

EIGHTH DAY

Friday 04 November 2016

DRAFT HANSARD

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EIGHTH DAY

Friday 04 November 2016

The Acting Speaker (**Mr Aide Ganasi**) took the Chair at 10 a.m.

There being no quorum present, Mr Deputy Speaker stated that he would resume the Chair after the ringing of the Bells.

Sitting Suspended.

The Deputy Speaker again took the Chair at 10:45 a.m, and invited the Member for Kabum, **Honourable Bob Dadae** to say Prayers:

“Our Heavenly Father God all Mighty, you are mighty and everlasting, you Holy and perfect, father we thank you, for the pray that you have accorded us to be in this Parliament to represent over 7 million people of Papua New Guinea, we thank you for continues protection and guidance to this term of Parliament, Father today we pray that you will give us wisdom and understanding to help us to deliberate policies that concerns of our Nations, Father this day to we pray and make a special prayer point to our Governor General which is in the hospital at Brisbane, father we join our hands as to all our Christians throughout the nations to pray for his recovery, Lord oh Mighty we also pray for the Budget that will be debated next Tuesday, that father to your wisdom and guidance that the Budget may be properly debated and passed to leaders, 2017 financial year, we thank you oh god for this week, and thank you that you guide us and protect us over the weekend, as we come back to resume on Tuesday next week, we give ourselves what is Souls on spirit in your hand and assure your leadership and guidance, and we pray, Amen!

QUESTIONS

Teachers’ Salaries and Entitlements

Mr MAI DOP – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for recognising the people of Jimi. My questions are directed to the Minister for Education.

The Parliamentary Referral Committee on Education presented its findings and recommendation of teachers’ salaries and entitlements to Parliament on 26 August 2014, Parliament endorsed all thirteen recommendations of the committee and directed the Education department to implement the recommendations within three months. Attached in the working

committee was chaired by TSC Chairman, Mr Baran Suri, was established and a detailed scope of work and implementation. A schedule was prepared and submitted to the Cabinet.

In its decision NO. 63, 2015 date 24 March 2015, the Cabinet approved a total of K26 million for the implementation of the PRCE Report also known as the Ganim Report to be rolled out over five years from 2014 to 2019 totalling K7.86 million was for the phase one implementation but these funding has not been forthcoming. The working committee resubmitted for K7.8 million in the 2015 Budget and again this was knocked out. As the Chairman of PRCE it is concerned about the 56 000 teachers in the country will hold the O'Neill-Dion Government liable if nothing seems to be happening in addressing teacher's issues in the country who are the key drivers of Free-Education Policy of this Government.

02/08

My questions are;

(1)Can the Minister update this honourable House and the people of this Nation especially the 56 000 teachers in the country on the process of work undertaken by the Education Department on the Working Committee?

(2)How will the Department approve the K7.8 million for the phrase one implementation of PRCE report now that it was missed out again in the 2017 Budget?

(3)How can this Government assure the 56 000 teachers that it cares are their well-being and is addressing their issues through implementation of the Ganim Report?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr NICK KUMAN – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker and thank you Member for Jimi for these serious of questions.

Let me answer the last one first, as a result of the Parliamentary Committees Report most of the recommendations contained in that report that are approved by the parliament are being implemented and I will give a detailed response to you and also inform the Parliament next week, if we continue to sit next week.

But a brief update of what has happened so far in regard to the last question is that the well-being of teachers and obviously you are right by saying that they are the drivers of the future of this country by educating our young children right throughout the country. As much as every partner in development in this country teachers are one of the well paid in the country. If you look at the remunerations that is being accorded to the teachers in the country they are one of the well-paid public servants in this country and I also agree that we got well over 56

000 teachers right throughout the country and they have done an excellent job every year in very difficult conditions in this country.

Secondly, we just completed PNGTA and the TSC with the Department of Personnel Management that completed the negotiation on the salary entitlements and conditions not long ago. It is awaiting the Government to make a decision throughout the country the overall quantum of pay raise throughout the country and that is the only thing that we are awaiting. Because the agreement between TSC and PNGTA left in April this year it is mandatory for the employer, the Department of Education and Personnel Management to go into negotiation which was completed about a month ago.

Question two, is relation to the updates. Let me start by the payroll system, yes we are under the Department of Finance ALESCO System and PNG Teachers are under the same payroll and you would note that not long ago we launched the ALESCO System in Enga in which the teachers can have those information available in their provincial headquarters they do not need to come to Port Moresby and one advantage out of that is that by using their smartphones they can be able to access the ALESCO Payroll System and be able to get the details of their salaries and other information that is available.

03/08

The appointment or establishment of Teachers Service Commission representative in the provinces is one of the main issues that we continuously are faced with. Teachers throughout the country come to Port Moresby and enquire about their pay, leave entitlements and all kinds of things, we use to see long queues at Fincorp.

With those recommendations, we need to really look at how best we can serve the teacher's right throughout the country and one is to must decentralise the TSC or the Teachers Service Commission offices right throughout the country. So in other words we are delegating all those responsibility to each and every provincial government in this country. We will also make sure that the functions of TSC will be decentralised. Leave fares, appointments and et cetera all these things will be done at the provincial level and we will only approve them and process them at the national level.

So far we have got two provinces that have been established, we have Enga, Chimbu and we are currently working on the one in Morobe, then we will eventually make sure that all these TSC offices will be established right throughout the country so that the teachers no longer will come to Port Moresby, That is one step we need to take to ensure that teachers are in the provinces and they do not need to come to Port Moresby.

The next issue is that in as far as Leave fares are concerned again these money have been granted straight to the provincial Government. The Provincial Governments manage the Teachers' Salaries.

The only problem that we have is when the teacher decides when he wants to go for leave. The cut off month is end of April every year so if they make an application around mid of April they do not go on leave the next year because the department has to process that through the normal budget process in order for them to take that leave the next financial year when it will be available to them. But there are other entitlements they are entitled to except the teacher has the responsibility to apply for leave before April, beginning of the academic year.

These are some of the problems that we are continuously being faced with. So when the appropriations are made, the ones who apply for leave in advance their moneys are available to the provincial governments for the following year.

So these are some of the things that we just really need to get the information out to the teachers and we have been continuously doing it but it appears that the mistake is still there it has not been corrected.

I think most of the 13 recommendations have been approved by the Parliament and we are progressively working towards it and the final one is the implementation of the report. Unfortunately, we were not able to get a financial report for 2015 and 2016 and unfortunately we missed out on this one too.

Thank you, Mr Acting Spear.

Supplementary Question

Teachers Leave Fares

Mr BIRE KIMISOPA – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker.

My question to the Minister is in relation to the Teachers leave fares and I think if Parliament can recall in my previous capacity as the Chairman of the Special Parliamentary Committee on Public Sector Reform and Public Service Delivery, we were tasked with the responsibility with attaining exactly what is happening to the leave fares right across the country given the high rates of absenteeism right across our schools teachers were not able to get their leave fares and were stranded all across the country missing substantial number of days during the commencement of the school year and what was proposed to the Government and I did express to the Floor was the Leave Fares is a simple procedure which the Department of Education can undertake.

My question is that the teachers leave fares should be given to the teachers allocated on prorated basis, whether they want to take the leave or not it is entirely up to them. It is spread over 26 fortnights and if they go, fine, if they stay fine so that we attack the absenteeism rates in our schools so our students right across the country are not denied a teacher.

04/08

I want to know, Mr Acting Speaker, what is the position and why it appears to be too cumbersome and, too problematic when all it requires is the Department of Education including the Teaching Services Commission to sit down with IRC?

And, at least our teachers, roughly over 27, 000 of them across the country, should be able to get their teachers' leave fares pro-rata 26 fortnights a year.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr NICK KUMAN – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Well, to some degree, I agree with the Member for Goroka but pro-rata under the normal Public Service General Orders does not allow that for leave fares. Leave fares are paid to the teachers when their leaves are due and it's budgeted for every financial year.

