

**SEVENTH DAY**

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**Thursday 28 March 2013**

**DRAFT HANSARD**

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## SEVENTH DAY

**Thursday 28 March 2013**

The Speaker (**Mr Theo Zurenouc**) took the Chair at 10 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 10.30 a.m., and invited the Member for Sohe, **Honourable Delilah Gore** to say Prayers:

‘Eternal Father in Heaven, this morning, Almighty God we assemble before your merciful throne as your children and as leaders of this nation. Eternal Father, we seek your forgiveness and ask you Lord to forgive us from our shortfalls and this morning, Lord, we ask you for a portion of your wisdom and blessings from Heaven above, and thank you Lord for being leaders of this nation and thank you Lord for bringing us this far. And this morning Lord we want to acknowledge your presence in this Chamber this morning and everyone of us join our hands, our voices together and say: Amen.’

## QUESTIONS

**Mr JOE SUNGI** – Thank you, Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Works Minister.

Mr Speaker, in May 2012, a total of K8.6 million was released by the Department of National Planning to the Department of Works to carry out maintenance and upgrading of the Nuku to Arakos/Ame Road in my district. It is now 11 months and to date no proper upgrading works have been carried out on the road.

Mr Speaker, sadly, I have information that K 1 million out of the K8.6 million has already been spent by the Department of Works to hire unserviceable machines and equipment belonging private owners East Sepik. The arrangement is highly suspicious as the private owners are relatives and cronies of senior staff of Department of Works who are positioned in the Department of Works to milk out public funds intended to improve roads in my district.

Mr Speaker, this road links to the only high school I have, Nuku High School and up to now, since its opening, we cannot move materials into the school because the Department of Works has been sitting on K8.6 million, which should be used on the road.

Mr Speaker, can the good Minister issue a ministerial directive to his department to immediately terminate work on the Nuku to Arakos/Ame Road and have whole of the remaining funds paid to Nuku District Treasury because I do have the capacity at the district to do the job myself.

Mr Speaker, failing to honour my request will result in me referring the my complaint to the Task Force Sweep and CID for investigation and arrests.

**Mr FRANCIS AWESA** – Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the honourable Member for this important question.

The Members of Parliament and the general public are aware that sometimes funds allocated for roads have gone missing.

In this particular case, K8.6 million that has gone missing. I wish to put this question on the Question Paper and reply in detail later.

Whilst I have the opportunity, I want to say that one of the actions we are taking within the ministry to avoid future misuse of funds is to set up an audit team. This team will comprise of engineers and will work very closely with Task Force Sweep.

So if there are instances around the country where funds are being misused either by Works Department personnel or contractors, they will come under the close scrutiny of the audit team, which will work very closely with the Task Force Sweep.

**02/07**

This will be set up in the next month or so because it is an ongoing problem with the Works Department personnel. Contractors are using old machines to do the work and they are not doing their work properly. For instance, the contractors are using inferior quality of materials for the road base and drainage systems, and culverts are not properly built. In some cases, the State's supervising engineers are scheming with the contractors to get away with lots of money and the work is not satisfactory enough.

I intend to set up an audit team which I believe will address this problem and minimize the misuse and abuse of funds but in conclusion on the transfer of funds to the Nuku District treasury, I think it is not possible because we should continue to leave the funds with Works Department and deal with those people who have abused those funds and allow for new people to carry out the work.

If it is not possible under the circumstances, I think I can have an audience with the Member and transfer those funds but it is only if there is a contractor doing the work then we can allow him to continue to complete this important road.

Mr Speaker, I want to say that I will provide a detailed answer in writing to the Member.

**Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL** –Thank you, Mr Speaker. I understand that the Education Department has sent school fee subsidies direct to the schools and the principals and head teachers fighting for positions so that they can have access to these huge funds.

My Question is directed to the Acting Minister for Education.

What are the control measures or regulations set up by the Department of Education to monitor these subsidies that have been given directly to the schools?

We have a situation at Hoskins Secondary where there has been a big foul play by the school management who have used the school subsidy to purchase vehicles when there are no proper classrooms and teachers houses.

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** –Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Governor of West New Britain for his question. The Government of this country honoured its commitment to provide free education for the children of this country.

Today, we have provided K652 million in subsidies paid to all schools nationwide for students in Elementary through to Grade 10. Starting next year, we will include Grades 11 and 12 so that by 2015, children in this country will have full free education. The issue of control mechanisms amongst our schools in terms of how they manage the funds is very important and at the national level we have made an important decision that certain element of that free tuition fee will go in terms of a commodity aspect to the school.

