

FIFTH DAY

Tuesday 30 October 2012

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD

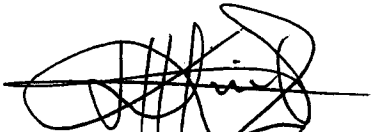
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Corrections maybe marked on a photocopy of the Daily Draft Hansard and lodged at the Office of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter, A123 (next to the Security Control Room).

Corrections should be authorised by signature and contain the name, office and telephone number of the person transmitting/making the corrections.

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LEE SIROTE

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FIFTH DAY

Tuesday 30 October 2012

The Speaker (**Mr Theo Zurenuoc**) took the Chair at 10.00 a.m..

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

Sitting suspended.

Mr Speaker again took the Chair at 10.20 a.m.; and invited the Member for Rabaul, **Dr Allan Marat** to say Prayers:

“Sovereign God, we humbly come to you again this morning in the name of Jesus Christ. Father, this country of yours is a Christian country and therefore, we acknowledge your sovereignty over this nation and especially over this Parliament. Father, as we bow before you this morning, we acknowledge our shortcomings and we acknowledge that we have failed you in many ways, we have failed our people in many ways. We pray for your forgiveness through your son Jesus Christ that we will be forgiven of all our disobediences and that we will be cleansed of all impurity and set us right with you this morning.

Father, we commit the rest of this Session into your hands that your Holy Spirit shall guide us in our thinking and our deliberations of this morning. Father, we praise you and thank you that you are a God of impossibilities and what is impossible for men to accomplish you can accomplish if we turn to you and turn from our wicked ways and we acknowledge you Jesus Christ as Lord of Papua New Guinea. In Jesus name, Amen.’

**DEATH OF FORMER MEMBERS –
STATEMENT BY MR SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament of the death for two of our leaders;

1. Mr Joseph Egilio who died on the 19 September 2012 and he was a former Member of Central Bougainville in the 5th Parliament from 1992 – 1997. He was appointed Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Bougainville Matters in September of 1994 and then Minister for Communication from 1995 –1997.

2. Sir Donatus Mola died on the 20 of October 2012. He was a former Member of the North Bougainville Electorate in the Second House of Assembly from 1968 – 1972. During his term, he was appointed Minister for Information and he was re-elected for the same seat for the 3rd House of Assembly and the First National Parliament from 1972 – 1977. He was elected Deputy Leader of the Peoples Progress Party and was appointed Minister for Business Development, Minister for Health and Minister for Public Utilities.

As a mark of respect to the memory of the late Honourable gentlemen, I invite all honourable Members to rise in their places.

(All honourable Members stood in their places)

Mr SPEAKER – I thank the Parliament.

QUESTIONS

Mr WERA MORI - Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Works. Before I ask my question, I would like to give a brief background to my question.

My question is in regards to the state of the Highlands Highway, which is the most significant economic infrastructure in this country.

Mr Speaker, the Highlands Highway was built in late 1950 – 1960. In 1970 given the state of agriculture development in the Eastern Highlands and Western Highlands, the Highlands Highway was upgraded to meet the traffic volume that was allowed during those years.

Mr Speaker, at that time, weighing stations were maintained at 9 mile out of Lae and a second weighing station was maintained at Goroka. This was to make sure that the loading or the volume of traffic traveling on the Highway did not exceed the maximum specifications of the road allowed.

Mr Speaker, as a direct consequence of the development of extractive industries in the Southern Highlands and now Hela, the people of Chimbu have lost a lot of valuable land given the high population density.

My questions are;

1- When can we have the weighing station in Lae installed so that we can be able to monitor the amount of load through the Simbu segment of the Highlands Highway?

2- If not, is it possible if we can have a weighing station in Mangiro so that we can be able to control the amount of load through the Simbu segment before we lose more land?

02/05

Mr FRANCIS AWESA – Thank you Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable Member for Chuave for his questions.

First of all, I want to say that weighing stations in the past were established at 9 Mile in Lae and in Goroka but in the last 10 to 15 years, we have not maintained them and in fact, they are no longer being used. However, I agree that this is something that we have to look at in light of heavy traffic using the Highlands Highway. That is the reason why I said that the Highlands Highway needs urgent priority. As we speak, this Highway has deteriorated to such an extent that it will take billions of kina to repair. The sooner we do it, the better it will be for the country because when you look at the wear and tear on tyres on the heavy vehicles using the Highway, a single tyre costs K25 000 and it lasts for only three months. This is about six trips to Komo and back, so the burden on the economy to the businesses is substantial.

So this Government is addressing the problem of not only weighing stations along the entire route but total repair and rehabilitation. I thank the honourable Member for Chuave for raising this very important question. I believe he is very familiar with this issue and I expect him

and all the Members of Parliament to support the Government's intention to borrow up to K6 billion to repair the Highlands Highways, which is a lifeline of three-quarters of the population of Papua New Guinea. Most of the economy worth 70 per cent of the GDP is generated through here so it is timely for us to address some of these problems.

I would say that in the next week or so, when I present a ministerial statement, I want all the Members to support me in my government's endeavours to Highlands Highway because it is a priority of our country.

Mr FRANCIS POTAPE – Thank you Mr Speaker. In the absence of the Prime Minister, I would like to direct my questions to the Deputy Prime Minister but whilst in doing so, on behalf of my people, I congratulate Honourable Peter O'Neill for been elected as the Prime Minister of this country in the Ninth Parliament. I also congratulate you Mr Speaker. You have been in the Opposition for almost four years in the last term of Parliament so you would be in a better position to understand how we feel in the Opposition, and so I believe, you will be fair in your rulings all the time.

I also congratulate Honourable Leo Dion for being appointed as the Deputy Prime Minister of this country, and also my party leader and Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Belden Namah and the Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister is now present so I will redirect my questions to him.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, you can re-direct your questions to the Prime Minister.

Mr FRANCIS POTAPE – Mr Speaker, my questions are in relation to Lae roads. In the newspapers, we have read that the Minister for National Planning and Monitoring and his Secretary visited the Lae road sealing project site and commented that they were unsatisfied with the quality of work done so far. If you go to Lae today, you will agree with the Minister and his Secretary.

(1) Is it true that K100 million of the tax payers money has been used up to construct this unfinished and low quality road in Lae?

(2) What action is the Government taking to complete the road sealing project in Lae?

(3) What action is the Government taking to punish contractors who have defaulted and walked away with millions of kina?

Mr Speaker, I believe that K100 million is sufficient to re-seal all the main roads within the Lae city. This has not been the case. It happens that throughout the country, governments after governments have invested in roads, airports, wharves and jetties, and yet, the results are wanting because contractors make millions of kina and walk away after doing low quality and substandard work.

Many times they get away after seeing some Ministers or senior bureaucrats on the side. This then prompts me to ask these questions.

(4) Has the Government any plans to review and revitalise the role of Department of Works with a view to converting it to an authority status to do all the roads itself rather than giving the work to contractors or if so, let that authority be the one to give contracts and then follow-up and punish those who default? As it is, we do not know who is taking what action.

(5) What are the roles of National Road Authority? It seems like we have too many bodies in this country and we do not know what roles they are performing.

Mr Prime Minister I think the country needs to know some of these things.

03/05

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for Komo-Margarima for his questions.

The Lae roads have been an issue for quite some time now and it is not only this Government that is faced with this issue but over many years, previous governments have not really paid much attention to the state of the roads in Lae city. As a result, when I became Treasurer in 2010, we allocated through the Budget process K100 million to make a specific intervention.

When we visited Lae, the citizens were very unhappy saying that no Government was taking any action to try and fix the Lae city roads. So we directed that money to the Works Department and also to the Central Supply and Tenders Board (CSTB) to carry out immediate repairs and construction of the city roads.

As a result, to get the work done as quickly as possible, they appointed about eight or nine contractors. The Department of Works also appointed an independent engineering company

to supervise that road. The processes of appointment of contractors were followed through the Central Supply and Tenders Board, Works Department and the Government procurement process.

I know that some of the contractors have not completed the work. I have received an independent report for that particular expenditure, and that report states very clearly that there was a lack of supervision. There were contractors who did not finish the contracts but there were others who did finish and finished on time and worked within their budgets.

In fact, there has been some work done but I cannot say that the work has been fully completed but there has been some work that has been done to the satisfaction of the Works Department. But I know that in some contracts they are lacking, so what actions do you think that we are taking? I have referred the Report of the Works Department to the Taskforce Sweep team to make sure that we recover monies from contractors who were not performing.

That action has been untaken by appropriate authorities and in fact; I have also stated very clearly that those contractors who did not finish their jobs will not be considered for the next contract. These contractors must be punished because when you are not able to finish the job on time and within budget, then you do not deserve to get another government job.

That is the instruction that is now in place and we are hoping that some of the CSTB Board members and Works Department people, when assessing the tendering process, should take note of these clear instructions.

With regards to rebuilding the Works Department, I would like to inform Parliament that the Works Department was almost brought down to a level where it could not perform its functions throughout the country. Under the re-sizing and re-modeling, the Works Department was closed down in many parts of the country.

When the Works Department was fully functional many of our feeder and smaller district roads throughout the country were functioning. But once the Works Department was shutdown, these roads were left unmaintained and as a result many of these roads collapsed.

What we are trying to do now is to rebuild many of those roads and one of the things that we will be intervening through the Budget, is to try and allocate more funds for road maintenance and infrastructure for those coastal districts under the intervention through the Budget.

We are hoping that we will work together with the Works Department in re-building some of the provincial Works Departments and some of the district Works Departments so that they can re-equip themselves to do work that can be done with minimum costs. This is because when we pass this work to contractors, what is happening is that they are charging us exorbitant contract amounts. Therefore, tax payers and the government of Papua New Guinea continue to pay these exorbitant fees and contract amounts when the delivery of those works is not done.

That is why we need to re-build the Works Department and one way is to buy a minimum number of machinery so that Works Department can maintain it and also be responsible in maintaining the roads in the districts and provinces throughout the country.

I know that there are issues with the duplication of work with the National Roads Authority (NRA) but the intentions were good at that time. The NRA, I believe, was responsible for 7 000 kilometres of national roads under a fuel subsidy programme, where an excise was charged on the tax for fuel. That money was then re-directed to maintain the roads throughout the country.

They are delivering in some areas but there is continuous overlapping of responsibilities between Works and NRA. Therefore, we are looking at trying to improve on this by creating a single authority that will be responsible for all the roads throughout the country.

Many a time we have the tendency, when one institution of government does not work and instead of shutting it down we go and create another one. This kind of practice is not saving us money but costing us money. We need to improve on NRA concept but I want to assure the Speaker and Member that, that is one of the priorities of the Government.

Mr NIXON MANGAPE – Thank you, Mr Speaker, on behalf of my people Laiagap-Porgera, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as the Speaker. I would also like to congratulate the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister.

I would like to direct my question to the Minister for Mining but he is absent and therefore, I redirect my question to the Prime Minister.

Regarding the Porgera Mining Agreement Review, this agreement was signed in 1999 and it is well over due and they have been operating within that review for the last 25 years.

When will the next review take place?

Many people have been displaced due to the mining operations resulting in children missing out on schools, and apart from that, the mine also impacted upon the environment causing damage to the surrounding environment.

04/05

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for Lagaip-Porgera for his important question. It is true and I am aware that the Porgera Mining Agreement review is well overdue. I understand that National Planning Department has already taken charge of this issue and is in the process of setting the dates together with the Mining Department. I will certainly make a follow-up on this issue. But, I also want to assure the Member for Lagaip-Porgera that we will try to speed up the review process so that Landowners can have their say at that particular review.

Mr NOAH KOOL - Mr Speaker, this is my first time to speak on the Floor of Parliament. Let me thank the almighty God through the people of Simbu who overwhelmingly gave me the mandate to be here. It is my prayer that I will strive to facilitate the good Lord's blessing to the people.

Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate you on your elevation as the Speaker, the Rt. Honourable Peter O'Neill as the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and each and every one of you.

Each year our education system pushes out 35 per cent of students enrolled in the formal education system. They do not further their education. They continue to join the big group who are already out there in the villages, cities and towns. They think the easiest way is to resort to marijuana, homebrews and other illegal activities. It is getting worse each year and we cannot pretend.

Not long ago in Kundiawa town, groups of youths fought against each other. The fights streemed from street sales and control over a territory in the town. Mr Speaker, stone throwing lasted for five hours and the policemen were powerless.

We are sitting on a time bomb, whether you believe it or not but we need to address the youth problem. The problems vary in each province and therefore, my question is directed to the Finance Minister.

(1) Under the financial grants to provinces, do we have financial grants for Youths?

(2) And is it sufficient or should we allocate sufficient amount so that youth activities are given prominence too?