This is so long as the teachers go and apply for leave before April and the documentations are processed from there on up to the Department of Education. We then factor them into the budget for the next year and that is all there is to it. But we cannot pay pro-rata because that is not possible.

Secondly, you are making an assertion that because of the leave fare teachers are absent from the schools. The leave fares are planned for every year and we know exactly how many teachers are going to go for leave for the next academic year.

Therefore, those are factored and that is why we make sure that short term leaves, long term leaves or furlough leaves are all factored in a normal government system. And it is clearly spelled out in the General Orders of the Public Service Commission. Therefore, we are not going to go outside of the public service system.

Also, our negotiation with IRC with regards to the tax component of it is part of the negotiation that we are currently undertaking.

Thank you.

Pomio Wants SABL Deal Review

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE – My questions are directed to the Honourable Prime Minister.

Mr Acting Speaker, in 2003 the Physical Lands and Physical Planning approved SABLs in the country. This was done from an amended *Forestry Act*. This actually promoted what some people call, exploitation of native forests without requiring PNGFA approval and adherence to existing forest regulations.

Nevertheless, as a result government in 2011 set up a commission of inquiry that was initiated by the then honourable Acting Prime Minister, Sam Abal, who announced a moratorium of signing new SABLs. As a responsible government, again, the O'Neill-Dion Government ensured that the CEOI was fully funded.

I am thankful to hear from the Forest Minister in the last Parliament session that the government has undertaken reviews to the *Forest Act* to improve benefits to landowners.

Coming from a district that is actually affected by some of these impacts of SABLs, this is very much appreciated. Another significant undertaking by the government is the recent announcement in the 2017 Budget, that there will be tax on log exports.

Mr Acting Speaker, while there are some negative perceptions on SABL in the Pomio district, let me inform this Parliament that there are some positive stories that must also be told. Pomio district has a unique story that must be analysed and reported in a holistic social context.

Mr Acting Speaker, I can inform this Parliament that we have a development partner that is willing to engage in consultations and is keen to review existing lease arrangements. We have made mistakes but we can make reviews and make some corrections.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are:

(1) Can the commission of inquiry tabled the SABL report in this Parliament and made available to us so that it can guide us in our discussions to review our progress in this process?

(2) Can the government consider giving equity to landowners of forestry impacted areas similar to privileges that are given to the gas and mining industry to ensure greater benefits from the resources?

Pomio district has two oil mills currently in operation.

(3) Can relevant laws be amended to ensure that the district and ILGs be considered shares in this crude oil revenues?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

05/08

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I thank the member for Pomio for his questions on the SABL issue in the country. When we came into Government we set up the SABL enquiry very early and we have received reports back to the Government from two

of the Commissioners out of the three that were tasked to carry out this inquiry, Mr Acting Speaker, we have yet to receive the report from the last Commissioner, as a result of that the inquiry itself has not been fully completed and as such Cabinet has taken note of the reports by only two Commissioners.

Mr Acting Speaker, rather than waiting for the other Commissioner to submit his final report, Cabinet has taken some decisions based on the recommendations of the other two Commissioners who were able to lodge their reports to Government.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am pleased to announce that Cabinet has made a decision that all the SABL leases that were issued will be cancelled. That instruction has now gone to the Lands Department and as of today, I can assure you that those leases have now been cancelled. Where there are projects now existing, we have encouraged the landowners to renegotiate many of those lease arrangements and the arrangement they have made with the developers.

Mr Acting Speaker, these leases were given without much talk in the past. As a result, many of the landowners stood to lose many years of generation of ownership of land that they have had for many many years. That is why Government has to take a tough position where we do not want rightful landowners losing rights to their future generation as well. It is important that we protect the interest of all our children who will utilise all that land in the future.

We cannot pass the ownership of the entire land to the developer and our people losing the right. That is why we have instructed the Department of Lands and Forestry to cancel all the SABL leases.

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to assure you that once we have complete the final report from the Commissioner, I will table the report to this honourable House. We are having some difficulties with that because of lack of cooperation from that Commissioner so we are yet to complete the final report. Despite the fact that we have paid all the fees, the report is not forthcoming.

The second issue is about the benefits to the landowners, the districts and the provinces, Mr Acting Speaker, I want to say that I've visited the developments that are taking place in the Pomio District and I can also support the member's statement that those developments are taking place very constructively and are achieving the purpose in which those lease were issued. That is they will have a large scale agricultural development project in the Pomio district.

Mr Acting Speaker, I understand that these two projects are very successful, but the benefits to our landowners, the districts and other stakeholders, ILGs in the area must be clearly

defined. I am encouraged that some of these developers are starting to talk with the landowners so that they can have a far greater benefit on the big projects that are taking place in each of the respective areas that those projects have started.

Finally, Mr Acting Speaker, this was merely a front used to develop forestry in the country, without compliant to the *National Forest Act*. As result, the SABL was just used as a front. That is why the Government in the process of cancelling all the leases. They were only doing round log exporting. They were not interested in developing agriculture in that particular logging area. They were just using it as a front to try and do log cutting in those areas so Government is now cancelling all the leases. There are cases where development has taken place so we are asking our landowners and developers to re-negotiate because our assurance is that we want to give a better benefit of a long term to our landowners.

06/08

In cases where developments have taken place already we are asking the developers and our landowners to renegotiate. Our assurance in that we want to give them a better benefit over the long term.

No Returns for Tuna Provinces

Mr BEN MICAH – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker for giving me this time to ask a question.

I am the shadow Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resources and I am putting this question straight to the Minister in charge of matters relating to fish, and other animal sources of protein in the seas as well as fresh water.

The preceding question was about land. This nation is not only made up of land. A vast area of our country is made up of sea, rivers, lakes and not only land. Why are you always talking about land, titles of SABL and other titles which take precedence.

The oceans of Papua New Guinea produces up to US\$10 billion of tuna that is tuna alone. We are not taking about crabs, lobsters, trochus or any other marine produces, no, we are talking only of tuna here. And most of the tuna is coming out of an area known as the Bismarck Sea. And more specifically in my electorate where the tuna spawns the Mogado Square.

Mr Acting Speaker, how many years have we been in government. I was also a Minister, a major component of NFA funds were expended on Port Moresby roads and other unnecessary expenditure of the government that are not relevant to where the resource is coming from.

I want to ask you on behalf of all the other leaders from the Islands Region on the other side whose mouths are closed. They could not ask you, not even in Cabinet. I was the only one asking you in Cabinet and now I am asking you in Parliament.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Not directly to the Minister.

Mr BEN MICAH – Mr Acting Speaker, I want to know when exactly, will some revenue from this tuna exports and factories you have established in Wewak, Lae, Taiwan and many other places you are selling fish help develop the fishing industry in the Islands such as Samarai or other areas where the tuna is coming out from.

I am asking you because I have not seen such inclusions in the Budget, I was in Cabinet and have not seen you making plans to develop industries relevant to fish and other marine resources in the New Guinea Islands Region where the bulk of the tuna is coming out from to feed your NFA, building roads in NCD and other parts of Papua New Guinea.

I want to know the answer to that, just a yes or no answer and not any other information irrelevant to the question.

Mr MAO ZEMMING – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Kavieng for asking some very angry questions.

I am quite perplexed as to how to answer his question because he seems to be talking about finance, budget and roads being built in Port Moresby, he seem to be beating around the bush and I do not understand what his question was.

Mr Acting Speaker, the guy was in Cabinet looking after Privatisation. That is the business arm of government. You were in charge of that.

What have you done in the fishing sector leading to your defection and difficulties resulting in your blabbering?

Mr Don Polye – Point of Order! The Minister said the Shadow Minister has asked an angry question, it seem he is the angry one here. The point of order is; just give him the answer. Do not attack him personally.

07/08

The Government Members are attacking the Opposition personally. The Minister should answer the question accordingly because we have vast open sea so what is he going to do about

it. It is a simple question and he should simply answer them. If he is beating around the bush that it shows that he is not performing his responsibilities properly.

(Government Members interjecting)

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – The Point of Order is in order so Minister, please answer the question accordingly.

