991 of the Laws of Guyana;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana through National Industrial & Commercial Investments Ltd (NICIL) is a preferential shareholder and a member of the Board of Directors of the Berbice Bridge Company Inc.;

AND WHEREAS since it's commissioning in December, 2008 the Berbice Bridge has facilitated crossing of over 650,000 vehicles (of the Berbice River) resulting in an annual revenue of over \$1,500,000,000 (one billion five hundred million dollars) for the Berbice Bridge Company Inc.;

AND WHEREAS the toll for vehicles crossing the Berbice Bridge presently is:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Present Rates</b>
Motor Cars	\$2200
Mini Buses	\$2200
Motor Cycles	\$200
Four-wheel drive/ SUVs/Pick-ups	\$4000
SUVs and pick-ups pulling a boat for recreational activities	\$4000
Four-wheel drives, SUVs and pick-ups pulling horse buggies	\$4000
Four-wheel drives/ SUVs / pick-ups transporting BBQ Grills, coolers	\$4000
50-seater bus	\$12,800
30-seater bus	\$7,200
Large Trucks	\$13,600

AND WHEREAS the toll for crossing the Berbice River is exceedingly high when compared to a similar crossing of the Demerara River by the Demerara Harbour Bridge and represents a significant devolution of wealth from the people of Berbice in particular to the benefit of a private company;

AND WHEREAS in recognition that the toll was too high the Berbice Bridge Company Inc. for a specific period over August 1, 2013 to August 12, 2013 reduced the toll for the crossing of the Berbice Bridge to the following rates:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Current toll charges/freight charges</b>	<b>Reduced toll charges for the month of August/no freight charge</b>
Four-wheel drive/SUVs/Pick-ups	G\$4000	G\$3000
SUVs/Pick-ups pulling a boat for recreational activities	G\$4000	G\$3000 and no freight charge for tourism and pleasure activity
Four-wheel drive/SUVs/Pick-ups pulling horse buggies	G\$4000	G\$3000 and no freight charge
Four-wheel drive/SUVs/Pick-ups transporting BBQ grills, coolers	G\$4000	G\$3000 and no freight charge for tourism and pleasure activity
50-seater buses	G\$12,800	G\$9,000
30-seater buses	G\$7,200	G\$6,000
Large trucks	G\$13,600	G\$10,000

AND WHEREAS section 3 and section 4 of the Berbice River Bridge Act 2006 - No. 3 of 2006 provides for the Minister responsible for public works to make "Toll Orders",

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That the National Assembly calls on the Government of Guyana to instruct its representative on the Board of Directors of the Berbice Bridge Company Inc. to demand an immediate reduction in tolls charged by the Berbice Bridge Company Inc. for crossing the Berbice River; and

## BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the National Assembly calls upon the Minister responsible for Public Works to make the following Toll Order:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Present Rates</b>	<b>Proposed Rates</b>
Motor Cars	\$2,200	\$1,000
Mini Buses	\$2,200	\$1,000
Motor Cycles	\$200	Free
Four-wheel drive/ SUVs/Pick-ups	\$4,000	\$3,000
SUVs and pick-ups pulling a boat for recreational activities	\$4,000	\$3,000
Four-wheel drives, SUVs and pick-ups pulling horse buggies	\$4,000	\$3,000
Four-wheel drives/ SUVs / pick-ups transporting BBQ Grills, coolers	\$4,000	\$3,000
50-seater bus	\$12,800	\$9,000
30-seater bus	\$7,200	\$6,000
Large Trucks	\$13,600	\$10,000

**(Notice Paper No. 272 (M 93 Opp 56) published on 2013-12-10)**

**Suspension of Standing Order No. 10(1)**

At 9.32 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Standing Order No. 10(1) was suspended to enable the Assembly to continue with its business uninterrupted.

38.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

The Minister of Housing and Water

Ms Amna Ally

Faizal Jafarally

Dr. Veersammy Ramayya

The Minister of Public Works

Thereafter, Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph Harmon replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

(iii) **COMMITTEES BUSINESS**

**MOTIONS**

**ITEM 6 - ADOPTION OF THE SIXTH PERIODIC REPORT OF THE  
PARLIAMENTARY SECTORAL COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES**

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., (Chairperson of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Social Services), moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Sixth Periodic Report of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Social Services be adopted.

**(Notice Paper No. 323 (M 101 Committees 7) published on 2014-04-28)**

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal spoke to the motion.

The motion was then put and carried.

**ITEM 7 -- ADOPTION OF THE SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS IN RELATION TO THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Dr. George Norton, M.P. (Chairman of the Committee on Appointments), moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly adopts the Second Report of the Standing Committee to address matters relating to the Appointment of Members of Commissions established under the Constitution, and signifies to the President that the following persons:

- (i) Mr. Patrick M. Yarde; and
- (ii) Ms Patricia Went

have been nominated in accordance with Article 200 (1)(b) of the Constitution, to be appointed Members of the Public Service Commission.

**(Notice Paper No. 324 (M 102 Committees 8) published on 2014-05-09)**

The Minister of Agriculture spoke to the motion.

The motion was then put and carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 12.50 a.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2014.

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

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,**  
**Public Buildings,**  
**Brickdam,**  
**Georgetown.**

**15<sup>th</sup> May, 2014.**