(3) Do we have functional grants for the churches? If not, can we include that in the 2013 Budget because the churches are currently playing proactive roles in changing the mindset of our youths. The Youth, Sports, Agriculture and Commerce departments collaborate and integrate their planning so they are not working in isolation but to actively involve youth right down to the grassroots level.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you Mr Speaker, I would like to take this time to congratulate the Member for Simbu for being elected the Governor of Simbu Province. It is one of the densely populated area in the country. I also want to thank him for his very important questions on the issue of youths and churches and whether funding has been made available to their districts.

Mr Speaker, when the Treasurer announces the Budget, there will be an indication that greater amount of appropriation will go to the provinces and the districts. It is structured in a way that the districts and provinces can be able to address youths and church issues in line with their provincial and district plans. So we will leave it at that and await the Treasurer's announcement.

But, in retrospective to the previous Budget, we had appropriations in as far as DSIP is concerned through law and order and the economic sector. But the appropriation to DSIP in the last five had a strong element of flexibility on the part of JDP & BPC and to appropriate where necessary as needs become relevant.

In the last five years, a lot of resources were available to youths and churches and where they were. This means that the districts had money with a lot of discretion to the JDP & BPC.

Under the direction of the O'Neill – Dion Government, the delivery of goods and services is focused at district and provincial levels. Let me assure the Governor that there will be strong appropriations to the provinces including matching appropriation to the districts and we will have funding for law and order, commerce and youth activities.

It is now up to every JDPBPC and the provincial governments to ensure that you develop a strong program for youths and churches that can be funded at your own level. But in the instance that national programs are housed under the National Youth Commission at the

Department of Women and Community Development and many other counterpart funding programmes that are run there.

05/05

You can develop your Sector plans at your level and bring that submission of your programmes to the National Minister concerned for Youths, Churches and Women and she can also try to source out support for you.

But, yes, in response to your question, at provincial and district levels, in the last five years there were no direct appropriation to youths and churches. But there were appropriations made with the intention to cater for youths in line with those sectors and paid to the districts and provinces. This year, in this appropriation when the Treasurer announces it we will announce and indicate strong appropriations to the provinces and districts. There will be an element of appropriation in which you can use to factor in programmes for your youths, churches and women.

Mr WESLEY NUKUNDJ – Thank you, Mr Speaker. Firstly, I take this opportunity to thank our good Lord for choosing all of us, the 111 Members to lead this country forward in this Ninth Parliament.

Before I ask my question, I also take this opportunity to, on behalf of the people of Dei, congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your re-election for a second term to Parliament. Not only that but also because of the confidence this Government has in you to elect you to the Speaker's post On behalf of the people of Dei, I congratulate you on your being elected as the Speaker of this Ninth Parliament.

On the same token, on behalf of my people, the people of Dei, I also take this opportunity to congratulate our Prime Minister and Member for Ialibu-Pangia for his election victory as the Member for Ialibu-Pangia and also election as our Prime Minister in this Parliament.

The list would go on and on but let me cut it short here. For all the Members, Governors and Ministers, on behalf of my people, I congratulate all of you. For your election victories and I look forward to working closely with all of you, whether you are in Opposition or Government, I look forward to working with all of you.

Before I ask my question, I would do injustice to the womenfolk of my Electorate by not conveying their congratulations to the three special MPs on this Floor of Parliament. They are Governor Julie Soso, Minister Loujaya Toni and Vice Minister Delilah Gore.

It is the wish of the women and youth of my electorate that I congratulate you for your victory on this Floor of Parliament.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I'll have to interrupt you because it is Question Time and you need to ask your question.

Mr WESLEY NUKUNDJ – My question is directed at the Minister for Environment and Conservation and the Minister for Forest can take note.

My questions are related to the Middle Ramu Block One Forest Management Area and also the illegal timber permit held by Madang Timbers Limited.

Mr Speaker, due to the recent controversy surrounding the FMA permit at Middle Ramu Block One, who is developer that holds the legitimate environment permit?

Is it true that Madang Timbers have been granted some fraudulent or illegal Environment Permit by your Department?

Mr David Arore – Point of Order! Is he from the Middle Ramu or Dei Electorate?

Mr SPEAKER – Mr Minister, your point of order is completely out of order. He is a national Member of Parliament and can raise questions of national interest to any Minister.

Mr WESLEY NUKUNDJ – Mr Speaker, I am a Member of Parliament and as such, I have every right to ask any question. I wouldn't mind asking 20 questions. I will come to my personal questions on Friday. I am now asking questions of national interest.

Mr Jim Kas – Point of Order! The matter is now before the Court so we should not be pre-empting the decision of the court.

06/05

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I have to seek clarification from the Clerk on this matter.

Honorable Member, the question would be sub judice at this time so I will not allow you to ask your question.

Mr Tommy Tomscoll – Point of Order! Mr Speaker, the matter before the Court is not related to the environmental damage, that is not the substance of the Court case, therefore, I think the Member has the right to ask the Question and the people of Middle Ramu have the right to know.

Mr SPEAKER – I will not allow this question to be asked at this point in time.

Mr SAM BASIL – My question is directed to the Minister for Sports. Recently, a National Boxing tournament was held in Mumeng District and it was a very successful one but I have been involved in few other sports in the 1990's representing PNG and that moment I spent with Boxing Executives during the tournament, we have exchanged some notes and there are some things that I want to raise to the Sports Minister which will help our sports men and women, as many times we watch on television individuals playing in international matches and expect them to win but unfortunately, sometimes they come back without winning any medals. I think it's about time now to have the Government look into funding for individual sports throughout the country.

Many sports do not have the support of the Government instead they survive on their own and lack quality in their respective areas. So I am asking, can the Minister look at putting some money aside for individual sports like, boxing, athletics and martial arts as they do not cost much to move the athletes and it is easier for them to win medals.

We should be serious now to budget so that we can carry out activities during the year to pick out the best athletes to represent the country.

Mr JUSTIN TKATCHENKO – Thank you, it is a very good question and this leads us to the Government's framework, a new program called the Sports Enhancement Project which is

currently being reviewed under this Budget. This project is aimed at addressing what the Member has said and that is to give support to the sports in districts and provinces that needs help in terms of the maintenance of sporting facilities and the organization of competitions and the actual programs of particular individual sports.

We have realized that most districts and provinces are not getting the necessary support they deserve in sports and therefore, we need to incorporate this into the Sports Minister's Budget so that sporting activities and programs can be funded right down to the districts and the provinces. Our young men and women can participate and get the best out of our sporting revolution in the upcoming South Pacific Games in 2015.

Member for Bulolo, this will be addressed in the coming budget and I will emphasize more on that in my ministerial statement.

Mr ROBERT GANIM – My question is directed to the Minister for Education but firstly I would take this time on behalf of my people of Wabag to congratulate you and the Prime Minister for your election to your respective office. I also would like to thank my people of Wabag for giving me the mandate to be here in Parliament.

It was a difficult choice but I think they made the choice to have me replace the Former Member, who was former Deputy Prime Minister.

So much was reported in the media on the Outcome Based Education (OBE). There has yet to be a concrete instruction issued by the Department on what stand it is taking on the OBE. I think the people of this country have the right to know the progress of the OBE as reports in the papers indicated that the Prime Minister gave assurance to the people that OBE would be abolished next year but we have yet to receive a firm ruling from the Education Department.

Can the Minister make it clear to the Parliament and the people of this country as to when OBE abolishment would be effected?

Mr PARU AIHI – Thank you Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for his good question. We have made a decision to abolish OBE and this decision was taken by the previous Government.

07/05

But as you all know since the introduction of OBE in 1993 has really seen education in this nation has gone backwards and there are many other things that we could discuss about this at length but I intend to make a Ministerial Statement on the status of education in this nation and OBE will be addressed at that time.

I ask the honourable Member to be present and when I deliver my statement I believe the Member will be satisfied with the way the Education Department is handling this particular matter.

Mr Speaker, you are aware that a taskforce was set up under your reign as the Education Minister for an exit strategy for OBE and an alternate curriculum to be used.

One of the things we are considering seriously is that English language be brought back into our elementary education system, which has been publicly announced by the Prime Minister and I.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – EXTENDED TIME FOR QUESTIONS

Motion (by **Mr Koi Trape**) agreed to –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent the time for Questions this day being extended by 20 minutes.

Mr KOI TRAPE – Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to speak in this Ninth Parliament. On behalf of my people of Mul/Bayer, Lumusa, I would like to congratulate you on your election as the Speaker of the Parliament and I also extend my congratulations to the Honourable Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Government Ministers, the Opposition Leader and his Deputy and all the Members of Parliament. May our God guide us and lead us in his wisdom and knowledge to take this nation forward for the betterment of the people of Papua New Guinea.

Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Internal Security.

The law and order is currently the biggest problem and there needs to be an improvement on the Highlands Highway patrol.

(1) Do you have any plans to implement the police highway patrol unit presence and its men-power in the Highlands Highway?

(2) Mr Minister, in your Department improvement program, has your department considered bringing the AFP to help curb law and order in this country?

I humbly, suggest that you should consider bringing at least 100 – 200 policemen from the AFP to assist us.

I believe the Australian Police were brought in previously but due to some legal issues they were sent back. We as elected leaders have to make some changes and seriously look into our law and order problems and the ATP can be brought in and sent throughout the country to assist.

(3) How do you plan to improve the Police Department with the little amount of funding that is allocated?

Mr NIXON DUBAN – Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for Mul/Baiyer, for his questions. I understand that the Highlands Highway is very important area and it is the lifeline for big investments.

08/05

There is a greater need to that, and I can assure the Member that we are now looking at changing the shifts of Police presence. Now, we have started off with foot patrols and since the Highlands Highway is a national infrastructure and asset, it needs protection and strong Police presence.

I want to assure the Member that it has been given due priority already in terms of our discussion and I want to assure people of the Highlands regions and also other national highways within the Momase region that this concern has been addressed by the Police Commissioner and his two deputies.

We are looking at strengthening the Police Force and as I have said before, there are other issues of interest that we can address but again, it needs a lot of support in terms of financing.

When you look at the issue of ECP, that issue has been challenged in court and as much as this country wants to see some input by the Australian Police, we need to review how this arrangement went wrong in the first place and look for a better way to address it. So the commitment to talk to the Australian Police to try and resurrect the ECP is there but how it will come to fruition is an issue that will be discussed at an appropriate time.

Mrs JULIE SOSO AKIKE – Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is my first time to speak so on behalf of the people of Eastern Highlands, I want to congratulate you on your election as the Speaker of National Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I also wish to congratulate the Prime Minister, Peter O'Neill on his election as the Prime Minister which I had no part in as the counting was still in progress in Eastern Highlands. On behalf of our people, honourable Prime Minister, I congratulate you and all the Members of Parliament.

I wish to direct my question to the Minister for Health. Many mothers in Papua New Guinea are dying as a result of cervical cancer and breast cancer. I was not present so I did not hear the Minister present his ministerial statement but my question relates to these two health issues affecting many women in the country.

The cancer treatment machine in Lae is already out of order and patients who can afford treatment overseas are going to Australia but 70 per cent of the women cannot afford to do this.

What is the Health Department doing to assist and treat the women who have cancer in Papua New Guinea? We urgently need treatment centres, one in Port Moresby and one in Lae, and even one to be based in the Highlands.

Mr MICHAEL MALABAG – Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the Governor of Eastern Highlands for her very important question.

Mr Speaker, I gave my ministerial statement last week and I covered this subject in detail but I would like to also mention and reply to the Governor. As soon as I took office, we have been doing a lot of soul searching within the department. We have identified a lot of areas that need to be addressed and slowly but surely, I have gone through the identification process.

As we all know, there is only one cancer treatment centre in the country and that is in Lae, the ANGAU Memorial Hospital. The hospital itself has to go through a major

transformation in order to facilitate many of our cancer patients who have been referred there. I am in direct receipt of the major rehabilitation and also the appropriate equipment that we need to install. It is not only at ANGAU but the Port Moresby General Hospital will shortly undergo a major transformation.

This Government has put this into place and will be reflected in the 2013 Budget where one of major priorities is to ensure that we bring life saving equipment into the country. A lot of our people, due to affordability reasons, cannot travel overseas in order to get the treatment they deserve and this is why the treatment must start over here on our own shores, and it is incumbent on this Government or for any government for that matter to ensure that their citizens are given what they deserve.

In the Health sector, I have given it my undertaking as the Minister but it still boils down to the question of financing. We all know that major hospitals throughout the country operate under their separate *Provincial Health Acts* and this is why in consultation with the Department of Health, we will go about trying to address this major issue.

Honourable Governor of Eastern Highlands, you can have my assurance that we are already trying to work out something in order for us to make sure that we get those things in place, especially for the women and children in our country.

09/05

Sir MICHAEL SOMARE – Mr Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister for National Planning regarding the programmes for 2010 and 2011 for the Wewak airport which was supposed to be developed.

There was funding allocated for the development of the Wewak airport for 2010 and 2011 programmes.

(1) Why then has that funding been removed and re-directed elsewhere?

(2) Can the Minister give us back that money in his planning in the coming budget?