(Government Members interjecting)

Mr MAO ZEMING – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker, it is always the habit for Members who are expelled from the Government to criticise the Government. These Members have been in the Government as Ministers but they have not achieved anything.

Mr Acting Speaker, the practice of lying is gone now, this Government transparent and accountable. So far, we have five canneries already operating in Papua New Guinea and we have another one about to be established. Therefore, you can see that we are giving dividends to the State.

When Honourable Ben Micha was the Minister for State Enterprise, he has never given any dividends to the Government. As Minister for Fisheries, I have given dividends to the Government for the last four years of my reign. The record is straight now.

Mr Ben Micah – Point of Order!

Mr MAO ZEMING – I am answering the question, stop disrupting me.

Mr Ben Micah – Mr Acting Speaker, the Minister is totally confusing the Parliament.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr Ben Micah – He knows very well that when I was the Minister, Kumul Petroleum paid dividends under my responsibility. Air Niugini and all the State companies paid dividend to Kumul Consolidated Holdings and it was then transferred to Treasury. He is trying to deflect the questions because he is unable to answer it.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Minister, please answer the question.

Mr MAO ZEMING – Mr Acting Speaker, I accept all his Points of Order but I want to inform the country that we are serious in the Fisheries business. He should know the business plan that we have initiated and we did a review –

Mr Ben Micah – Point of Order! The Minister, Prime Minister and all the Ministers know that the SOE paid dividends so I demand that he must withdraw his previous statement.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – You have made your point already but Minister, if you can withdraw your previous statement.

Mr MAO ZEMING – Mr Acting Speaker, I do not wish to debate with the honourable Member for Kavieng but I want to say that in Kavieng, we are trying to establish a Beche-de-mer industry and the Member should work closely with my ministry. He asked me whether there was any plans for Kavieng, I want to inform him that we already have a plan in place. We also have plans to establish canaries in the country and make 100 per cent downstream processing and we already have an export policy in place so he should not say that we don't have any export policy. We will review this policy and take stock of all the sectors within the Fisheries Ministry.

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to inform the country that now we have five canaries already operating and they are employing a lot of our people. We have 18, 000 people employed by this industry and 12, 000 of them are female.

So the former Minister for State Enterprise and Member for Kavieng must know this. He already knows but instead he is raising this irrelevant question to gag the Parliament. If he wants to establish a fish canary in Kavieng, he should come and discuss his proposal with me.

Prices of Essential Services

Mr DE KEWANU – I direct my question to the Minister for Public Enterprise and State Investment, Honourable William Duma. My question is in relation to setting of prices of essential services run by the State entities like PNG Power, Telikom PNG, Air Niugini, PNG Water Board, et cetera. There seem to be some misunderstanding in the public mind as to who sets the price; is it your ministry or the State entities.

Can you advise Parliament and the people of Papua New Guinea that prior approval are obtained from ICCC of any legislation that is brought before Parliament on essential services like water, power, telephone et cetera are brought before this Parliament ? So, I would like the Minister to give an explanation to this Parliament and the Nation on the rates that go before ICCC.

08/08

Mr WILLIAM DUMA – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for Mendi for asking this very important question. I believe that all companies that are under the Ministry of State Enterprises are expected to operate as Commercial Entities.

Mr Deputy Speaker, any price that are set by them in the first instance are approved by the ICCC, which is the price regulated for all the services provided by the services providers of this country. For instance, Air Niugini, PNG Power, Eda Ranu, Water Board. All these State-owned enterprises simply do not go out and impose their own rates on their own free will. They must simply apply for approval by ICCC and ICCC after taking the accounts of all the circumstances of this country then allows the approved rate, so it will be misleading for anyone that thinks otherwise.

They should be applying for the ICCC and ICCC after taking into account circumstances of this country then allows the approved rate. It will be misleading for anyone to think otherwise.

In the case of the proposed new company such as Water PNG, again, any rate that is set by that company, it will have to be approved by the first instance by ICCC. Any other company has no other powers so I thank the Member for Mendi for asking this important question so that the public knows that all the companies owned by the Government have no powers to impose rate on their own accord. They are regulated and controlled and approved by first instances by the ICCC.

Supplementary Question

Considering Business Position with Cost

Mr KERENGA KUA – Would the Minister care to advise this Parliament whether the ICCC in his consideration takes into account the other things, the profitability of that business in coming to a conclusion, and if so, does that consideration also add to the cost, and therefore, making it expensive and unaffordable?

Mr WILLIAM DUMA – Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the Member for Sinasina-Yonggamugl for asking a very important question again.

Mr Acting Speaker, the ICCC takes into account the public considerations it takes into account the prevailing economic issue of this country and it takes into account the need for a company which is applying for a rate to make a profit. Nothing is free in this world.

In the case of Eda Ranu, for instance, water is being provided to the villager and settlement and they also simply pay. The ICCC is taking into account, like said, the economic circumstance of this country and it has not set out to impose difficulties on the users. So, all the rates that are approved by ICCC are fair and reasonable for our people. I can say that I have not yet heard a complaint from the village in the outline areas from this province as well as NCDC complaining about the rate imposed by Eda Ranu.

Mr Acting Speaker, when one spends money on items like beer and pokies, I am very sure he budgets his income and make sure to pay his water bills because water is life.

No one can say Eda Ranu is imposing rates that are impossible for users to pay.

Legality of Nomination Fee

Dr ALLAN MARAT – Mr Acting Speaker, my four questions are directed to the Prime Minister and they relate to whether the Prime Minister's Proposed Amendments to *Section 103* of our *National Constitutions* infringe on the constitution rights of our citizens.

Even under *Section 55 of the Constitution* which provides or guarantees all citizens the same rights, privileges, obligations, and duties irrespective of race, tribes, political opinion, colour, creed or sex.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Supreme Court has ruled that earlier proposed rises in nomination fees for elections into Parliament were unconstitutional. In 1981, the Supreme Court declared a rise from K100 to K1000 unconstitutional because this would have denied the majority of eligible citizens the reasonable opportunity to stand for elections given to them by *Section 50* of the *Constitution*.

09/08

Mr Acting Speaker, the Prime Minister is proposing a one thousand per cent increase in nomination fees, at least one thousand to ten thousand kina. I ask the Prime Minister the following question, if he cannot answer this questions, he cannot say how many citizens will be excluded from nomination by the propose increase, first question.

Mr Nick Kuman – Point of Order! Mr Acting Speaker, is that whilst the Honourable Member for Rabaul has asked the question on the ruling of the Supreme Court, there's are substitute ruling on the same issue, can he be able to ask it within the same question, So the Prime Minister can give consideration to both cases before he can answer the question, because it relates to the same issue.

Dr ALLAN MARAT – That is something for the Prime Minister to check?

Mr NICK KUMAN – Point of Order! If he wants to inform the Parliament, it's better for him to give a detail question on the cases, or the same issues, as those references are submitted to the Floor of Parliament.

Mr BIRE KIMISOPA – Point of Order! Mr Acting Speaker, there is no precedent The Honourable Member for Rabaul is asking a question for you to make a ruling on that.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Ask the question.

Dr ALLAN MARAT –Thank you Mr Acting Speaker.

(1) What proportion of our Population has an income of K10, 000 kina a year?

(2) What proportion of our rural women in Bougainville have an income of K10, 000 kina a year?

(3) What proportion of our women in Middle-fly Electoral have an income of K10, 000 kina a year?

Mr Acting Speaker, the earliest the proposed Constitutional Amendment could be enacted on February or March, next year.

(4) Does the Prime Minister intend to have 2017 General Elections conducted under Legislation, which the Supreme Court using in precedence is likely to declare unconstitutional?

Mr PETER O'NEIL – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker, and I thank the good Member for Rabaul for his very important question.

