

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE 71ST SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST  
SESSION (1992-1996) OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD

AT 2.00 P.M.

ON WEDNESDAY, 31ST JANUARY, 1996

IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (72)

Speaker (1)

The Hon. Derek C. Jagan, S.C., J.P., M.P., Speaker of the  
National Assembly

Members of the Government - People's Progressive Party/Civic (42)

The Hon. Samuel A. Hinds, M.P., Prime Minister

The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., M.P., Senior Minister of  
Agriculture (Leader of the House)

The Hon. S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P., Senior Minister of Home Affairs  
(Government Chief Whip)

The Hon. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P., Senior Minister in the Ministry  
of Public Works, Communications and Regional Development

\*The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth Bisnauth, M.P., Senior Minister of  
Education and Cultural Development (Absent)

\*The Hon. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and  
Minister of Legal Affairs

\*The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Senior Minister of Labour,  
Human Services and Social Security

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P., Senior Minister of Foreign  
Affairs

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Senior Minister of Health

The Hon. M. Shree Chan, M.P., Senior Minister of Trade, Tourism  
and Industry

\*The Hon. Bharrat Jagdeo, M.P., Senior Minister of Finance

Mrs. Janet Jagan, O.E., M.P.

The Hon. Clinton C. Collymore, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture

The Hon. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human  
Services and Social Security

\*The Hon. F. Vibert DeSouza, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Public Works,  
Communications and Regional Development

\*The Hon. George E. Fung-On, M.P., Minister in the Office of the President

The Hon. Moses V. Nagamootoo, M.P., Senior Minister of Local Government

\*Non-elected Member

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Mr. Cyril C. Belgrave, M.P.  
 Mr. Fazil M. Ali, M.P.  
 Mr. Husman Alli, M.P.  
 Mr. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P.  
 Mr. Komal Chand, M.P.  
 Mrs. Shirley V. Edwards, M.P.  
 Dr. Hughley H. Hanoman, M.P.  
 Mrs. Una A. James, M.P.  
 Mr. Alston A. Kissoon, M.P. (Absent)  
 Dr. Moti Lall, M.P.  
 Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.  
 Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P.  
 Mr. Lawrence E. Rodney, M.P.  
 Mrs. Pauline Sukhai, M.P.  
 Mr. Winslow M. Zephyr, M.P.  
 Mr. Reuben A. Gilbert, M.P.  
 Mr. Edward DaSilva, M.P.  
 Mr. Khadim Bacchus, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)  
 Mr. Samad A. Baksh, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomereroon/Supenaam) (Absent)  
 Mr. Harrinarine Baldeo, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)  
 Mr. Joseph DeSouza, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)  
 Mr. Eugene La Cruz, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)  
 Mr. Bagot Paul, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni) (Absent)  
 Mr. Kum Karan Ramdas, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)  
 Mr. Ramrattan, M.P., a/k Balkarran (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/  
 West Demerara)

**Members of the Minority (29)**

**(i) People's National Congress (26)**

Mr. H. Desmond Hoyte, S.C., M.P., Minority Leader  
 Mr. Robert H.O. Corbin, M.P.  
 Mr. Winston S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P. (Absent)  
 Dr. Patrick L. McKenzie, A.A., M.P., Chief Whip  
 Mrs. Clarissa Riehl, M.P.  
 Dr. Kenneth F.S. King, M.P.  
 Mr. Deryck M.A. Bernard, M.P. (Absent)  
 Mr. Dunstan Barrow, M.P.  
 Miss Anna Ally, M.P.  
 Miss Jean M.G. Persico, A.A., M.P.  
 Mr. Arthur A. Alexander, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly  
 Mr. Simon H. Ng-See-Quan, M.P.  
 Mr. David Subnauth, M.P.  
 Mr. Reynold N. David, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)  
 Mr. M. Idris Deen, M.P.  
 Mr. Aftabuddin Ahamad, M.P. (Absent)  
 Mrs. Cyrilda A. DeJesus, M.P.  
 Mr. Kenrick Tyndall, M.P.  
 Mr. Phillip Bynoe, M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice)  
 Mr. Andy Gouveia, M.P. (Absent)  
 Mr. Hukumchand, M.P., a/k Parag  
 Miss Joan C. Richards, M.P.  
 Mr. John A. Fredericks, M.P.  
 Mr. Ivan Peters, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)  
 Mr. Hubert K.H. Hyman, M.P. (Absent)  
 Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P.

(ii) Working People's Alliance (2)

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine, M.P.

Mr. Matheson Williams, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)

(iii) The United Force (1)

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.

OFFICERS

Mr. Frank A. Narain, A.A., Clerk of the National Assembly

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

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 2.03 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Variation of Order of Business

Before the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1996 was resumed, the Senior Minister of Agriculture (Leader of the House) stated that it was agreed that, on resumption of the sitting at 5.30 p.m., following the suspension from 5.00 p.m., the Assembly would consider the motion by the Prime Minister on the Operations of Omai Gold Mines Limited.

MOTIONS

**ITEM 1 - MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1996**

Assembly resumed the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 1996.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Robert H.O. Corbin

The Senior Minister of Local Government

Mr. Manzoor Nadir

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 5.00 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 5.30 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

**ITEM 2 - OPERATIONS OF OMAI GOLD MINES LIMITED**

The Prime Minister moved the following motion:

WHEREAS over 19th to 24th August, 1995, there were massive leaks of tailings through the impoundment dam at OMAI;

AND WHEREAS the President proclaimed the Omai and Essequibo Rivers as an Environmental Disaster Zone, and proposed the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry;

AND WHEREAS the National Assembly on 24th August, 1995, unanimously passed a motion, which amongst other things, endorsed the proclamation and the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry;

AND WHEREAS the President appointed this Commission on 7th October, 1995, and the Commission presented its report on 8th January, 1996;

AND WHEREAS this Report was laid in the National Assembly on 19th January, 1996, and has been available for study and review by all and, in particular, the Minister responsible for Mines and Minerals, Officers of the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission, and the Environmental Unit of the Office of the President;

AND WHEREAS the Assembly specifically required that the commercial operations of the Omai Gold Mines Limited remain closed and only recommence on the basis of an examination of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and the environmental audit:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly take note of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry and agree that the Operations at Omai Gold Mines Limited should be restarted at the earliest opportunity in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Dr. Patrick L. McKenzie  
Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine  
Mr. Manzoor Nadir

Thereafter the Prime Minister replied.

The motion was then put and carried .

**ITEM 1 - MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1996**

Assembly resumed the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 1996.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Dr. Hughley H. Hanoman  
Mr. Simon H. Ng-See-Quan  
Mr. Komal Chand  
Miss Jean M.G. Persico

The Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security.

Mr. David Subnauth  
Mr. Fazil M. Ali

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 9.50 p.m., on a motion by the Senior Minister of Agriculture (Leader of the House), the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Thursday, 1st February, 1996.



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**D.C. JAGAN**

Speaker of the National Assembly

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

**31st January, 1996.**