This funding was earmarked at that time but it was re-directed to other projects or programmes. We have been talking about re-directing funding to other areas.

(3) Why then has the government re-directed funding for the fencing of the Wewak airport grounds?

I would like the Minister to assure me of this matter and tell me if the Wewak airport will also be included in the coming budget?

We have done a lot work for some of you already and it is about time you reciprocate.

Mr CHARLES ABEL – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Grand Chief, Regional Member for East Sepik. It is wonderful to see him back in full health after his difficult time in the last twelve months, and on behalf of my people, we are very grateful and congratulate your return. It is good to see you feisty on the Floor of Parliament asking questions again and firing back, it is great as you are the Father of our country.

Mr Speaker, the Governor is referring to the Wewak airport and I must say that airports are very important in this country, not only the 22 regional airstrips but also the rural airstrips that we need to look at, and that is part of the government's comprehensive programme as far as infrastructure is concerned.

This is the reason why we are going out and seeking this broader financial framework to address all these issues, not only the Wewak airport but our international airport, 22 regional airstrips and the rural airstrips where many of our people live because they have no access to roads. But as far as the Wewak airport is concerned, I know that there have been ongoing issues, particularly on the extension of the airstrip, and I think there were some landowner issues in relation to that. This issue was managed through the Civil Aviation and National Airports Corporation (NAC).

Mr Speaker, I am not aware of the funding being re-appropriated and I believe that the funding still remains there and we will continue to support that programme and its implementation in terms of that funding. So, I will look into it to see if that funding has been re-appropriated but I do not believe that that is the case. I believe the funding is there and that it comes down to an execution problem and I know that NAC is struggling in general with their whole caddy programme through ADB. That is something that this government is aware of and is trying to speed up, not only for the Wewak airstrip but for Gurney airport, Jackson's International airport, Hoskins and Kavieng. There are many issues in relation to the airstrips, as well as our transport infrastructure and wharves, and this is why this government is focused on coming up with a comprehensive plan to address all these issues including the Wewak airport.

Thank you.

Mr JOE LERA – This is my first time to speak on the Floor of Parliament and on behalf of 300, 000 people who elected me, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Speaker of the National Parliament. Also, I would like to congratulate the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition, Deputy Leader of Opposition and all of us who have been elected to this 9th Parliament.

My questions are directed to Minister for Treasury but he is not here, therefore, I would like to ask the Prime Minister. My questions are in relation to the derivation tax in Bougainville, but before I ask my questions, I would like to give a little background information.

Due to the Bougainville Crisis, the internal revenue of Bougainville was only K9 million annually and to cater for our government annually, we have been depending on the National Government. We have been depending on the National Government giving us K189 million annually and this alone is making Bougainville survive in terms of service delivery and development.

The issue here is not that Bougainvilleans are lazy and that we are only making K9 million annually as revenue. The economy collapsed because of the Crisis and to add to that, the money earned by my people through their hard work is benefiting East New Britain in taxes.

All the cocoa and copra that my people produce are being exported out of East New Britain. Bougainville is contributing to the economic growth of East New Britain instead of Bougainville. In light of this, can the National Government and the East New Britain Governor give back some of those taxes.

(Dr Allan Marat interjecting)

Mr JOE LERA - Every week, forty to fifty businessmen and women from Bougainville go to Rabaul due to the lack of services and infrastructures we have back home. Therefore, all the money from Bougainville goes to East New Britain.

(1) Can East New Britain Provincial Government help Bougainville by funding some social projects?

(2) Can the National Government and East New Britain Provincial Government give back some of those money from taxes to help my people?

10/05

Mr PETER O'NEILL – I thank the Member for Bougainville and congratulate him on his victory. I know it was not an easy way in. I also want to thank him for his participation at the recent joint supervisory body meeting held in Kokopo.

That body was inactive for many years but it was good to see Bougainvilleans and Papua New Guinea officials able to sit down and resolve many of the issues that were outstanding for some time.

I also want to thank the regional Member and the other Members of Bougainville for a very constructive approach taken. On behalf of the National Government I thank them all.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Governor of East New Britain and the Deputy Prime Minister for hosting the Kokopo Conference. It is an excellent spot for conferences. I urge all the other Members and departments to take note and keep supporting that province for excellent work they have done in hosting such meetings.

In terms of the grant, I will get the Treasurer to write to you personally and explain what sort of support we have for Bougainville. But apart from the K15 million grants specifically mentioned in the peace agreement, the National Government continues to support it through the recurrent budget and also through the implementation of DSIP and PSIP programs.

The National Government continues to place Bougainville as one of our number one priorities in the country. That is because we have the desire to bring basic services to North Bougainville as quickly as possible. Because of that we provided an additional grant of K100 million per year in 2011 so we just gave the first K100 million cheque this year.

I also stressed during the meeting in Kokopo that we wanted to see some tangible development out of that funding. That means that we will try to fix the major highway from Kokopau to Buin, reseal Arawa township, Kieta port, Aropa airport, and address some of the power generation issues. We will also look at the Buka ring-road that the National Government has committed for many years.

As a result of our agreement on these issues, we were able to capture those infrastructure development programs in the agreement and the communiqué we signed in Kokopo. So for the first time we are naming the infrastructure. We believe that we will bring a lot of benefit to the people of Bougainville. I am very thankful today to the Bougainville Leaders who have agreed to take that approach. I am certain that over the next four or five years we will see many of these

projects coming up. I understand that; there are some private planes landing at Aropa without being controlled in that airport. We are suspicious of some of the activities that are taking place so we want Autonomous Bougainville Government to work with our Civil Aviation officers. We must take charge of who is moving in and out of Bougainville, particularly we must make sure that Bougainvilleans have direct flights out of Arawa and Aropa rather than driving up to Buka to catch the flight. Now that we have much more recommitment in working together I think we can address some of these issues in the near future.

I also want to assure the Regional Member that copra is a very important product for Bougainville and many other New Guinea Islands provinces who also grow coconut. Because of the intervention by the Minister for Agriculture, we are now putting a subsidy grant. This is because when the prices are depressed we would like to meet those prices so that we can keep the farmers working so they do not neglect their produce.

The Government is intervening at that level. We are also looking at extending at extending that extension to the other products like coffee. Mr Speaker, I want to assure the Regional Member that we have been proactive. We want Bougainville to come to normalcy as quickly as possible, and I want to assure him that this Government will work closely with him to making sure that we deliver to the commitments we made as a government to Bougainville.

Mr PETER IPATAS – My questions are directed to the Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, the initiatives taken by this Government complement the previous government's initiatives in delivering services at the district level. I want to particularly commend the Prime Minister for his bold stand in resourcing the districts.

Since we introduced DSIP there have been problems and I have been one of those few Governors who has been talking about accountability of funds. Who is taking ownership of assets. As the Governor of a province, I am concerned as well as the people of Papua New Guinea. It is not to say that we should name a few Members or to be personal in this thing, but we have to take a national approach to this.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, ask your question.

11/05

Mr PETER IPATAS – Mr Speaker, all I am saying is that since the Prime Minister has made a commitment to giving more funds to the district, are you able to assure this Parliament and the nation that there will be an improvement in the accountability of these funds?

Mr PETER O'NIELL – Thank you, Mr Speaker and I thank the honorable Governor for Enga for his very important question.

I think he asked this question to me several times before but let me reassure him again.

For me personally, I represent a rural community in this Parliament and I think many of us here are the same. And having grown up in that setting for the earlier parts of my life and having represented them in this Parliament now for well over 10 years, we all know the problems that we have in the districts and the provinces. We see the lack of basic services.

They are not asking for some service that is beyond our capacity. The people living in our rural communities make up close to five million or 85 per cent of our population. They are not asking for something out of the ordinary.

They are asking for basic services and that is why in 2002 when I got here I introduced a Bill called District Authorities. The aim was to try and divert funds directly to the districts and the provinces so we deliver these services.

Unfortunately, sometimes the Waigani bureaucracy, not the leaders, but the Waigani Bureaucracy has been an hindrance to this progress because they think that every public servant and leader is going to steal that money and corrupt it. So they stopped the flow of the money going down to the districts.

They don't care whether mothers are dying in hospitals or children are not getting an education, as long as they stop the stealing but it is alright for them to steal in Waigani.

So, let us starve our people so that we can steal in Waigani. That is what is being taking place.

Well, I can tell you that as a leader representing a rural community ii cannot stand by and allow that to continue. So, I have been very determined to, and I want to thank my former Treasurer and former Leader of Government Business, Honourable Patrick Pruaitch for understanding me when I was Leader of the Opposition and he was Treasurer to introduce this concept of DSIP.

I don't know whether or not that DSIP is working across the country, but in my district I can tell you that it is working. And that is why I am here on this Floor today, because it is working.

I am sure that goes for Member for Komo-Magarima, Rabaul and Bulolo too. I think whilst I acknowledge that there are problems, and I acknowledge that there are accountability issues we must not stop the flow of funds going to the provinces and the districts.

So, for the first time, Mr Speaker, we are now re-directing the development budget to the districts and the provinces but with very, very strict guidelines and I want to assure the Governor on that.

And also as a result of that direct funding we are now putting separate funding for audit and inspection. The Finance Department will, at random, without any notice come and inspects any treasury office in the country at their desire. So, they will be doing the audit. That used to happen before. I don't know why we stopped it, Waigani just kept on cutting everything and as a result of that all the auditors and inspectors were not able to go down to the districts.

Mr Speaker, I want to assure the Governor that there has been instances where Members of Parliament are buying assets for their district through the DSIP. I understand that some of these assets have been transferred to their personal name. We understand that some of them have been owned by family members. These are all public properties.

So, we are now asking the Chairman of the SWEEP team and his team to investigate areas where these assets are known to have been transferred to individual family members and other people.

I can tell you that as soon as we improve the accountability and auditing all these things will come to light and those who have transferred the people's and government's property to their own personal use will be held accountable.

Of that I can assure the Governor that it will happen. But please, those problems does not mean that we stop the flow of funds and services to our people. Let us support our government's initiative in making sure that we re-direct the funding aspects of this development budget in the future.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance) – I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION – ESTABLISHMENT AND APOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That Mr Gordon Wesley, be appointed Chairman, Mr Ereman ToBaining Jr be appoint Deputy Chairman and Mr Lidwig Schulz, Mr William Powi, and Mr Nixon Mangape be appointed members of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Legislation.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – RERRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent Notice No. 10 being called on forthwith.

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF OPPOSITION – STATEMENT – PAPER NOTED

Debate resumed from 23 October (See page....)

12/05

Mr DON POLYE (Kandep-Minister for Treasury) – I would like to continue with the debate that was led by the Leader of the Opposition where he raised the important issue of the

2012 General Election. I also take note of the question without notice asked by the NCD Governor to the Prime Minister. That is an issue of national significance and I think Parliament should debate and assess the situation as to the claims made by the Leader of the Opposition with regards to verifying through our systems, whether or not there is justification for the claims made.

If there is some truth in that, it is a matter that we cannot overlook and if there is none, rather than speculating these should be issues that we should have discuss within the provisions of the Government.

I would like to bring us back to the Elections, to the debates and some of the actions that were involved and other important factors that influenced various decisions made on the Floor of Parliament and also the decisions of the Government that led to the Elections.

The 2012 Elections was not a normal election that the country would have experienced like it had been in the past because the circumstances that the elections were run under were absolutely unprecedented but despite that I would like to state boldly here that the Elections were conducted well with full confidence from the Electoral Commission, the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, the Defence Force, Correctional Service, the teachers, health workers throughout the provinces and the districts that worked under difficult circumstances. In my observations the Elections were conducted very well.

The Members of Parliament who are here now have not come through a system that is being corrupted, or robbed we have come through the normal democratic process and every Member has been duly elected by the people of this nation under very trying times.

Why I am saying that these elections were conducted through trying times is due to these factors; we had problems that were created by a situation where the Chief Electoral Officer of the Country went through a strenuous politically motivated leadership tribunal in the Courts.

I say politically motivated because I know about that as I was in the previous Government, because I know about how the Grand Chief Sir Michael, politically motivated imposed conditions the leader had to go through in respect of the leadership tribunal in order not to cause stress in the governance and leadership in the top level.

Leading to that the Grand Chief, had to be hospitalized for a prolonged period due to medical conditions that we are all aware of, and accessibility by an acting Prime Minister put in

charge of the country's governance and leadership who in my own opinion did not administer his functions as well as he should have.

When that happened we saw the country not moving in the way it should have and some of us decided that we should create a new scenario. Others called that new scenario the defected government but we called it the Government because the Parliament had the power to put it in order and it is now water under the bridge.

That Government came in and what did we do? We made several decisions on the Floor of Parliament. Some I must say were not done in the best interest of the country which I am happy under the Prime Minister's leadership, the coalition Government agreed that the House should amend them and revert to normalcy.