Mr Acting Speaker, nobody, not even this Government is trying to deny the rights of any individuals in this country, but the fact reminds, Elections are getting more expensive. As we all know that Former Candidate of many of this Elections, you and I know that running elections campaign event cost more than K10, 000, when we have to conduct the campaign process, so we must have some realistic guidelines and core- structures that will be able to minimise this level of building that are been put on to taxes payers,

Mr Acting Speaker, now we are reaching closer to over K400 million to run the 2017 Election, and the cost keeps on going up, because the numbers of the candidates are increasing.

As are result of that, it is getting more costly for the Electoral Commissioner. I think it was well below K200 million in previous years, so someone has to pay and meet the cost of this.

Mr Acting Speaker, yes, Government ultimately collects taxes from you and every individual to pay. So if candidates are willing to run for public office, there are certain sacrifices that we all have to make.

Mr Acting Speaker, and one of them is costs. The Supreme Court references that the Member for Rabaul is referring to in 1981, I understand that there is a subsequent decision that was overturn that particular ruling.

Mr Acting Speaker, that subsequent decision has now enabled us to increases from K100 up to K1000 last elections we all paid K1000 nominations fees, The good Member for Rabaul knows very well that the supreme court decision has been overturn, and this question is really out of order.

10/08

Mr Acting Speaker, he knows that fact and he paid K1, 000. He did not pay K100 in the 2012 General Elections nomination fee.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am well aware and understand that the per capita for every individual in our country is around K6, 000, and these are the figures that have been put forward to us by the National Statistical Office. Therefore, it does not mean that everybody can afford to run for elections, Mr Acting Speaker, and that is a fact.

Therefore, for the people that he thinks that would be excluded many of them will make personal decisions to whether run for public office or not.

Mr Acting Speaker, therefore, the government has put this proposals to the Electoral-Commissioner. The Electoral-Commissioner will make the assessment and then he will advise us whether it feels necessary that Parliament should consider this or not, and when this matter is put forward before the Parliament and after consultation with the Electoral-Commissioner then we will debate on whether we will increase the fees or not.

The last question on whether it will be applicable in the 2017 Elections, Mr Acting Speaker, quite frankly, I don't know. It depends entirely on the advice that we get from the Electoral-Commissioner. If he says yes as it will help us meet the cost of running the elections and let us put it before the writs are issued. Then we have got between now and 20th of April next year about five or six months to go, Mr Acting Speaker, there is sufficient time for us to make constitutional amendments if necessary.

Mr Acting Speaker, nevertheless, our lawyers from the State Solicitors Office and government lawyers and others think that this is an adequate time to make the changes because I understand that it was over 20 years ago, that the last increases were done. Between that and now, the cost of doing elections have increased dramatically, so Acting Speaker, we have to be realistic about this.

And I know that the elections cost even more for individuals when they are conducting their campaigns but even more for the State and the burden has been placed onto the tax payers. Therefore, we will continue that as long as the numbers of the candidates that are running for election office. And I think for this election coming up will be over four thousand.

To run an election for four thousand candidates for 111 seats on the Floor of Parliament is quite expensive. That is why we had to allocate K400 million this year.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Litigants Certificate of Judgement

Mr KERENGA KUA – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, my question is directed to the Attorney-General.

As he knows, the last step in any litigation against the State when somebody gets a judgement against the State, is for the Solicitor-General to sign a certificate of judgement. That is a form that the Solicitor-General confirms the details of the judgement and it's signed off. So, it's really a clerical function. There is no statutory power in the Solicitor-General to frustrate delay or even to decide whether or not to sign so he has to sign. But there is quite a lot of certificate of judgements being delayed at the Solicitor-General's Office and successful litigants against the State have been prejudiced.

Litigants from both local, domestic sources and international as well. This really impacts upon the State's credibility to do business as a place where people can come and do business and expect their judgments to be processed in a timely manner.

Would the Minister consider looking into this matter and ensuring that whenever a certificate of judgment is submitted to the Office of the Solicitor-General that the Solicitor-General signs within no less than 17 days having in mind that this is only a clerical function?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr ANO PALA – Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to thank the Honourable Member for his very important question.

I understand as well as he does and he has expressed it very clearly that this is perhaps a clerical responsibility or formality. However, Mr Acting Speaker, when there are large sums of money involved and when the Finance Department is required to pay, this judgement needs to be clarified by way of clearance from the Solicitor-General. This is because as you know there are a lot of papers and documents that are floating around or floating around on back of vehicles.

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So it is important that in the interests of clarifying the documents, the State Solicitor or the Solicitor-General should sign these documents before the payments are made. There were cases where payments have been made in the past, even with the clarification with the Solicitor-General and later these documents were found to be fraudulent so that is why it is important that the Solicitor-General must clarify these documents before Finance Secretary makes payments and that is why for nearly all the payments ordered by the Courts, the Finance Department always checks with the Solicitor-General and I think it is good practice for us and the government that the Solicitor-General gives final clearance, although it might be a matter of formality we need that clearance for the Finance Secretary. Thank you.

Mr Kerenga Kua – Point of Order! The question was whether or not he could improve the efficiency by reducing the time involved. Some of them are taking more than six months which such verification should not have to take six months or more.

So could he look at reducing the time involved to maybe seven days, which is the core part of my question?

Mr ANO PALA – Mr Acting Speaker, yes, and these processes can be improved and I am sure that everyone is complaining about the time factor and I share the concern of the honourable Member and we are trying our best. In fact, I get calls every day even from the Members of Parliament of these matters and those complaints are genuine, I think the process is a bit too slow and I would like to fasten the process.

And, I think the lawyers throughout the country are concerned about it and we need to fast track things but the concerns to ensure that the documents are properly checked are very important and we need to allow the Solicitor-General to go through the process thoroughly but I do agree with the Member that we need to improve that system.

Thank you.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Question proposed –

That grievance be noted.

Mr SASINDRA MUTHUVEL (West New Britain) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I might be repeating some of my points but it is worth repeating.

West New Britain is one of the economic powerhouse for this Government, it has been contributing before Independence in the 1960's when the World Bank introduced Oil Palm into the Province to support large scale farming and also to generate revenue for the country and, Mr Acting Speaker, up to date, this industry has grown to billions and it generates over K1.5 billion ever year to our national GDP.

Until to date this industry is operating alone without any direct funding from the Government, it is privately managed. The Oil Palm Industry Corporation (OPIC) doesn't regulate this industry but it supports and promotes the extension program to improve Oil Palm cultivation. This OPIC which is a statutory body fully survives on the money collected from the grower's levy of K4 per tonne they collect from the farmers.

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The other equal amount is a voluntary contribution by the private companies. So, the entire body survives by the money collected by the growers and also from the private corporate companies and this is the industry.

Oil palm is one of the highest export revenue earner, especially, when we are talking about issues regarding not having enough foreign reserves. Therefore, this is the industry that we are supposed to focus on which will bring lots of US dollar into the country.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am not sure whether we are ignorant or not sure about where to invest. This industry is in need of desperate help from the government, especially when we talk of oil palm road.

There was a submission, Mr Acting Speaker, by OPIC requesting the government for K70 million only to address this oil palm road which was about 1, 250 kilometres. In West New Britain we have about 700 kilometres and the other remaining kilometres are from Milne Bay and Popondetta and other oil palm growing provinces.

By simply investing this K70 million, Mr Acting Speaker, there is a very high and likely chance of increasing the production by another 10 percent. When you talk about 10 percent in that volume over a period of five years it would be hundreds of millions of kina in terms of revenue. Therefore, this investment would not go in vain.

Mr Acting Speaker, the only excuse we have here is that the government has no direct control over this industry and it is not regulating this industry.

Mr Acting Speaker, the industry has survived for more than 40 years without any government regulation or without any funding from the government. This is an agricultural industry and it is the only large scaled, I mean we do have cocoa and copra and other agricultural commodities but none of which have been done on large scale accept for oil palm.

And also, to our credit, Mr Acting Speaker, all of our oil produced in Papua New Guinea, especially from West New Britain or Popondetta or Milne Bay, it all has the standard called RSPO. This is called the Round Table Sustainable Palm Oil which enjoys a 2 percent rebate from the European Union because all our oil produced can be traced. It is sustainably produced and it can be traced back to which farmer or field. That is why it enjoys a similar standard like a ISO and therefore, this has RSPO standard. Therefore, we should be proud of having that standard and our oil is exclusively exported to European countries because of this standard and having this certification.