Of course there was the fiasco between the Legislative and the Justice system. Then you had a fragmentation within the Police Force and the Defence Force system, so we had situations that made things difficult as they coincided with the Elections.

Even the Parliament considered deferring the Election to a later date but some of us felt it might not be in the best interest of the nation so we allowed the elections to go through. So when the Legislature is fighting with the judiciary and Disciplinary Forces are divided created by these situations that I have mentioned, you cannot entirely lay the blame on one person like the Electoral Commissioner and say he never ran the Elections properly.

We created the situation that led to unprecedented circumstances causing systems of Government especially elections to be conducted under difficulty but I think they did a good job.

Because sometime back there was a failed Election in Southern Highlands Province in 2002 and we had to go for a Supplementary Elections but we did not experience any failed elections in PNG under these circumstances. We have fights, rivalries and so forth to get to where we are but that's normal.

You are competing to have the mandate from the people; you have to excel yourself to do the right things to win. We have done what it takes to be here so let us not condemn our Electoral Commissioner; he had to cope with the system and the circumstances that we the leaders created.

Let's admit that we have gone wrong in doing some things that created situations that we did not want to experience. All in all the 2012 General Elections was conducted democratically and correctly and we have come this far so let us uphold this and commend the Elections and

everyone involved to make it a fair election. PNG is a democratic country and in that way we can paint a very bad picture on democracy globally for our country.

13/05

I wish to commend the Electoral Commissioner and his team, the Police Commissioner and his team, the Defence Force Commander and his team and the public servants of this country. Regardless of some of those negative comments that we have made about that time, I think under very trying times that this Parliament created in the short time of the impasse they have stood out well.

Mr Speaker, most importantly, when Prime Minister O'Neill, Deputy Namah, and Honourable Bart Philemon and some of the Ministers went down to the Government House, there was an impasse by the Police Force resulting from division within the ranks. During these conflicting times, our people never took sides. They stood resilient to principles of peace and justice and they held us together.

For us to say that these elections were failed elections, that would deny the people who stood tall and strong to get this Parliament democracy going.

Mr Speaker, I would like to dismiss any claims that the elections were not conducted properly and if there are any issues, appropriate systems are in place, like the Court of Disputed Returns, that will deal with those issues. We don't need to establish another Commission of Inquiry into this. We do need to discuss further. In fact, when we talk about issues before the Courts, they are in numbers and are all related to election results, generic ballot papers and other similar matters. The Court of Disputed Returns will verify the facts because they are the appropriate authorities to do that. This Parliament should be happy with democracy and support it and move on.

Mr Speaker, the issue of the K6 billion is a fascinating topic that my honourable colleague, the Member for Kandrian-Gloucester, is so keen about along with Dr Marat.

Mr Speaker, what better time will Papua New Guinea have to look at mobilizing resources within the domestic market as well as the international market or making use of the existing facilities to advance the progress of development?

What better time when your microeconomics stability is there and your foreign reserve is sitting at K10 billion, and inflation rate is at 5 per cent as against the GDP growth, which is 10 percent with investments.

For the simple people who don't understand economics, let's see the traffic, which is always congested and we lose a lot of time and it is a pain. But the good news is that your country is growing.

Of course there are arguments in the rural areas of when they are going to see this and that and that is why the job of this Parliament is to make sure that the National Budget must deliver those issues.

That's where the Prime Minister is coming from when answering questions from various Members and Governors that we have to allocate money directly to the districts and provinces and create a separate chart of accounts and systems of accountability for the districts and provinces and down to the Councilors in their LLG's.

So we are paving the way for the Budget that trickles down to the people down there. So what are the impact areas that we address? Let's give everyone out there in the provinces and districts some kind of financial autonomy. Let's not control the development Budget up here at Waigani.

Of, course capacity is a issue but we have got to manage that and lets empower our people to make their choices. Yes, they are bound to make mistakes. When I hear about people saying capacity of the know-how, I say, unless we try people out and let them take charge of their destiny, we will never build capacity in this country and we will never train them.

Mr Speaker, capacity and experience comes from mistakes, trials and failures. A country must be built on trials and failures. It is a learning process for the people and Government. Over time we will become better at it. By the time we become better at it, we have already become experts.

Americans, Australians, Chinese and every developed nation who come to us and preach to the world about success and not failures, don't believe that because they made mistakes over hundreds of years and learnt from them. We are only 30 years old.

(Mr Sam Basil interjecting)

Mr DON POLYE – I have done a lot of things that's why you are benefiting. If I go down my track record you will see.

Mr Speaker, we have got to give the money direct to the provinces and districts, let's not control the development Budget here in Waigani. Let's give it to the people. If they make a mistake they go to jail and they learn from it and improve our nation and develop it.

Allow me to get the K6 billion or K20 billion I can get because the conditions are correct under a very responsible fiscal policy.

Let me assure the spokesman of the Opposition on Treasury matters that I will be giving a multibillion kina Budget in two week's time.

Mr Speaker, we are on the right track.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr DON POLYE – Let's just say the elections were democratic elections and any issues that arise, the Courts will attend to them and not waste our time talking about these issues and not give our democracy a bad name. Our democracy is thriving.

The Government is on the right track to draw down any finance to address all the Members including the Opposition Members concerns. We don't see you as individual persons but we see the people that you represent and the Government is going to look after your people as well so support this Government.

Sitting suspended from 12.20 p.m. to 2 p.m..

14/05

Mr SAM BASIL (Bulolo – Deputy Leader of the Opposition) – Mr Speaker, by way of introduction, I respectfully remind the Chair of the Speaker's spoken intention to raise the level of decorum, dignity and integrity of Parliament and Parliament session standards reflecting that of the highest democratic institution of Papua New Guinea.

In that vein, can I suggest to the Parliament and to the Chair in particular to establish a vetoing committee that ensures only documents, bills and ministerial statements of the highest quality befitting decisions for our great nation and people, and their wellbeing, prosperity and security are tabled and entertained by this Parliament.

The National Parliament is the legislature of our great country and the Members of Parliament are enhanced and expressed by the high standard of work, the quality of paper prepared and the high standard of presentation with dignity in this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, you are the chief custodian, conductor and judge of all those.

This Parliament, under our Westminster system of government, has an Opposition, and the Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Belden Namah has appointed Shadow Ministers tasked to monitor, critic and provide alternate views on the various areas of responsibilities of State Ministers. As a wing of Parliament, it will be our duty, honour and privilege to do this on behalf of our great people.

May I kindly suggest to the Chair that the following ministerial statements by the Ministers, the obvious first of right response ought to be from the Shadow Ministers responsible. Thank you for taking my comments onboard, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I rise today to speak in my capacity as the Opposition's spokesman for Health and HIV/AIDS. Firstly, I wish to congratulate Honourable Michael Malabag on his election by the Moresby North-West people and on his appointment to oversee the Health sector in our country.

Health Department is one of the pillars that hold Papua New Guinea together and we are all in agreement about the need for adequate care and cures for our citizens' wellbeing and wealth. Leadership in Health in all forms and stratum must not be treated lightly.

More importantly, resourcing and management in the Health sector must be treated with intensive care and visionary foresights. Every other pillars deal with life and death issues indirectly but in Health, we deal with life and death issues of our people directly.

Mr Speaker, I must admit that I was gravely disappointed with the honourable Minister's preface of health and death situation. I am concerned about the seemingly lack of insight and indefinite lack of foresight in the Minister's first ministerial statement on Health. The ministerial statement read more like a bad research and a badly written newspaper report than a sovereign State Minister's statement on the health of the nation and its people.

Let me provide the alternative for the honourable Members.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Deputy Opposition Leader, I must remind you that we are now debating on the statement by the Opposition Leader. We will have time for the reply to the Health Minister’s statement in the future.

Mr SAM BASIL – Thank you Mr Speaker. I don’t think we debated the Health Minister’s ministerial statement and I believe it is on the Notice Paper.

Mr SPEAKER – It has been taken note of and it will be brought up later.

Motion (by **Mr Sam Basil**) agreed to –

That the question be now put.

Motion – That the Parliament take note of the paper – agreed to.

**HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY –
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT –
PAPER NOTED**

Debate resumed from 24 October 2012 (See page ...)

Mr SAM BASIL (Bulolo – Deputy Leader of the Opposition) – Mr Speaker, I rise today to speak in my capacity as the Opposition’s spokesman for Health and HIV/AIDS.

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Let me provide the alternative for the honourable Members, representatives of our 89 districts as well as 20 esteemed provincial governors.

Papua New Guinea's population of seven million today will double in 25 years to 14 million at current population growth rate of 5.2 per cent. That is about 300 000 babies born every year. What it means is that whatever health service capacity and delivery related problems we have now, if they are not built up beyond the population growth rate, our health services will be swamped twice or even three times as much.

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Please allow me to highlight some statistics.

The total number of doctors in both the private and public health services is about 450. We have a doctor to population ratio of one doctor to every 15,000 people. The University of Papua New Guinea Medical School based in Taurama campus produces 40 national doctors annually, but there are more than 300, 0000 live babies born annually.

Theoretically, that works out to one new graduate doctor for every 7,500 live babies annually. If the birth rate does not change and the number of doctors produced annually remains the same, this disparity is unbelievably phenomenal.

Mr Speaker, on top of the ratio of one doctor to 15,000 people, we will be adding 7,500 people to every additional doctor. If none of the doctors retire or die in five years the ratio of doctors produced to population growth will be at 1:8,750.

In order to improve health outcome indicators, the huge ratio disparity between health workers to the population must be reduced from one health worker per 800 people to one health worker per 50 people in the next twenty years.

Currently the total workforce of doctors, health extension officers, nursing officers and community health workers add up to just over 8,000. That implies a ratio of one health worker to

every 825 people. This ratio is what places Papua New Guinea in the bottom twenty countries in the world as far as the outcome of health indicators are concerned.

There are currently 40 health facilities operating as hospitals in the country. Twenty are provincial hospitals and out of these 24 are church-run and operate in the rural areas. There are four public rural hospitals and three hospitals in the mining townships around the country.

There are just over 90 health centers, facilities, and 60 sub-health centers and just over 2,000 aid posts operating in the country. About 40 per cent of these aid posts are closed down to date. The special medical services sector has 90 specialists with 70 per cent of them due for eligible retirement from public service. That would only leave only less than 30 medical specialists if the retirement is due with immediate effect.

The UPNG Medical School annual medical specialist production is up to 10 but in reality, it is less than five medical specialists per annum. In 10 years when the aging medical specialists retire, there will be only a hundred medical specialists produced. The net medical specialist production by UPNG, the only medical school in Papua New Guinea is a hundred. Also, in 10 years, there will be an additional 3 million people to the current 7 million people. To expect the hundred new specialists to serve 10 million people in real terms is no gain in specialist medical care.

Currently the health burdens, which is the ability of the health system to deal effectively with health problems arising from a given country, falls into four categories:

- (1) the infectious disease burden;
- (2) the non-infectious disease burden;
- (3) the emergency health care services; and,
- (4) The surgery oriented health care.

Category one includes disease process arising from infectious agents such as malaria, tuberculosis, sexually transmitted infections, typhoid, measles and dengue fever. These diseases are preventable and most treatable and the potential to recur is very negligible in as far as health economics and investments are concerned. Aggressive preventive health programmes are required.

Mr Speaker, in the long term, health investment in this area which is predominantly in the curative health care is not sustainable. They will come to suck dry the limited health resources. Long term health investment must be forecast on primary health and preventative medical health.

Mr Speaker, category two includes disease processes such as diabetes, arthritis, hypertension, heart diseases and obesity which arise as a result of immerging lifestyles that PNG urban dwellers are going through. Because of the recurring of the disease processes, the burden on the already under-funded health expenditure will be very huge. It will be a costly exercise to treat them to prevent the development of the disease processes. It is better to engage an aggressive public health preventative programme to prevent lifestyle diseases.

In other words, improve lifestyle through healthy and disciplined eating, regular exercise and rest so that this category two disease processes are out before they come into being disease entities. Uncurbed because of the recurrent nature of the disease processes, they will absorb a huge portion of the recurrent budget.

Category three includes health care and emergencies that arise from accidents, violence, fire, occupational injuries and natural or man-made disasters. Though the occurrence may not be frequent, the severity of care may absorb huge limited health resources because most injury might attract tertiary health care, which in itself is very expensive to operate. The capacity to deal with category three health care is very limited but prevention emphasis on this requires multi-sectoral approach involving awareness by Police, Traffic, Mining and Fire Services, community development and social awareness initiatives.

Category four, surgery oriented health care is a highly specialised area and it does require a huge amount of health expenditure to install and maintain the operations. These include equipment and manpower training. It requires ongoing improvement and expansion of care including highly specialised tertiary medical training.

There are currently 89 districts in Papua New Guinea. In order to bring the level of health care in the districts to build the capacity up to where it can provide emergency obstetrics and effective referral, such as operating theaters, pathology services, x-ray, transfusion services and in-patient wards would require at least K10 million per district or K890 million.

The districts have need to have other compatible infrastructure such as electricity, roads, bridges, schools, post offices, shopping center and banking services for the doctors and allied health workers to be attracted to.

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It will cost another K20 million to build these infrastructure. So an additional K170 million is needed to build the district infrastructure to provide holistic investment to build the capacity of the district health systems to deliver effectively. A satellite district urban development is a requirement in order that holistic infrastructure development at the district level concurrent with health infrastructure development is realistically ascertained.

The salaries of two medical doctors and other health workers including allowances and housing would be around K3 million per district. So we are talking about K267 million for the entire country per annum.

The training of doctors costs K120,000 per doctor per year. In order to train a doctor to graduate which takes five years, it will take K600 000 per doctor. We need to at least train 200 doctors in the next five years to have two doctors posted to each district hospital throughout the country. K120 million is needed to train 200 doctors. In five years K600 million is required to train 200 doctors.

An additional K100 million is required by the only medical school at UPNG to provide additional infrastructure for the increased intake of students to 100 per year. So in five years, the country can produce 500 doctors to position in the rural health facilities at the cost of K700 million.

If another medical school is to be built, it will require K300 million to invest in building the capacity for additional 200 new medical graduates and allied health scientists, lecturers, support staff salaries and the actual construction of the new medical school.

The allied and health technical workers training require K60 000 per annum. As eight workers are needed per district health facility, that works out to be K480 000. To produce eight workers each for all 89 districts, that is 712 laboratory technicians, that would require K341.76 million per year; K1.7 billion in five years. The recurrent expenditure on their salaries will be over K22 million.

The nurse requirement is 4000 to fill in the hospital and rural health facilities. In the next five years at K30 000 per nurse trainee, it will cost K120 million for training of 800 nurses per annum. It requires additional K100 million to put infrastructure in place to accommodate for the increase in nursing intake. The salaries of nurses as recurrent budget in five years will be K83.2 million.

The community health worker (CHW) requirement is 4000 to fill the hospital and rural health facilities. It will cost K120 million to train them, 800 CHWs per annum. It requires an additional K100 million to put infrastructure in place to accommodate for the increase in CHWs intake. In five years the recurrent budget for the salary will be blown further by K74.6 million.

There will also be specialist nursing training in intensive care units, midwifery, child health, accident and emergency, psychiatry, surgery, internal medicine, ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat), and neonatal care. One hundred nurses are required for these training every year. In the next five years, there will be 500 specialized nurses trained. That will cost K12 million per annum in training K40 000 per specialist nurse and K60 million kina over the five years. Their salaries will cost the State some K15.6 million.

In five years, it will cost the State almost K13.5 billion to produce additional 1000 doctors, 100 medical specialist, 500 nursing specialists, 800 allied health workers, 8000 nurses and 8000 CHWs. That is K2.7 billion kina per annum as separate health development funding.

In five years the Papua New Guinea population will increase by 1.5 million people to almost over 8 million people. We will produce additional health workers of almost 18,000 bringing the PNG health workers to just fewer than 25 000 by year 2017. Fifty per cent of the current workforce will require lawful retrenchment. Therefore, the total health workforce in PNG by 2017 will be about 20,000.

It will cost the State K13.5 billion in five years to produce 18,000 additional health workers to reduce the current disparity of one health worker for 800 people or one doctor to every 15,000 people or one doctor for every 5333 people.

The K13.5 billion investments in the new Health Development Investment programs will reduce the disparity between health workers to population by 50 per cent. If the State continues to fund K2.7 billion on new Health Development Investment for the next 10 years K27 billion, we will produce just over 40,000 health workers. In ten years, PNG population will grow by three million bringing to almost nine million people by 2022.

The disparity between health workers to population in ten years if State funded K24 billion, it will be one health worker for every 225 people. In ten years time, the disparity between one health worker to population will be reduced by 70 per cent. The WHO review clearly reinforces that very low health worker to population ratio, significantly improve health outcomes.

Mr Speaker, the statistics that I have highlighted is not new. They should be the basis of future resourcing of the Health Sector because of two main problems.

(1) The current health workforce consists of 70 per cent of workers due for lawful retirement.

(2) Our health facilities are not only deteriorating but insufficient and swamped already by crowds with a still growing population.

Otherwise, Mr Speaker, the overall health system in the country will collapse if remedial, curative, preventative action is not seriously accounted, deliberated and acted upon immediately.

Mr Speaker, there has already been calls for an urgent need to design an economic model to reform and transform the National Economy of Papua New Guinea to cater for massive capital investment not only in the area of health and other social services but the capital investments in the infrastructure development investments in Telecommunication, transport, information technology, energy and the National Security, Agriculture, Fisheries and national housing projects for the citizens.

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This is vital if we need to deliver effective health infrastructure development programmes as they must be done holistically with other developments.

The Opposition stands ready to support the government in this life-saving health sector of Papua New Guinea. But the government must be factual in their approach and come with a proactive visionary approach, Mr Speaker, so we can curb our immediate health woes while designing facilities and training manpower resources in the tune of our growing population.

Finally, Mr Speaker, the government must be prepared to resource up to K3 billion additional annual development funding for the next five years and monitor the usage so it is strategically applied in building health facilities, infrastructure and health workers capacity and numbers.

Mr POWES PARKOP (National Capital District) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to contribute to the debate.

Mr Speaker, before I go on with the debate, please, Mr Speaker, the Chamber is almost empty. There should be some ways in which we monitor Members' participation so those of us

who attend can be rewarded in some ways. Because I know that in the last term, Mr Speaker, you also know that my participation in the Chamber has been very high. I have a 95 per cent attendance record. So there should be some ways in which your office can recognize some of us who try to fulfill our duties as legislators.

Mr Speaker, I want to contribute, but I thought that this afternoon we will be continuing the debate on the Opposition Leader's statement. I will come to that later on.

But, just to comment on the statement by the Deputy Opposition Leader on the Report to Parliament by the Minister for Health, I thought that the Minister for Health, being a first time MP without any background in health gave a good statement to Parliament outlining the dire situation that we face and what we could do about it.

I want to commend the Minister for Health. He is an MP from our capital city, though he had been vocal outside in the unions, he has almost no background in health. But his presentation, I thought should be commended by both sides of the Parliament because he tried to capture almost everything that the Member for Bulolo tried to present as an Opposition's alternative plan for the health sector.

Let me just go through some of it. He qualified his report to the Parliament by saying this. In the beginning of his statement he said something to this effect.

Mr Speaker, PNG's health statistics are well documented and I wish not to dwell too much on them now, rather I must mention a number of major challenges which shall remind us, national leaders, whether it is Ministers, Member of an electorate, Governor of a province or others to assist in addressing them.

That was the premise to which the Minister gave his statement to Parliament and if you look at his statement it captures almost all of what the Member for Bulolo said. He addressed maternal mortality, infant mortality, immunization, measles, health workers, especially the problem that we have with an aging workforce, and how we can come up with strategies to overcome them.

He also addressed major diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, which is making comeback, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS, and almost all the sectors, including, he went on to talk about governance, legislatures, governance and policy, especially us moving into only one system.

In the past we used to have a provincial health system and a national health system but now we have come up with a legislative framework by which we can have the provincial health authority where we combine the national and provincial governments working together.

He also addressed the need to come up with a good medical supply system that ensures that the medical supplies reach all the clinics and aid posts.

So, I thought the Minister for Health gave a good picture or outline of the health situation facing our country. Of course he did not cover everything but, let me say this, he also mentioned that everything is captured in the National Health Plan 2011-2020. So everything is there, we just need to read that health plan. It covers everything that the honourable Member for Bulolo says.

But this brings me to what I was going to say about the Leader of the Opposition's statement and the Opposition's reply to some of our ministers' statements.

Mr Speaker, you know my views. In the last Parliament we all have been sharing this. And in this Parliament too, I wish to continue to advocate this. I am not sure if we really need an Opposition in this country. I have to be blunt and be public about this.

I think this is a system that belongs to Westminster and England and we should not just copy it just because we want to be a democratic system. We can come up with our own version of democracy. These people on the right side were just on the left side with us not so long ago. They are our brothers, really they should be with us in the government but only they know why they are not.

We should measure some of our debates so that we help each other because in the PNG system and in our culture we don't have government and opposition. In the villages everybody is both government and opposition. This is what we should be considering and moving towards achieving. Maybe we should consider having only one chamber where we are all government and opposition at the same time. That will allow debate to flow smoothly, we criticize objectively and we help the incumbent Prime Minister whoever it is to come up with good policies because at the end of the day we agree to almost everything.

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Perhaps, the style is different but we want to improve the infrastructure and service delivery for our people. I think it is just the style or the priority or schematics but we get in Government and Opposition because we have inherited the English System so we criticize just

for the sake of criticizing. And we should start to move on some of these big issues so that we can manage country and getting it going to meet the needs of our people.

Otherwise we will be engaging in politics forever and never achieving the objectives or desires that our people want us to do. And if people don't like that idea that we should do away with the Opposition, there is an alternative and that we can go through a presidential system.

In the world now 95 per cent of the world follows the presidential system of government and only five per cent follow the Westminster system that came as a tradition from colonization. Why does 95 per cent of the world follow the presidential system? Perhaps it is the better system, it might get us to govern the country and manage our people and achieve the goals of development rather than this system that we have inherited and are holding onto for too long.

This is the point where I want to come in where the Opposition Leader's statement is concerned and I want to commend him because as an opposition they have to come up with alternative views.

Mr SPEAKER – I must remind you Governor that we are debating the statement of the Health Minister; we have put to rest the Leader of Oppositions' statement.

Mr POWES PARKOP – Thank you, Mr Speaker I will get to that, I thought we were debating the other issue. It was a good statement that gives us a start. I have been able interject when he was presenting it because his predecessor always came up with task force and I am happy that he did not mention the word task force.

But the former Minister, with due respect, would come up with task force for issues regarding health. And they never delivered.

Mr Ken Fairweather – Point of Order! Please do not talk about the previous Health Minister, he is no longer here to defend himself.

Mr SPEAKER –Governor continue please and Honorable Member please resume your seat.

Mr POWES PARKOP – We just need to recite a bit of history to remind ourselves. As I remind the Minister now that he is not resorting to that sort of decision where we defer the decisions and don't make anything by getting the task force but never do so.

I am happy that the Minister has outlined in general what our health needs are in the country and I want to commend him on that but there are some things that we all need to address. Some were mentioned by the Government and others by the Opposition. We should take in all these things and analyses them for ourselves and not ignore any of them because the Opposition said it or the Government. Some of the things raised by the opposition on costing we should take into account.

We must have a plan and a very clear outcome so we must integrate all this into our plans and we must know and be precise about the outcomes that we want and the strategies that we are going to put in place to achieve those outcomes. We can come up with good statements and policies but if we do not translate those into strategies and clear outcomes we will miss the opportunities and mislead our people to think that we are doing well but instead we are just going around in circles.

Some of the things that I would like the Minister to consider is that he should come up with strategies on the things that he mentioned like the infant mortality rate, reducing maternal mortality and other areas which are not fully laid out in his statement.

Mr Speaker, we have come up with the free basic medical care. That is good but if we do not deliver the supplies to the health facilities this will amount to nothing. If we ask some of these facilities to stop collecting fees, they might close down and that is because we are not delivering the medical supplies to all the health facilities in the country.

The Minister should come up with the strategy on how to reduce HIV/AIDS prevalence rate. The United Nations has set out for the next five years to achieve zero per cent prevalence rate and that is a very high goal for us to achieve but we can achieve it. Here in Port Moresby when we started our term in 2007, the national prevalence rate, including NCD, was at two per cent and we made a commitment to reduce it below one per cent.

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Today, we have achieved that because we were committed to funding it and supporting our provincial AIDS Committees. We encouraged people to come and do testing and we

achieved the result that is in the city now. I don't know about other provinces but we need the Health Ministry and the provincial governors to come up with the strategy and curb this dreadful epidemic.

The Minister must be very clear on how we are going to do this. The United Nations has set a target in the next five years for us to achieve zero percent prevalence rate. It's not that difficult. We can achieve it. But the Minister must take the lead and provincial Governors must come up with a strategy to achieve that goal that has been set for all of us all around the world.

One of the points that I keep emphasizing on, in the last term of Parliament, which Mr Fairweather complained to me about, is preventive health care.

The Minister and the Government must give priority to preventive health care as much as to specialized health care, and I will continue to say this. Many times we give a false impression to our people by saying, let him get sick, drink more beer, chew betel-nut, so he can be treated by the doctors. We build hospitals, clinics and we hire doctors and purchase equipments but we may be sending the wrong message to our people.

Mr Speaker, it is a good political thing to go out and open a new health clinic because we will get more votes. Maybe we are sending the wrong message altogether. We should encourage our people to practice preventive health care. There is not a lot of attention to this issue.