Mr Acting Speaker, through you, I would like to appeal to the government that it is a worthy investment by fixing this oil palm road, not just in West New Britain but it is also in Woru, Milne Bay and in New Ireland Province. By fixing the oil palm road we can directly increase the revenue generated by this industry.

Mr Acting Speaker, though this giant industry is in West New Britain, we have no way in getting any direct benefit or revenue generation out of this industry. The entire tax revenue is paid to the National Government.

Mr Acting Speaker, over a period of time we have been really struggling to get some attention even though the government intended to develop a regional centre for tourism for economic activity.

West New Britain is a province and every Member of Parliament and Mr Acting Speaker, even you have relatives residing in West New Britain. Because everyone whether from Momase, Sepik, Highlands, Tolai and the Southern Region, they are all living in West New Britain. This is because of the oil palm industry and its economic potential.

Also, indirectly we are helping the National Government to accommodate all these people. The Sepiks have the highest population with the second highest from the highlanders.

In West New Britain we truly practice unity and diversity and people have learned to live in harmony. Therefore, it is an ideal province for the government to support because we host the entire Papua New Guinea in our province.

With that, it is the responsibility of every Member of Parliament to support West New Britain to get the support that we deserve. We are not asking for anything big. We want all of our bridges fixed, our oil palm road to be fixed and our hospital as well. Our hospital is a colonial time hospital and we want our hospital to be fixed.

Therefore, we want an equal distribution of wealth, Mr Acting Speaker. I do not understand – of course we are saying that it is very hard to reach a formula regarding how to distribute equal wealth to every province.

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Some donor agencies have been told to work with districts, some to work with provinces, but especially in the province, we Provincial Government are always on the ground addressing the issues and the day to day monitoring and doing all sorts of work in the province.

What is wrong, Mr Acting Speaker, if we can allocate equal share of funding, let's say hypothetically, K100 million for each province? It will come to K2.2 billion. The K2.2 billion does not have to come to the province, we nominate the projects with the consent of the districts with all the Open Members to avoid politics then prioritise three important projects and the National Government to support that project. This is so that the development budget is shared fairly. There are concerns why projects are centred only in Port Moresby or Lae or urban centres.

Mr Acting Speaker, one such major challenge is, and I thank my member for Talasea and the Minister for Higher Education for taking ahead this proposal to the Cabinet about the drought situation which West New Britain experienced and was worse affected. With the poor farmers and the RSE standard, that standard require every farmer to have a legitimate title. If they don't have the titles, they will not be able to replant. Their economic sustainment will be affected.

So in order to have that title, they have to settle the outstanding land rental. They have taken up these matters with the Agriculture Minister, Lands Minister and I again appeal through you, it will be a great Christmas present to our oil palm farmers to waive that land rental in consideration of their contribution in the last 40 years to the national economy. It is not going to be more than K5 – K7 million in terms of their land rental arrears. Because they have to settle these arrears before they can get a legitimate title.

What was once an oil palm block meant for one family 30 years ago, today you have two or three families sharing the same revenue. They have been struggling because of the continued drought in 2014 – 2015 which caused lot of them to lose revenue. Now they are struggling because they can't go for a replanting without obtaining the titles for the individual blocks.

I am appealing to the entire executive Government to consider this proposal when it comes to Cabinet as it will be a perfect gift to all our oil palm farmers to reduce their burden so that they can also go and attain their titles. Over 19 000 farmers entire amount will be less than K6 million. So I'm putting this appeal through you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Again West New Britain always remains loyal to this Government and will always focus on two industries, which are agriculture and tourism to support this Government in terms of generating its foreign revenue. I seek support from the National Government to build the infrastructures which will enable large scale agriculture and tourism in West New Britain province which host more than 60 per cent of dry coral species in the world. Thank you

14/08

Mr POWES PARKOP – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker for giving me the opportunity to participate in this grievance debate. I think all honourable members are thinking that Governor you should not have any grievances because all the money in being invested in you. I want to clear out this type of thinking and explain from another paradigm or perspective because many times when issues are raised the Opposition Leader has always claimed that all the money is going to NCD and I have just heard my brother, Member for Kavieng, also strongly alluding to that. So I want to put these claims into perspective.

I think it is a genuine truth that in our country the majority of the population live in the rural areas and Members representing them have a right to their opinion. I am not against your opinion because we need to have a balance in development and development spending. In an ideal world we should have such development but the reality of life is that development, for our information, understanding and appreciation is not always balanced.

In the history of the world, if you care to study the history of the world, no country in the world enjoys balanced development where everybody is going together. Yes, that's what we want but, the reality is something else. I want to put this in perspective.

Of course we don't have gold, copper, gas, cocoa, or coffee, none whatsoever. All the natural resources are based in our provinces and districts.

But I want us to appreciate how the spending is done. I also wish to say thank you to the Prime Minister and the NEC who, despite all these criticisms, continue to spend in our capital city and our other cities as well.

The premise is that our cities and urban areas are critical to the development of any nation. For the benefit of us, Members of Parliament and the public, if you look at the history of the world, before there were countries, there were cities. I want the Member for Kavieng to listen to this.

Italy did not happen first, Rome was built first and Italy was established later. I want us to understand this.

Many of the problems the government is facing in the spending in cities like Port Moresby is a legacy problem. Previous governments made a big commitment, including a K300 million new stadium. We have not delivered that. And when we were going to deliver the Pacific Games we were two years late. We almost became an embarrassment to the nation and to our people. Luckily the government through the Prime Minister took the lead and we hosted a successful Pacific Games.

Mr Acting Speaker, my point is that cities and towns are critical to the development of our people because this is where the government sits. This is where the business sector, NGOs and service providers sit and go out and service our rural people and help develop the rural areas. This is the reality in the world. It is here in PNG to.

If you neglect Kavieng Town, Wabag Town or Mt Hagen you won't have a province. This is the reality that we have.

(Opposition Members interjecting)

Mr POWES PARKOP – Can the Opposition ranks listen for a chance, when you talk, I listen.

Members – He is lying!

Mr POWES PARKOP – It is not a lie. If you look at Australia now, 80 per cent of the population live the urban areas. Eighty per cent, only 20 per cent live in the rural areas of Australia.

If you look at a developing country like Cameroon, I can tell you now, Mr Acting Speaker, 65 per cent of their population are urbanised, only about 35 per cent live in the rural areas. This is a trend that no country has successfully stopped.

The rural-urban migration is a trend. The Member for Kandep cannot erect a fence in Kandep to keep all the Kandepians in Kandep. They will move to My Hagen, Lae or even to Port Moresby. This is the reality.

Let's not bury our heads in the sand and pretend that the Kandepians will not come to Port Moresby, they will come.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Governor, do not personalise your grievances.

Mr Don Polye – Point of Order! I take offence that the honourable Governor is singling out Kandep.

15/08

The point is that there are two ways of development but one is correct while the other one is wrong. We are pursuing the wrong one, and if we develop Mt Hagen just in the same way we do NCD, the Kandep people will not come here but they will go there and likewise, if you develop Wabag Town, they will not come but they will go there. The Path that you and the Prime Minister are following is the wrong path.

(Mr Powes Parkop interjecting)

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Order! Governor, don't personalise your grievances but debate on your issues.

Mr POWES PARKOP (National Capital District) – Mr Acting Speaker, I am not targeting the Member for Kandep but just making an example.

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to air my grievances here because on many occasions I heard of this issue so that our people can appreciate that too. I am not against the rural development or balanced development but I am just talking about the reality which in the history of the world, there is no such thing as hidden development.