May I remind all Members that we are tired and soon we are going to ban betel nut in our capital city. Even our educated people with degrees shame us because they chew and spit and spread TB.

If we start taking some tough measures and getting our people to practice good eating and drinking habits maybe there will be no need for them to go to the hospitals. The Government must make it an objective that the doctors should be the last person people go to see.

If we can reduce the number of times people visit doctors then we are doing well. Some of this curable health services that we are encouraging are mainly there for mothers and children because mothers and children don't have a lot of control over their health and their bodies. When a mother is pregnant she must go and see a doctor. But there is no need for the men to see a doctor unless they are very sick. If we practice preventive health care we don't need to see a doctor. Most of the diseases are self-inflicted and then we go to the hospitals and when the services are not good we complain and threaten the doctors. Some people have ended up

assaulting doctors. They should go to the mirror and have a look at themselves. Who caused you to go there in the first place?

Mr Speaker, we have to improve our basic hygiene, basic health care and our people should be encouraged to go down that path so that we alleviate the need for specialized health doctors.

Mr Speaker, curable health is important. There are some that can not be prevented. I don't know how they describe them but if the former Minister was here he knows all the terminology such as non-communicable or un-communicable because they are airborne or otherwise.

We also need specialized healthcare and there is hardly enough specialized healthcare in our country. A lot of people are suffering from lifestyle diseases in Papua New Guinea. These are diseases such as heart problems caused by unhealthy eating habits. We need to seriously address this issue.

Mr Speaker, we don't have specialized hospitals for heart and kidney problems in this country and so the Minister should balance basic health care and specialized health care and come up with a plan to achieve some clear outcomes that are achievable.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Minister for his first Ministerial Statement. I think he has done well but only time will tell. I take this opportunity to remind him that there is a program that we are putting together.

The Government of Cuba has offered to train some of our medical students for free and there are about 32 countries around the world that will benefit. Among those in the Pacific and Asia are Timor-Leste, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands. I can't see why we -

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, your debate time has lapsed. You may resume your seat.

Mr SASSINDRA MUTHUVEL (West New Britain) – Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to speak.

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We are trying to pretend all is well but the truth of the matter is our health facilities have deteriorated. When people get seriously ill in the rural areas, it is costly to bring them to Kimbe. It costs about K28 000 just to bring two mothers all the way from Gasmata to Kimbe and then they will wait another 72 hours before the doctor will attend to them, and at the end, their families find out that these two mothers are dead. That is the truth of the matter.

So in our health policy, I want to suggest that the medical students studying a five-year course should serve six months of this time in the rural areas. Right now, we don't have any doctors serving in the rural areas of West New Britain, they only serve in the main health centres. At the same time, we have two systems where the general hospital does not come under the responsibility of the provincial government even with the appointments of CEOs and board members.

From personal experience, doctors will not serve you quickly unless you are a friend or if you are some one with influence and can be able to pay them. Sometimes we must pay extra money to get lifesaving operations. Therefore, I am suggesting that we can make it compulsory for medical students to do their practical in the rural areas for six months or one year.

I must commend the Health Minister for coming up with the idea of establishing provincial Health Authorities. This is a good initiative where they will bring devolution of powers to the provincial governments but at the same time, the provinces will also need capacities and training. It is a good initiative by the Government to devolve the powers down to the provincial level and in fact, the honourable Minister will visit West New Britain this weekend to hold a conference on provincial Health Authority.

I wish to also commend the Governor of NCD, Honourable Powes Pakorp, for his suggestion that our doctors must go to Cuba for specialised training. Right now, we are facing shortage of doctors. If there should be a policy where the National Government can allow the provincial governments to recruit doctors, even from overseas, especially to serve the rural population. I know that some provinces are making private arrangements with private hospitals like in Milne Bay Province for doctors to visit once a month.

Through this, I believe, our people in the rural areas will have the opportunity to see doctors. As added incentives, we should also provide additional allowances for doctors who are willing to serve in the rural areas.

In West New Britain, HIV/AIDS is one of the major diseases and when we have vibrant economy because of oil palm, it also comes with such diseases.

On hygiene, 90 per cent of the diseases can be addressed if our people can be educated on hygienic ways. In my personal experience, I have seen that people wear same clothing and don't shower for 10 days so we must educate our people in hygienic health practices. With chewing of betel nut, they spit spray in the air and it mixes with the wind and spread diseases such as TB.

Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – Thank you Mr Speaker, I also wish to participate in this debate.

I would like to commend the Minister for Health on his ministerial statement and I also would like to commend the Deputy Opposition Leader for a very critical assessment where he raised some very important pertinent matters.

I have a few points to make in relation to that ministerial statement that was presented and one of them is about population. I noted that there was no mention of a National Family Planning Policy or any effort to develop policies to curb the population growth of our country. Papua New Guinea has the highest population growth rate in the region and it is described to have one of the highest in the world.

Currently it is about two per cent although it varies due to very poor data collection and statistics retention type efforts. You can guess that it is between two and three percent and we are unable to count some people in the very remote areas or in settlements. This will pose some significant and substantial problems in the future. We have limited infrastructure which is deteriorating and which has been built and developed to cater for only specific population.

Our population growth is placing a huge burden on the existing infrastructure and in addition to that, we have limited resources and yet, we have not made an effort to develop a plan to check the population growth of our country.

The entire world is suffering from population growth problem and after the global financial crisis problem, we are going to be faced with food and water crisis, and we will be facing those problems in Papua New Guinea. We can preach all about the economic boom but if are unable to provide for our people, they will suffer the consequences. Poverty, crime and other issues are all related to population boom and unchecked population growth.

So I would like to suggest that an effort be made to develop a policy to check our population, and such an effort should include the development of curriculum so that it can be taught at our educational institutions where our children are taught about the importance of basic hygiene, nutrients and fitness and even population growth.

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I would like to also suggest that we make an effort to improve the welfare benefits of our health care workers, many of whom are still receiving the same pay that they have been receiving for the last twenty years.

When we talk about that, let us look at the accommodation allowances that are paid to public servants, K7 per fortnight in most instances. This is truly sad, that thirty-six years on we are still paying our public servants K7 housing allowances per fortnight. I was one of those public servants, and what can you purchase for K7 per fortnight? Where can you live? Our public servants are living in settlements, villages and struggling to survive due to the increasing costs of living.

This is an issue that the Health Minister should take note and are include in his Health Plans. I would also suggest that, those you wish to become health care workers be trained for free and also encourage the training of our health care workers abroad. And I also take note of the suggestion made by the Governor for NCD in regards to Cuba where it has one doctor per seven households. They also contribute to the rest of the world by providing 20,000 doctors, more so than any developed economy. They have offered us assistance but we have continued to ignore their offer and our other neighbours in the region have already taken up that offer, such as Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Fiji and so forth.

We should make a significant effort to reach out to them and take up this kind offer. We should not allow the Western nations to discourage us because I know that, that is where the discouragement is coming from.

Mr Speaker, having said that, I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this matter and I would wish to point out that the ratio of doctors to people in all our provinces is atrocious and terrible, and I will give you an example; in Oro province we have six doctors for a population of about 180, 000 people. That is one doctor to 30,000 people and as a

result we are seeing the continuous deaths of mothers and children. They are the victims of our poor management, lack of leadership and guidance.

They have been carried over mountains, across rivers and through forests only to end up in an aid post that does not have medicine, aid or health care workers or a doctor. And when a child dies they have to track back, several days even back to their villages crying and weeping and asking themselves what is happening amidst all these economic boom that we are preaching about.

Mr ATI WOBIRI (Western) – Thank you for recognising me and the people of Western Province. I, too, would like to join in the debate on the ministerial statement made by the Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS.

As this is my first time to speak on this Floor of Parliament, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my personal congratulations and that of my people from the Western province to the highest office of this honourable Parliament. I am certain that you are God's appointed leader for such a time as this. And I know that you will restore the respect and the godly values and the principles on which this Parliament was built.

Mr Speaker, I also want to take this opportunity to offer my warm congratulations and that of my people to Prime Minister, Hon. Peter O'Neill and to the Deputy Prime Minister, Honourable Leo Dion for the election to their respective high offices. I also want to offer them my personal commitment to serve under their leadership for the whole of this term of Parliament.

My people want political stability and it is my intention that I will remain with this government because what this country needs is a stable leadership so that we can truly experience development.

Mr Speaker, I also take this opportunity to congratulate all the Ministers, Members, Opposition Leader and all governors because all of us are here in this Parliament because God wants us to serve this country and needs us to be leaders of this country at this time.

Mr Speaker, I also take this opportunity to congratulate and to sincerely thank the people of Western province for giving me the mandate to serve them as their Governor in this 9th Parliament. I am truly humbled by their overwhelming support and I know that with God on my side, I will do everything to bring them the much needed development outcomes.

Mr Speaker, I stand to take part in the debate on health because in the honourable Minister's ministerial statement, my province was mentioned in particular as having serious health problems.

It is no secret that Western Province has many development problems including health problems. I am particularly disappointed as the Governor because Western Province as many people know, is not a poor province when it comes to financial resources.

Mr Speaker, it is my observation that the lack of strong political leadership in the past has added to the problems that we now have.

Mr Speaker, I want to inform this Parliament that I stand committed to serve my people for the full five-year term.

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Mr Speaker, I am very thankful that I have already received assistance from the Prime Minister and his Ministers in addressing a lot of problems in my province. I know that with this kind of support I will go a long way in addressing the health problems that have been mentioned in Parliament. I am happy that the Minister for Health is helping me to appoint a new hospital board in Daru as well as a new CEO. I believe this is what I need to critically address health problems in Western Province.

Mr Speaker, I recently met with all my development partners who pledged their support to work with me. I acknowledge the support of PNGACP, Ok Tedi Development Foundation, Ok Tedi Limited, AusAid, World Vision, Youth With a Mission, Australian Dollars International, and others who have been working in Western Province to address health problems. A political will and leadership to work together with these partners were lacking. So, I have entered into an agreement with all these partners to work together to address those issues. A steering committee has been formed at the operational level. The committee comprises of representatives from the development partners. I am comfortable with the arrangement because we will be able to address those issues.

Mr Speaker, I have discussed with AusAid and they have agreed to support the funding of our health programs commencing next year. The Government will also support this project. We are also supporting a Church-run community health workers training program in Rumginai, Ninety percent of our health services are in the hands of the churches and I want to acknowledge

their role in the provision of health services in the Western Province. The three main churches are: the Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea, the Catholic Church and the United Church.

Mr Speaker, we have agreed to set up an institute of technology in Tabubil and it will have a school of medical science which will be managed by Divine Word University. Nurses and rural doctors will be trained in the technology starting next year.

Mr Speaker, together with the partners we are doing something to address the serious health problems and development problems in the province.

Mr Speaker, in the spirit of empowering provinces to take more responsibilities, I would like to suggest that perhaps the Minister for Health should look at amending the *Hospital Act* in order to allow provinces to appoint Hospital Boards and CEOs so that, as Governors of the provinces, we can take full control.

I believe having the right people on the boards as well as medical CEOs is a very important component of seriously addressing health issues.

Mr Speaker, in my PEC meeting recently, the province has contributed K1 million towards fight against TB. My government is serious and we are not just talking. Whatever resources we have, we want to inject it into fighting health problems faced by our people.

Mr JOHN PUNDARI (Kompam-Ambum, Minister for Environment) – Mr Speaker, we have to ban betel- nut and I know you agree with me. We are talking about preventive health issues and concerns and banning betel-nut might be too trivial for us to consider because we are looking at making big ministerial statements. But we have to take some aggressive decision.

Mr Speaker, I say this with a great deal of concern. Leaders on the Floor of this Parliament and those sitting in the Gallery, I believe, have read the news article regarding a TB case which was drug resistant.

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There is about eight or 10 identified to have this strand of TB and it is very costly from what I read in the media to be able to overcome this disease in these patients.

The success rate of treating those who contract this disease is very low. The way I read from the media report is that the chances are more higher of losing him or her then of saving him or her.

Doesn't that concern you and me and all of us here as leaders? If this drug resistant TB is airborne then it should really cause us to do something about it. What have we aggressively done as leaders since this news and information came to us, especially the health authorities.

Mr Speaker, I know the Minister for Health is quite aggressive about it because he told me the other day that he was looking at ways and means of outlawing the chewing of betel nut and spitting of betel nut.

It encourages me a little bit because if diseases like TB are becoming drug resistant and if we are going to prevent this disease from spreading surely if the spitting of betel nut is a possible cause for the spreading of this disease then it calls for us to do something serious about it. We've got to ban it.

Mr Speaker, I was just driving on the roads that we have just maintained here in the City of Port Moresby and to think these are just resealed roads but what do you see on them, you tell me. What, are we blind? I am talking about this thing. It is not only dirtying our city, it is also a major cause of the spread of diseases and sicknesses.

What is life compared to the chewing and spitting of betel nut in the city? Is life worth more than chewing betel nut? Or, is this information we are reading in the newspapers about this drug resistant TB just there to decorate the papers while we as leaders have nothing to do with it?

You know, I am just concerned. If it hits the City of Port Moresby, and given the way we chew betel nut and the attitude of our population towards disposing betel nut spit carelessly, how will we contain this disease?

We've got to legislate, enforce that legislation and ban betel nut chewing by restricting it to your own homes and houses.

The Governor for NCD was talking about this in the last Parliament. He knows that it is very, very serious.

Here we are expecting Queen Elizabeth's son, Prince Charles, to visit our city and our beautiful country. We just want to make an impression on him that we've got a beautiful city and we have nice roads for him to drive on.

Dr Allan Marat – Point of Order! Can the Minister address the Prince properly, using his title and not as son of Queen Elizabeth?

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Minister address him properly.

Mr JOHN PUNDARI – My apologies, Mr Speaker, the point of order is totally in order.

With my sincerest of respects to the Prince who is visiting our beautiful country and our beautiful city, you know, we want to make a sincere expression and show off our city as the beauty that we would want to portray. And Mr Speaker, what pretentious leaders and residents we are in our capital city. Tell me if I am wrong.

He will drive on this nice road that our government, the O'Neill/ Dion Government put a huge sum of money into fixing but what does the attitude of our people reflect? We thought that he is blind and he will not see it, won't he? Betel nut stains everywhere. Isn't this a shame?

What nutritional properties does betel nut, when chewed with mustard and lime which gives it a red colour? What vitamin does it contain, is it A, B, C, D, E, or F? May be the Health Minister should come and present a statement of that.

Preventative health is that what it is? We let out citizens continue to chew, pollute and spread diseases like TB. What nutritional value does it have? Why does it concern us so much that we don't want to ban it, come on?

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On top of the filth, you have more rubbish and betel nut spittle everywhere. I am promoting good environment and protecting our people from diseases. You would agree with me that in the city of Port Moresby, while driving around to go shopping, you spot a brand new VX Landcruiser and you think a reputable person is driving but the next thing you see, the glass winds down and he or she is spitting out onto the road.

It is not funny and we really have to be serious about it. I call on the Health Minister, who has already delivered a very good statement and I know he is very aggressive about it, to bring that legislation into Parliament and let us fix this.

I also call on the NCD Governor, if it has to start somewhere, let it start here in the nation's Capital. Let us be aggressive about it as there are better people who want to live in the city of Port Moresby; people who have better attitudes and have great sincere respect for city life. Only a minority of the population is causing the filth in the city.

As a result, a lot of airborne diseases can be spread. And spitting betel nut is one way airborne diseases can be transmitted. I must also acknowledge that this Government and the Minister for Health and his department are giving serious consideration to health issues.

Mr Speaker, I stand here to say that successive governments have never missed out Health as a priority area. Health has always been a priority for previous Governments as well the current one. I stand to be corrected but the fact is, health has received substantial funding in annual budgets.

It has been and always must be a priority policy. We can't say that we have not funded health well but where does all the money go to? We do see some of it in reality but where does the bulk go? Is it corrupted through the system and does not reach our people and our people are suffering?

From the rural districts up to the nation's capital our people are struggling in pain for health services. We do not have to go very far to seek health services but most times for unknown reasons unknown health services are not available. Those who are able to afford the fees fly to Cairns, Singapore or other hospitals to seek specialist assistance.

What about our poor population? How many of us were treated at the Port Moresby General Hospital? When leaders get sick, we quickly go to the Private hospitals and we shy away from our Government-run hospitals. Why do we do that?

It is simply because we know that we won't be treated fast enough and we know that the hospitals are dirty. When there is something seriously wrong with us we find easy access to Singapore or Australia. What about the general population of this country? I am so glad that I am part of a Government that feels that problem. We are not just talking about it but are thinking seriously about it and addressing it from the rural districts and up to the urban areas.

Mr Speaker, if I remember correctly, it was our Prime Minister who was then the Minister for Treasury who made direct intervention by funding our base hospitals directly. Now he is Prime Minister and I am so glad to say that the bulk of the development budget will go to the districts and from there we will start addressing our health and education issues.

There is no better place to start addressing our health problems than in the rural areas because that is where the bulk of our population lives.

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The challenge is on us as leaders to ensure that we provide that leadership; that what is allocated for the development of our health sector or whatever the other sectors are, is not corrupted along the way.

Mr Speaker, the value for money must be seen and felt by our people. That tangible reality must happen. Our people must experience the fact that development funds are directed to the rural districts of our country.

When part of it is corrupted, and most of it is plucked at the national level and, as the Prime Minister said this morning and I agree with him whole heartedly that so much is corrupted here at Waigani, nothing is felt by the majority of our rural population.

Mr Speaker, if the health service here in the country is of any concern for you and I as leaders, how much more is it worse for our people in the rural communities of this country?

That is the reason why our development Budget must start at the district, where the heart of this nation is. That is where the priority of this Government and its planning and development must start.

Mr Speaker, a lot of our people flock to the cities because they cannot experience better health services or education and even better markets for that matter. We come to places like Port Moresby and we find that we can't survive so we turn to selling betelnuts on the streets and in doing so create more problems for ourselves.

Mr Speaker, when we bring more meaning and value through our Budgetary process by ensuring that we provide better health services, better education, better road infrastructure starting from our rural districts, you will find that a lot of our people, instead of selling betel-nuts in the streets of Port Moresby, will go back to the districts and make meaningful lives in the districts.

I commend the Minister for identifying the problems and the challenges that face our health in this country and making aggressive and bold statements in providing that leadership to address those issues.

I support the Minister's call in facilitating our hospitals here so that our rural population that is unable to afford the facilities that are offered in places like Singapore and Australia, we can make available in our own districts. This is the only way forward.

Mrs LOUJAYA TONI (Lae - Minister Community Development Religion and Family Affairs) - Mr Speaker, I would like to contribute to the debate on the paper presented by the Health Minister, Honourable Michael Malabag.

Mr Speaker, basically with our conventional health system in this country, the burden of addressing and carrying our health problems is enormous and perhaps we should begin to look at alternate health care options.

Under my Ministry we still receive letters of request for fundraising activities pertaining to people that have health problems and we also receive letters for request for financial assistance. I believe it goes to other Ministers and Members as well.

Mr Speaker, perhaps we can conduct a research and study to see if there are existing alternative health practitioners in this country.

Mr Speaker, before becoming a Member of Parliament, I was an alternative health practitioner training people to treat cancer organically. I have helped the Sepik wara communities by conducting teaching and training of agents right down to Madang and parts of the Highlands and in the nation's capital.

It's a matter of personal hygiene and also understanding that a lot food and vegetables that we have in abundance in this country have medicinal substances.

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You can also educate our people about what kind of nutrients are there in our vegetables in the country that can be used to treat cancer. Therefore, I suggest that our first attention should be to look at what we have on the ground in this country. It has not been brought under the radar of the Health sector but we need to keep a directory of alternative health practitioners and traditional medicine practitioners. You will find that there is a wealth of experience and knowledge that needs to be confirmed by the established conventional health medicine system. This is an option that we can take to alleviate the existing problem. At least we should look in-country before we go overseas.

I would be most delighted if I can find time in between what I am doing to be able to showcase to honourable Members of Parliament by way of video presentation of the success of the healing of breast cancer within seven to 14 days. I will certainly make sure that Honourable Sir Puka Temu is present for the presentation so the he can be able to see that we have this cure

available in our country. Had I not won the elections, I would have gone for further studies to confirm that as patent but these are the things that I would like the Health Department to take note of and explore these options on alternative health as medicines that we can produce as homegrown patent.

We need to start thinking innovation, science and technology, and it is not something that is a western concept, it is something that has always existed within our traditional society but we have not explored it.

We have had them in the past and I commend those people that ran medical symposiums in the past around the country but one may ask why didn't you bring whatever you have been doing for the last 10 years to these symposiums. Unfortunately, being a fulltime student, it was not possible for me. But that is there and I would like us all to think along those lines.

With regards to betel nut, I am in the ministerial portfolio that actually passed the *Informal Sector Act* to help people sell more betel nut and other produce but this policy has contributed to health risks. I am looking at introducing the *Cottage Industry Act* and perhaps do away with the *Informal Sector Act*.

When we talk about betel nut chewing, while it is easy to rule out and to demand that our people stop chewing betel nut, we also have to take into consideration, the economic aspect. Being challenged within my Lae electorate, I came up with something that could be considered. The husk of the betel nut can be used to produce coy fibre and be part of an arrangement where you can make fibro cement replacing asbestos. That is something that could be viable but I would like us to provide an alternative if we are going to ban betel nut. What will people chew when chewing of betel nut has become ingrained in our culture.

But thank you once again honourable Members and Ministers for your attention. The emphasis here is really on opening up our options for alternative healthcare.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA (Vanimo-Green – Leader of the Opposition) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to join the debate on Health. I did not have the privilege to hear the Minister for Health present his ministerial statement but I suppose it is common knowledge what the state of affairs of health in our country.

Mr Speaker, firstly, I want to congratulate the Prime Minister for the two important policies that we adopted in our short term Government in the last term of Parliament during the

O'Neill-Namah Government. Today, it is being brought forward to the O'Neill-Dion Government, therefore, I want to congratulate the Prime Minister for bringing two very important policies forward into this Government; the free basic health and free tuition fees for our children in the schools. For a country to develop, you need healthy educated people.

Health is a big issue and we must understand that prevention is better than cure. I agree with the Minister for Environment and Conservation that we need to stop some of our bad habits.

I can see two Ministers smile over there, they know our relationship but this is something that we must work together to address. We have to educate our people in the way they live. Papua New Guinea has an attitude problem and that is why we are not going forward. We throw rubbish even while living in the city. When you look back to the pre-colonial days, it was your responsibility to clean 50 yards outside of your house.

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The health and education systems in those days worked. I do not see why successive governments in the past changed the system and now, we are complaining about the Outcome Based Education. What was wrong with the system that worked? Why did we have to adapt the Outcome Based Education? The same also goes to health.

Mr Speaker, I believe that we should now give responsibilities to the various levels of government. We need to give provincial health centers back to the provincial governments to manage. We need to give back the rural and district health centers back to the districts to manage. All the Government needs to do is give appropriate funding. Make the funding available to the provincial governors and local Members so that provincial governors manage their provincial health centers. Local Members will, therefore, manage their districts and rural health centers.

Today, if you travel throughout the country you will see that every health infrastructure is in shambles. We can come here and preach and say the good things that we are going to do, but if we do not physically implement those policies, we are wasting our time and our people's time. It is about time that we delegate responsibility to the various levels of government.

Mr Speaker, the National Government's responsibility is probably to look at building four identical regional hospitals in our four regions. If there is a problem in the rural or district health

centers, the sick can go to the provincial hospitals and from the provincial hospitals, they can be referred to the regional hospitals.

It is about time that government must come up with this interventional programme. We talk about Port Moresby only, but what about the other parts of the country. You talk about banning betel nut in Port Moresby. The Minister for Environment and Conservation is talking about Port Moresby, the governor is talking about Port Moresby but what about Mt Hagen, Madang, Lae and et cetera. It should be a national issue, not a National Capital District issue.

Mr Speaker, I would like to see the Government immediately look into building four regional hospitals, and delegating responsibilities to provincial governors to manage provincial hospitals. The district and rural health must be given to the local Members and district administrators to manage and give necessary and appropriate funding.

Mr Speaker, we need to improve the employment conditions of our nurses, doctors and public health workers. They have been complaining time and time again and if anybody is as busy as the mine workers, I believe it is the nurses and doctors. Most of them have left the government hospitals to go to the private sector because our employment conditions are not attractive enough to get our national doctors to give service to our people. I believe that it is high time that we look at nurses and doctors who work in the rural areas. The same should also apply to our teachers.

Some of them walk for kilometers into the bush to teach in a very small primary school. Nurses and doctors walk for kilometers to go and serve in rural hospitals. While we talk about building good hospitals and good infrastructure we need to look at upgrading the living conditions.

Mr Speaker, many developed countries believe in health and education. When they have healthy and educated people they know that they are going to contribute as partners in the development of their country.

Mr Speaker, I reiterate that our problem in our country is attitude. You go to some of the hospitals and you will see rundown hospital beds with betel nut stains on the wall and everywhere like at the Port Moresby general Hospital.

Papua New Guinea needs a serious attitude change, and how do we do that? In my statement last week Tuesday, I made it very clear that we need to start by putting our children through cadet schools. When they finish grade 12, we need to send them to national service. one

area that the government seriously needs to look at. When you send them to national service they train as soldiers and become engineers. After 12 months they then chose to pursue what fields that they would like.

By sending them to cadet school or the national service school, they will learn self discipline and have self respect. If they respect themselves, they will in turn respect others because if they cannot respect themselves in the first place then they cannot respect others.