If you look at the United States of America, they built New York, Miami, Los Angeles and Houston first before the States were established. So this is the reality that we should also appreciate. Although we are spending more on urban areas but we are investing in the future. Right now as we speak, the population of Port Moresby is nearly one million or maybe already over one million and it is about one-third of our country's population. Unless the Government and the Parliament pass a law to control, regulate or give internal visa, people are going to keep on flogging into Port Moresby, Lae and Mt Hagen.

So this is something that we cannot stop. If you look at the trend in the world as I have stated earlier, that is the trend that people are getting urbanised. So unless we become a unique country then we are going to stop against all the experiences in the world that we are going to be exceptional and stop urbanisation from taking place. The investment that the Government is speaking about is a good investment because we are investing for our people everywhere even though we don't like it but it's hard to stop it. That is the point I am making and I want us to have this balance so that we can sometimes appreciate the type of hard decision that needs to be made.

Mr Acting Speaker, I agree totally that we must develop all the districts and the provinces as well. If we have enough money, everybody should be an even and progress together but that's nothing wrong in us in having the type of investment that we are going to invest in the urban areas. The Government is here and they can bring changes to the rural areas and if the businesses are established in a conducive environment for them to grow, they will provide service and expand to the rural areas. So I want us to also look at our towns.

The Government has invested a lot in Port Moresby and we are happy but I don't know whether NCD will have enough money from the 2017 Budget to service all its loans and how we are going to do this is another matter. I will have to come up with plans A, B, C and D I don't know but we should also look at other cities. Mt Hagen should become a world class city with all the infrastructure and facilities that could be conducive for that city to service our people up in the Highlands. Likewise in Lae too, it is a major city, our crossroad between south

east and west and it should also have that type of investment. I want this to happen and I think eventually we will get there.

But I want us to appreciate that the type of investments that are taking place, we cannot measure some of them in terms of immediate gains, some will have medium to long term gains like the investment with the infrastructures for the Pacific Games. Well, maybe we do not have immediate economic gains but the benefits that we are seeing now where we hosted the Oceania Football Championship, Tri Nation football Championship and now, we will have the Under 20 Women's Soccer World Cup.

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That's a privilege and an honour for us to host this international event, these young women, under 23 years old now, Mr Acting Speaker, will, in 10 or 20 years' time be champions in industry, politics and businesses.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Your time has lapsed.

Mr POWES PARKOP – Mr Acting Speaker, I just want to balance the debate.

Mr KELLY NARU (Morobe) – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker, I would like point out to the Honourable Members on some issue that came prominently in the country and my province.

This refers to Section 44 of the *Constitution* which talks about the Freedom of Religion. This Section of the *Constitution* gives our country the right to embrace freedom of religion to ensure that churches must exist and it also states that religion must also include our traditional customs and practices.

The challenges are now being issued in relation to this Section of the *Constitution*, as a prefix, I would like to refer our honourable Members to the preamble of our *Constitution*, this states we have adopted this Constitution as a sovereign nation of Papua New Guinea under the guiding hand of God. So we have brought our God into our nation as evidenced by the presence of the Bible.

We must encourage these noble traditions and our Christian Principles to be practiced by our future generations and ourselves.

In this context I wish to encourage us to see that one hand the preamble to the Constitution has adopted the Christian faith, its God and its principles, on the other hand, the other side of the coin, in Section 45 we opened the door stating that we should practice freedom of religion.

So, the contradiction is this, in the preamble, whilst we are embracing the Christin God and Christian principles and bringing them into this country, in the provision, according to the Letter of the Law we are opening up the freedom to practice religion so that while God is coming into this country through the front door, at the back door and through the window and the chimney other gods are coming into this country.

In this way under the protection of the Right to Religion we see all sorts of religious orders flourishing in this country. We see Muslim, Buddhism and many other coming in.

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In a place called Pindiu in Finchhafen in the Huve LLG there is new religious movement taking place. This new religion has gotten the blessing of the Government through IPA as an incorporated association group. Therefore, this religious movement is now a registered association.

Once this religious group were registered by the IPA they have returned to Pindiu under the name New Guinea Christian Mission. Now, the problem with this new religious movement is that, in our Christian belief we believe in the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. This new religious movement on the other hand believes in God four one.

The problem and challenge for us all here is that, in Section 44 of the *Constitution*, the right to freedom of religion in this country is under siege. It is being challenged and the question for leaders of this nation and the Christian community of this country is that, are we going to let Section 44 to remain as it is? Are we going to protect our Christian beliefs and values by resisting or opposing other religious beliefs in order to protect our own beliefs and values? Or, are we going to legislate and say that this Section 44 of the *Constitution*, the right to freedom of religion, should be redefined and amended.

It should then mean that the right to freedom of religion should mean the right to practice exclusively only Christian based religions to the exclusion of all the other religions. This is the challenge now that is now before us all.

I am not saying which ever view is right but I am putting forward this idea because we need to be aware that such pressing issues are occurring. This Section 44 of the *Constitution*

giving right to freedom of religion opens the door for any form of religion to come into the country. For example, like what is happening right now in Pindiu. Apart from that, if you can recall some years back. There was a cult group that sprang up in Madang called the Black Jesus Cult.

This is a classic example whereby the leader of this cult group also broke our country's laws which resulted in him being capture where jungle justice was given to him. But if this person was not captured, then who then would have stopped him from practicing his cult beliefs? This is because he is entirely able to do that within the protection and ambit of the requirements of Section 44 of the *Constitution* the freedom of religion.

Now, a similar occurrence is happening in Pindiu with their new beliefs of God four one. There have been standoffs with Lutheran followers in the same area where the followers of the new religion have been asked why they have brought this new beliefs. These standoffs have mostly resulted in fights between the two religious factions.

Therefore, how then are we going to deal with this issue? Perhaps, a constitutional enquiry or committee should take place together with the Council of Churches to investigate this issue. We really need to address this issue regarding new religious movements that tend to misuse this freedom. We are all Christians but we have to tolerate and relate to other religions as well because that is the freedom that is given to us.

Nevertheless, the problem now is that the freedom for the Cristian Religion itself is under threat because the Christina belief in the Holy Trinity is under threat by this new belief in the God four one belief. And what is stopping others from coming up with their own beliefs of God five one, God six one or God ten one.

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Mr Acting Speaker, that is my grievance and I think if Parliament can take note and some time we can look seriously into this freedom of religion under section 44.

Thank you.

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance) – Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to take this time to speak about some grievance I have. Many times I don't speak because I am a Minister and I don't get the opportunity to speak on behalf of my people in Tari-Pori as well as Hela and Southern Highlands.

I have sat in the Caucus of the Government and generally in the dissuasions about the need for development in this country and we are faced with many questions and sometimes we

question ourselves whether we are doing enough as Members of Parliament. For instance, let me paraphrase a discussion in Government Caucus earlier this week where there was this discussion or exchange between two members.

One Member Of Parliament basically commented on another honourable Member concern about sealing a road and this colleague made a statement that goes like this, “some of you are talking about sealing the road that was already sealed, some of us have not even seen the first coat on our roads”, and Mr Acting Speaker, this is a statement of fact.

So, let me take this time as we come to the end of our terms to commend the Works Minister, the Prime Minister and some of us on this side for running government now for almost full term and we have not invested in some of our roads that run through our own provinces that have never been seen.

Mr Acting Speaker, I stand here and I will take to the Elections a strong discouragement that I have been a senior member of this government yet we were not able to seal a major part of Highlands Highway that runs from Tari to Mendi and to the LNG areas. But having said this let me qualify this statement from the context of national development focus, having been in the economic minister’s circle for four years I fully appreciate the struggle that as a Government we were able to maximise and optimise the limited resources that we have had in the last four Budgets to really cover adequately all corners of this nation, and that is why when I commend the Works Minister because he did not put his own road as priority. I commend the Prime Minister, I see him investing in his DSIP for instance on his road from Ialibu to Pangia because he knows the Budget is tight and he did not use his influence as Prime Minister to sheppard off a huge chunk of Budget to finance roads pertaining to his own District. I have seen the Minister for Works in the past for instance, I was there in the last government when the national highway from Mendi to Tari was supposed to be financed under the first Tranche of ADB being diverted elsewhere under the excuse that the Mendi to Tari Highway will be funded by the LNG Project funds

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I have driven from Mendi to Kandep and I am happy that a good sealed road is there and it’s a part of our country that needs to be sealed. But I make this comment to maybe impress on every Members of this Parliament that the need of the country is so huge.

We cannot satisfy everything in one Budget, yet alone in a five-year period. And so, some of us have sacrificed. Because we run this government, we sacrifice for the entire nation. I live and drive in Port Moresby City and I support the Governor because it’s our city. We cannot

complain about our city. Some of us thought that we cannot travel on the fly-over and yet, we travel on the fly-over in haste to get to Jacksons Airport. Regarding our national highways, today, we have got 8, 500 km of national highways right across this country.

Mr Acting Speaker, to seal roads the average cost is K1.5 million per kilometre. Therefore it will cost this country K12.7 billion to seal every national highway to good quality and top class standards. Now, when we put in all our district roads and provincial roads it then goes past 20, 000 km of existing roads that we have and the Works Minister can confirm that. If you were to work on all these 20. 000 km of roads in the country, Mr Speaker, the cost costs goes beyond K30 billion.

The needs of this country stares us in our faces, yet, our critics including those from the Opposition, when the government structures innovative budgets and financing to ensure that we meet some of these important needs right now, we come face to face with severe criticism. These critics come from glass house economies. They sit and sip their cups of coffee elsewhere. They do not carry the burden that we carry together. They do not feel the pain that we feel back home.

They do not live in the outskirts of PNG and yet, people have the audacity to criticise the government who is investing straight into rural PNG, Mr Acting Speaker.

When you talk about free education, a parent out there in rural PNG does not have the luxury of K2, 000, K3, 000, K4, 000 or K6, 000 per year to pay for six children per year in a school. The Member for Kavieng knows that. Our people in Tari and Emira do not have this sort of money because they do not come in contact with economic opportunity.

So, the school fee intervention programme for the last four years together all in all is about K2.4 billion transferred from Waigani back to rural PNG and to the schools. This was to help parents alleviate the need to put their children through school.

I give you these statistics and if government has money and if the country's economy is sufficient to fully adequately pay for the 3 million school-aged children in this country on an average allocation of K2, 000 each per child, it would cost this country K6 billion to run a very top class quality education system in this country. That is the entire development budget of this country and so, we do not have this sort of money. If 8 million citizens of this country deserve good, and they deserve good, top class health service in this country at a minimum cost of K1000 per citizen, that would equate to K8 billion a year. Now, when you combine these three facts alone the figures go past K30 to K40 billion a year and that is the sort of money that we do not have.

So, it baffles my mind to have people who claim to be leaders in this country who continue to downplay our economy, criticise our economy and put down ourselves. Therefore, you are doing that at the expense of the growth of our economy of our country. When the economy grows and the country grows and when our country is seen in a positive light by investors outside, you attract foreign investment and bring in the money and pour it into our economy so that it can start to grow. Then when the economy grows then we have enough money to send to all corners of PNG and hopefully one day my Mendi-Tari road will see it sealed with bitumen.

Mr Acting Speaker, my grievance is this, our economy today and the budgets that are continuously being framed by the government is done in light of the resource envelope that we have.

20/08

People can criticise, criticism is good, however, in my opinion you must criticise with alternative to grow our economy. Constructive criticisms, put the options on the table to grow our economy. When people talk about SMEs, you look at the investments in DSIP, these are direct investments into small businesses in PNG. By Government interventions, we pumped out K5 billion to the rural sectors, to the districts, to the provinces. Our SMEs are alive out there. On one hand you complained about big contractors in Port Moresby, that's correct. They have received only up to K3 billion in total aggregate. The districts and the provinces contractors, over K5 billion have been transferred to Waigani. This is Government's direct intervention into SME, Mr Acting Speaker.

I'd like to encourage everyone as leaders, as we go into the face of election, Mr Acting Speaker, criticisms that are healthy to grow economy must come forth because the need is big in actual money. None of us are contributing to growing the economy. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr KILA HOADA (Central) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to firstly thank this Government and the Prime Minister on the DSIP and PSIP funds which have done a lot for our country and we cannot deny that. There's a lot happening in the last four years.

Every time we talk about Port Moresby, Port Moresby, I sit quietly and feel embarrassed about Port Moresby. My people own the land of Port Moresby but I want development to go out in Central Province, the province that host this nation's capital. Thank you Prime Minister

for the four lane road at 6 mile to Bautama Bridge, a world class road. These type of road needs to extend further to Central province.

Four months ago, I saw on the TV that our people were evicted at 8 mile settlement. Children holding towels and mothers holding cooking pots were shown on the news. These are our people, these are people we are mandated to look after so we must have plans to put these people before we can evict them. When we evict them, they have no way to go but go to Central province and illegally settle on my people's land. This is a very serious issue and we must care for our people.

When we want to evict them, find the land, negotiate with my people and settle them properly as human beings. When you evict them without alternate arrangements, they come and settle on my land.

I want to set my projects at Ilimo farm, my governments land of 2 100 hectares. People have nowhere to go and settled on my land so I had to evict them to develop my land. It took a very long process for me to do my developments. My people are pushed to the limit. People and leaders must understand the kind of problem I have with the land issues.

In the past our forefathers fought over land. It's a very big issue and I want you to understand. In some provinces when you go and chop the tree, you'll be chopped the same time. My people have a lot of problems and I want us to understand that land grabbing in Central Province is a major problem. Grabbing land by force, buying land off the people which are already State land creates another problem for the Minister for Lands. This is a very big issue and when we build roads to this Capital, we must make research on the effects of those roads. Not so much on the economic side but the social side of the road because when we don't research, our people come and squatter. I hope that one day in my lifetime, we must eliminate settlements. By your birth right, by our customs in Papua New Guinea, we all have land. We can't be squatters. We must go back to our land, not in America or anywhere where you don't have land. You have land when you were born, you are entitle to land either on your mother's side or father's side; you have land. You cannot come and squatter in Port Moresby, Lae or elsewhere. You must be proud of your land and our system of landownership in our country.

21/08

Please, Members of Parliament. This is a very big issue in Papua New Guinea and settlements must one day be eliminated from our land.

Kairuku-Hiri Electorate has a population of about 171,000 people, all other electorates, Abau, Rigo and Goilala has between 35 000 to 50 000 people. It's a very big electorate.

In 2002 a law was passed to create another electorate from Kairuku-Hiri. They said, leave it until 2007, when 2007 came, nothing happened, they said leave it until 2012 and in 2012 they said leave it until 2017. While that is happening my people of Kairuku-Hiri are suffering because the K10 million and K5 million that goes to the electorate doesn't cover all the people.

When we say equal distribution, we must have equal distribution to our people, the K5 million and the K10 million when distributed among the 50 000 people may be okay but what about the 171 000 people of Kairuku-Hiri? We find it very, very difficult.

The Member for Kairuku-Hiri and I struggle in Kairuku-Hiri. It is a very big land mass with a very big population.

Please, Members of Parliament, if I don't come back, and somebody else comes in in the beginning of 2017, this electorate must be split into two electorates so that come 2022 there must be two electorates.

Mr BEN MICAH (Kavieng) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

I would be a complete fool and a total idiot if I stood on this side of the House and deny the achievements of the O'Neill-led Government which I was a part of for the last four years.

I gave a mammoth hand towards many of those achievements through the leadership of the Prime Minister and there shouldn't be any contentions on this issue. We are all of one accord that whatever the government has been doing over the last four years is commendable and through those programmes we have all achieve quite a bit of things in our electorates.

What I want to speak about is on the issue of sustainability.

Brothers and sisters, I see that if we don't stop and carefully analyse and question the direction we are taking, within 20 years I think we will crash. We seem to be living in an environment of drugged stupor. We seem to have been infused with drugs so that we have not been able to think outside the box about the trends of development that we have been governing or managing over the last 41 years.