Our people spit betel nut everywhere and throw rubbish everywhere and that is the attitude problem that this country has. We need to look at how we can fix the attitude of our people. If we put a new building it will be damaged and even the bus stops shelters are torn up and stolen.

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We cannot look after our own infrastructure. I went to Port Moresby General Hospital and saw graffiti everywhere.

We can make very fancy policy statement on the Floor of Parliament but if we cannot implement, drive and delegate powers and responsibilities, and if those people in the operating theatre cannot be looked after well we are wasting our time on the Floor of Parliament.

Our people will have no faith in us. They will not believe in us. They will always say, a politicians behavior like that and they are good talkers but when the election is around the corner they will try to lure us into voting them.

But I am really thankful to the Prime Minister for bringing the two important policies which I challenge the Prime Minister to implement in his term as the Prime Minister.

You need good people around you to implement those policies because if you have just ministers who come and preach on the Floor of Parliament and don't go and implement them, they will let you down.

Mr Speaker, like I said, to live a healthy life is something that one must do because prevention is better than cure. But whilst we do that, as a government there must be a proactive action. I think in health and education issues there must be a bi-partisan approach by the government and the opposition to work together and to ensure that much of the health and education service is delivered to the people. We need to share ideas because these are the issues that affect our nation. We must work in partnership with the churches.

During my campaign trail I went to some remote parts of the country where government health and education services are not there, but churches are delivering. The reason why I want to give 10 percent of the annual budget to churches is because most of the work is being done by churches throughout the country. And by having this fund they can put into the education sector and health sector where the government cannot reach the people.

Our government needs to work in partnership with the churches and non-governmental organisations who are delivering services that the Government cannot reach. The foreign missionaries went mountains and cross rivers to reach the people when we should be the ones doing it if we love our people.

Mr Speaker, Mr Malabag can laugh because he spent most of his time in Port Moresby.

(Mr Michael Malabag interjecting)

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – Thank you Minister, if you recall, I did not remain with the Somare Government I had to resign and you were the one fighting me and Mr O’Neill when we changed the Government so let me remind you of your history too. So don’t just scream, you must think.

Mr Speaker, the Government needs to work in partnership with the NGOs and the Churches because churches deliver health services to our rural people. We need to work out how we can assist the Minister for Community Development. Let us give some funding to community development where churches and NGOs can have access to.

Now that the Health Minister has walked in, I want to urge him not to spend most of his time in Port Moresby. You should visit other parts of the country.

We need to delegate responsibilities in health sectors and that is provincial health must go to provincial governments. Rural health and district health must go to the districts. We must also build four regional hospitals so that they become major hospitals in our country and referrals can be made from district to provincial health hospitals.

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Public Services) - I want to also add to the excellent debate on health issues. I am the only person with Health Training background. Unlike the Deputy Opposition Leader the Minister for Health delivered a comprehensive health policy.

He informed the nation on the health situation of the country. He has mapped the way forward on the priorities that he has determined under the leadership of the Prime Minister.

I have never heard a Prime Minister in this country giving priority to health except the current Prime Minister Honourable Peter O'Neill. He is the only Prime Minister that I know who has given commitment to ensure that the government he is leading is providing health services.

Mr Speaker, prioritizing health services have been lacking for a long time. The Prime Minister and his Health Minister are in the right direction and the prescription that he has given after making the diagnoses is also the right one. Unfortunately, I am certain that the spokesperson for Health and HIV / AIDS only agreed on one area that the Minister has given priority to and that is to address the health workforce.

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Unfortunately the spokesperson from the Opposition stopped at just that one priority while we were expecting him to give us another comprehensive option policy from the Opposition but he fell short of that.

Mr Speaker, while there has been excellent debates going on what we need to do is take the cue from our Prime Minister who has already made a commitment to make sure that over the next five years health will receive the attention it deserves under his leadership. That is the commitment that the Prime Minister has given to our people.

Mr Speaker, whilst many speakers before me have already spoken extremely well on many of the issues, I just want to touch on one or two areas that I've been very passionate on.

When I was Health Secretary I used to sit down at the door of the Secretary for Finance and wait until he granted me the budget that I submitted. I would not leave his office until he agreed to the budget for medical supplies, health infrastructure maintenance and others. But, I would come back to my office crying because it was never granted.

Over the years health has received very little attention, even though the health sector, perhaps followed closely by the education sector are the only two sector that have always produced development plans, either for five years or 10 years. These two sectors have always come forward.

In health the prescription is very straight forward. Health activities are very well defined, like immunization. They are very well defined in terms of what vaccines you need to bring into

the country to prevent epidemics in the country. Those are global best practices. We've got them all.

Also there are very defined minimum activities that you need to do in order to protect the community. For example, it is global practice that if you immunize 80 per cent of the children, epidemics will not occur.

They are very well defined so in terms of costing, the many health plans that have been made are well costed. And I am very, very happy that the Prime Minister and the Health Minister are providing the leadership in the current health plan. It has been fully costed and all we need to do is wait for the budget to see the commitment that the government has given to make sure that the requirements that are needed in that health plan are met.

Unfortunately, over the years we have developed plans that fell short of the required minimum level of funding.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I want to pick up on a very important issue that the Minister has highlighted. And that was in 2011, the Department produced a National Health Services Standard. When there is a windfall in the country like what we are going to achieve in the next five years we can talk about four specialist hospitals. We can talk about increasing the number of health workforce training but unfortunately windfalls don't come every five years, there is always a downturn in the economy.

And so, Mr Speaker, what we really need to do as a responsible government and Parliament is to make sure that we protect the minimum standards. That the nation must never fall below those minimum standards because adhering to those minimum standards protect the health of the people.

And therefore, what do we do on the Floor of Parliament? When the budget comes we must debate and say that to protect the minimum standards this amount of money must be granted on the Floor of Parliament in the appropriation bill. This is where all of us leaders come in. When the bill is brought in we must make sure that we are smart enough to debate it.

I am saying this because I have spent six years as Secretary for Health and in those times I will sit at the advisors box while the budgets are being presented and health would always fall short.

I know the Minister for Environment has commented that we have always supported health but that is only in recent times and for the first time, if ever the people of Papua New Guinea will

remember one Prime Minister that had turned this country's health issues you will take the credit, Mr Prime Minister if you will just adhere to the directions of the current health plan. It is very well designed. Minimum health standards have already been done and that's what's needed.

There must be those minimum standards, like the minimum education standards, minimum road standards, and other minimum standards. That is why when Honourable Ben Micah, Minister for State Enterprises was pushing for change on the Organic Law of Provincial and Local Level Government, there was a proposal to establish a National Monitoring Authority.

That NMA, which is now replaced by PLASMA was to go around the country, into the sectors and make sure the sector designed minimum standards so that we don't fall behind.

And this Parliament has that responsibility, through the appropriation bills to make sure that it is protected.

In 2008, when the National Economic and Fiscal Commission was undertaken by the then government to ensure that the minimum standards are protected through the functional grants. As you know, I think it was 2009 and 2010 that we appropriate increases in the functional grants which were education and health as priority areas. And so, provinces, since 22009 have got increased functional grants which has education and health as priority.

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I remember on average each province had an increase of K6-7 million so the Parliament and the Government introduced a lot to make sure that functional grants were always appropriated in the appropriation bill and we will continue to do that.

Mr Speaker, we are now becoming better in responding to our people's health and education needs. My challenge as the Minister responsible for Public Service is to make sure the funds appropriated on the Floor of Parliament are effectively administered by the delivery machinery of this government.

Recently, it was published in the media that India will be declared as a polio free country and we were declared polio free in 1999 during my term as secretary for Health. We made Papua New Guinea polio free; we made it a place where leprosy is no longer a public health problem. We have made major achievements and now I am reading on HIV prevalence that the curve that was exponential is beginning to slow down.

So our effort since 1985 and then right through to the introduction of the *HIV/AIDS Act* is now beginning to pay off but the strategy was multisectoral. That is 60 per cent of health outcomes are achieved by non- health interventions.

Mr Speaker, what type of things does this Parliament need to do and know? The reason why TB spreads is because the average people living in one household in Papua New Guinea is four to five people. Imagine a one-bedroom house with no light. So this patient is in a tiny little room and when he coughs, TB germs pass through the air and that is how we spread TB.

The answer to stopping TB is not about pumping all the drugs into your system and we have those same drugs that will treat even the Queen when she is sick. These are the same TB drugs used elsewhere and we have it.

What we really need to push for in Parliament is perhaps for the Housing Minister to introduce a policy and let us address the issue of better housing standards for our people. When you walk into a settlement in Port Moresby, you see everybody is cramped up. No wonder TB is spreading and it is not to be blamed on the betel nut spittle.

It is because we do not have proper housing and too many people are crowded in one little house. So if we improve the housing situation, TB and other contagious diseases will be reduced.

We need non-health interventions and that is in the case diarrheal disease because our people do not have good clean water and proper sanitation facilities in the villages or in the settlements. The simple intervention which is globally recognized is to provide good water and sanitation to the communities and as a responsible Government, we must do those.

We must expand the water access. As I speak, we have mothers and girls still fetching water and carrying them for miles. While the debate is very good and we are focusing on health and talking about building hospitals and improving drugs and health service delivery we need workable interventions that will work.

I must congratulate the Speaker for taking the step to make sure we have health checks and we must have regular checks every 12 months. Sir Buri Kidu Heart Foundation is one of the best in the country. Many people are dying of heart attack in the country.

Caucasians have heart attacks after 50 years of life but in PNG, we are having heart attack below the age of 40.. Unfortunately the things that bring on heart attack are not so much what we do but mostly what we eat and how we prepare them.

For example, when I drive past Bavaroko Primary School, I notice mothers selling cheese pops at lunch time. If these are the things that this generation is eating, they will have heart attacks earlier in life as they are exposed to non-healthy foods.

The mother in the house is not preparing a healthy food and instead giving them money to buy those junks sold on the street at lunch time. Or we are just being lazy in terms of looking after our health and well being. I cannot agree more for a special directorate in this country for health promotion and we must fund these programs.

Education and awareness must be carried out, it is not a very expensive exercise as prevention is better than cure. I call on the Health Minister to establish a health directorate to take charge of running health promotion awareness. These promotions must begin with mothers and children and must be carried out throughout the country starting in our rural areas.

Under our DSIP funding, let us put money aside for health promotion and establish a dedicated office to promote health in Papua New Guinea. Healthy living also includes us. When we bring lamb carcasses from New Zealand, we must ensure to only allow the healthier cuts other than the lamb flap cut. We must ban the importation of lamb flaps. We can bring the carcass in but when it is cut we must outlaw the cutting of lamb flap.

I see many Members of Parliament driving into Big Rooster. I am also one of them but I fear the amount of salt that is used by these fast-food chains. We are killing ourselves and you know it is being proven that healthy living has a lot to do with our eating habits.

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Our eating habits determine the state of our health. It has been proven from experiments that rats that eat more food and more frequently than others have a shorter life-span. This is also true for humans and this is affecting Members of Parliament now.

Mr Speaker, I am worried that Government Caucus meetings are held every morning with breakfast at the Sate Function Room in Parliament. I suggest, Mr Prime Minister, to have our meetings at the B-3 Conference room in the B-Wing of Parliament.

I have been on the Floor of this Parliament for 11 years and some of you have put on a lot of weight and now, you have to start losing some weight.

Mr Speaker, what is the role of Parliament? In this health debate we must now proactively introduce the laws that will protect our people

Fast-food chains, including Big Rooster must undergo health inspections all the time to ensure they are not cooking the food in the morning and selling it at 5pm.

As legislators we must ensure that clean water and enough water is available to every community in this country. We must take bold stands and address the issue of poor housing in Papua New Guinea.

Mr Speaker, we have access to Information and Technology. Our country is not going to provide all the specialists we need but if every aid post throughout this country had access to latest Information Technology, we can easily gain specialist advice through the Internet.

As the Deputy Opposition rightly said in his statement, it will require huge funding in billions in order for us to balance the doctor to population ratio.

Mr Speaker, the last issue is in regards to what the Governor of Oro raised earlier in on population.

Population is the domain of the National Planning and Monitoring Minister, and not the Health Minister. There is an existing population policy but it needs to be updated.

The Prime Minister has already alluded to this in his statement that this Parliament and our Government must now bring the population issue for debate on the Floor of this Parliament because with a higher population and a few resources we have been chasing our tails for a very long time. The services we deliver are not sufficient because of the increasing population.

Mr Speaker, in regards to the traditional medicine alternate treatment the current policy and World Health allows it. When I was Secretary of the Health Department we did undertake a inventory of the medicinal plants in Papua New Guinea and what is available.

Mr Speaker, we need to move and empower our technical health teams with the right resources to make available the medicinal plants to our people.

Motion (by Mr Patrick Pruaitch) agreed to –

That the question be now put.

Motion – That the Parliament take note of the Paper – agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 4.10 p.m..