That is because we are very dependent upon the resource sector, our reliance on the non-renewable resources have blinded us to how we can entice our people to be self-reliant on their land and seas using local knowledge and skills to develop their communities.

That was why I was interjecting when my brother, the Governor of NCD spoke, because our own policy choices are going to determine whether we are going to be an urbanised country

with 90 per cent of our people living in towns and cities or whether we will continue to be a rural country with 90 per cent of our people living in rural communities where we all represent.

Eighty per cent of the world's population, Mr Acting Speaker, is still very rural. Of the billions of people in China, 200 million of them are still living below the poverty line. In India it is the same, billions of people are living below the poverty line in rural communities, as is the case in Brazil.

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So, this talk about Urbanisation Trend is a false sense of thinking that we must not follow because our policy choices must determine the type of community and the kind of background where our people live in.

I think everything we need is available on our land, the sea, the forest and all the other good things that we have in the rural areas already here for us to develop.

We were all excited and proud of the LNG Project and the revenue it would generate, but where is it now?

Now we are stuck because we have given away the control of this big resource to foreign investors who are dictating the flow of the revenue and who are now playing with the whole oil politics around the world which is affecting us and affecting our people who have no choice but to continue to live in the rural areas where 90 percent of them suffer and struggle every day to make ends meet or to try look for services like Health, Education and access to carry coffee, copra and cocoa and all these things to the village.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am a plantation owner and many times I talked about issue as a Minister. Now that I do not have a position in the Cabinet, I am living in a plantation in my province and I am cutting copra and cocoa, I am helping the people in my electorate, I am helping the Minister for Fisheries to look for fish, prawns and crabs to look for market all the way to Port Moresby with no support from NFA.

So much funds have been given to the coastal fisheries program for many years now. Mr Acting Speaker, I think in your electorate is a fisheries and marine resource producing electorate, but South Fly did not see any moneys from this revenue.

So, Mr Acting Speaker, we must think carefully and look at the direction that we can move towards

Secondly, now we are talking about the Electoral Commission, why are we giving money to these people and every year after the elections, hundreds of people still go to the Courts. What are they doing with this moneys? Can't we come up with a more innovative or creative

way of using modern electronic technology to cut down the cost of elections? We just continue to shove this money down to these people who are never accountable for the way they run the elections and the whole public service machinery is eating up a big chunk of this money. All this money, when I am speaking from Waigani, is not because of roads alone. Eighty per cent of the Public Service in Waigani what are they doing? Nothing, I do not see it in my electorate. I am struggling in my own district, now that I am more on the ground to try to get five or ten Public Servants in the Kavieng District.

These DSIP I cannot move because there is no capacity, there is no logistic support to move things out to the islands so as much as we are talking and watching, let us not just use nice words and platitudes knowing very well that the difficulties of developing this country are very real.

The biggest problem I see is when the oil and the gas runs out, when the mines are closed, when all the trees have been cut down and sold out as logs, how are we going to maintain the people that the Governor of NCD is trying to move from the rural areas into the cities? Where are we going to give them the power to give them the energy to run all this cities that we are trying to build around the place? When all that money is finished, how are we going to maintain this expensive, unproductive and ineffective public service system that is getting our country nowhere?

So, Mr Acting Speaker, we must be very careful to continue injecting this dependence mentality on unsustainable resource sector today and look at how we can make the things that our people are living closer too such as, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism.

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The direction the Government is taking on education is very highly commendable because the knowledge base on the future is the very key to the modernisation of our country, I commend this direction and support it because the impact of that huge investment that we are putting into education, will bear fruit in the distance future. Those educated people without industry to sustain their living and empower their knowledge to continue to grow this country will not contribute to anything, because we are throwing away all resources. Now the sector that I'm talking about is not even in our control.

Our currency has depreciated but why has this happened when our country is exporting Oil, gas, copper and gold. Our currency is not on the exchange board in airports in Singapore,

Brisbane or Sydney. It is not in Brisbane, it is not in Sydney and it is anywhere at all, but one time I took one thousand kina to exchange.

Mr Acting Speaker, when I tried to exchange K1000 for Singapore dollar, I was given 320 Singapore dollars, and I said why? Because I was told our money was worthless.

You can't get better in the black market. And Why is the currency of an oil and gas exporting country of are mineral exporting country doesn't have any value, It is because of the unstainable way that we are making our economic.

Mr DOUGLAS TOMURIESA – Mr Acting Speaker, Firstly all, I would like to commend the Prime Minister on the cancellation of SABL, and the corrective measures this Government has taken. And I would like to thank this government, because it is a blessing to the people of Papua New Guinea and especially to 85 to 90 per cent of the population that is based in rural areas, the cancellation by this government is a blessing to our people, whose land has been taken away by force or by improper practice.

Mr Acting Speaker, I for one would say this that we should not allow this to happen again, such practice that is approved by this Parliament or by bureaucrats or by any powerful body should not ever happen in this beautiful country of Papua New Guinea, the SABL was a disaster in the beginning, it was design to collapse and to fail, Today we have heard from the Lands Minister and the Prime Minister that the SABL has been cancelled.

For me sitting down here, I' am one of who is very proud to hear that, because there's so many reports from the daily Newspapers, event by NGOs and internationally, and from Facebook, asking the Minister for Forest, on when the SABL will be cancelled. They are pointing at me, the Prime Minister and to the Lands Minister, but it is not the doing of this government when it comes to this SABL, but I would like to say thank you to the leaders today especially the Prime Minister and his cabinet for considering the COI report and eventually cancelling the SABL.due diligence must be allowed before any approval can be granted.

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We come to Parliament and we allow such practises to be approved by us. Sometimes we must see if some controversial acts like the SABL have been approved in the past. We must stop them because when I sit and look at SABL and fingers are pointed at me and other Members for approving the SABL, when I look at the history of SABL it was done well before this Government.

But, I must say that our people's rights and our children's future must be protected by this Parliament and not allow foreigners to come and dictate to us and say it is good for our people and it is good for our rural community. Again this SABL was designed for disaster, it was designed to fail and I am glad that this Government has taken corrective measure to make certain that the SABL's are cancelled and the land goes back to our people and the investors must go back and properly renegotiate appropriate deals with our people.

Our people were given rubbish to take but today our people have the power in their hands to sit back and negotiate and say what they want because this is my land, we must never allow this to happen again.

Yesterday, I heard the Minister for Commerce and Trade talk about a piece of land up here where cows have been bred in Koitaki, and our people are being left out of that arrangement, we must not allow such practises to happen. This land belongs to our people, it must remain with our people and it must not be taken away from our people. The forest belong to our people so it must remain with our people.

Mr Acting Speaker, I stand here and I will not talk much but I want to thank the Prime Minister, his cabinet and the parliamentary members even the Opposition Members for standing with us to make certain that we solved this issue once and for all. This SABL must not ever happen again. If something similar to SABL has happened in the past we must cancel it and not allow it to happen, we must not sell the birth right of our people to anyone for his own interest.

PNG has made many foreigners rich because we are blind and allowing them to come and do what they want to. Our law must be respected, many time we push the law aside and we say that we are the law. We must not allow foreigners to come and do what they want and exploit our country.

Before in PNG there was not many educated people but now there are many educated people and we try to do everything.

So, I would like to thank the Government and at the same time I want to say that in the past 40 years we have allowed people to come and exploit our resources especially in forestry but many of them have not paid royalties to the landowners. And as I speak today I know that there are people who are still following up on the payments of their royalties. Many provincial governments are waiting for infrastructural development levy through the developers, the provincial government are yet to receive them, and even the companies owe a lot of money to the national government through tax and other royalties.

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I stand today to say thank you, to the Prime Minister, his cabinet and this Parliament that we cancelled the SABL and let's get it fixed and if there are other like the SABL, et cetera let's stop them, fix them and make certain that the birth right of this nation and the future generation of Papua New Guinea will continue to enjoy the benefits that trickles out of the decisions that we make from this Parliament.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Motion – That the grievances be noted – agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Mao Zeming**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.00.p.m..