For example; an elementary school on Dobu island in Milne Bay Province would probably receive K3000 as free school fee money. Imagine if the Board Chairman and the Headmaster had to come into Alotau to get the money and go back to the island. They would have spent K4000 just to come and get K3000. It is part of the normal school revenue for the upkeep of the school to provide basic school kits, stationery and others.

We have had cases of widespread abuse of these funds nationwide

### **03/07**

There are cases where abuses are occurring throughout the country. Some of these abuses are technical in nature while others are deliberately carried out. An example of technical abuse can be seen in the case of Dobu Island. The school officials on Dobu Island have to do all their banking needs at Alotau on the mainland.

Therefore, as a responsible Government, we are calling on the big service providers in providing basic kits for schools. Where services such as banking services will be brought straight to the schools so that school officials will not have to leave the school.

The Cabinet has also approved a policy which will be implemented next year. At the moment though, K40 million from the K600 million has been allocated for the community component to be mapped out for next year's full implementation.

Regarding the cash component for schools, K652 million has been allocated to schools throughout the country and with that we have placed some control mechanisms.

In the districts we have standard officers who were formerly known as school inspectors and are now known as district education advisors. There will be an NEC-approved district survey that will take place next month. We are going to release K100 thousand to each Member of Parliament. This money will go to the districts and we want each Member to coordinate that in the Joint District Planning and Budget Priorities Committee and liaise with their respective standard officers and district education advisors to do a stocktake of all the schools in your districts. We would like to know how many schools there are and the enrollment rate for the schools.

This will then assist us in establishing a database in the Education Department. Through this survey, we will know how many schools and students are enrolled throughout the country. This will establish a point of contact for the Education Department, provincial offices and district offices. The standard officer and district education advisor form the basic administrative nucleus in the districts to coordinate the disbursement of educational funds in the districts.

We would also like all the schools throughout the country to submit their acquittals for last year. These reports should come through the system. The schools submit their acquittals to the standard officer who then submits it to the district education advisor, which will then be collected by the provincial education advisor who will submit them to the Education Department. By April, we should have all these reports in my department for the rollout of the second batch of the Tuition Fee Free for this year.

Therefore, standard officers and district education advisors in the districts are expected to get to work collecting the reports and have them forwarded to the Department headquarters. This is the first step in ensuring that there should be acquittal reports every year.

Schools that do not have accounts must open their accounts because some schools have already missed out on their subsidies. Next year, we will be remitting funds straight into school accounts based on the reports regarding the subsidies that they have already used up for this year.

I will also be tabling a report on this Floor of Parliament in the next Sitting regarding the Tuition Fee Free Policy for last year. This report will let this Parliament and the nation know how schools throughout the country used their school subsidies for last

year. This will then become an annual process which would take place every May or April in future. As for the K625 million for this year, a report would also be tabled next year.

The process is therefore set and we expect all the standard officers or district education advisors to be responsible agents with the Provincial Administrators to collect the acquittal reports from the schools.

As announced yesterday, headmasters are paid special allowances and part of that allowance is for them to administer their respective school's appropriations. If they are not reporting back on how much money is given to them then they should be held accountable and be removed from that position.

Headmasters throughout the country are therefore required to submit their reports through the process that I have mentioned before. If all these things are carried out, then by the month of May, we hope to have all these reports to present on this Floor of Parliament.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**04/07**

### **Supplementary Question**

**Mr PETER IPATAS** – Mr Speaker, this is an important policy that has been taken up and driven by the Prime Minister through the leadership that he has provided.

Mr Speaker, how come we have not involved the provinces in all of these? We know the peculiar situations such as the issues with the Board Chairmen and all the officials.

Mr Speaker, can the Minister and the Government delegate the functions to the provinces so that they can manage it?

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** – Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor for his very important question.

Mr Speaker, in as far as his province is concerned, the system of education delivery is working very well and he has every right to make this request to the National Government.

Mr Speaker, unfortunately, in some provinces in our country the system is not yet working and it needs to be fixed and we would like to see this right across the country.

Mr Speaker, this Government made a commitment to the people to deliver free education for five years. This policy is evolving and it just needs to be tidied in ensuring that funds are delivered to the schools.

Mr Speaker, for provinces that already have their systems working, we will empower them to do so.

Mr Speaker, this year we will be embarking on tidying up these policies. The only issue is the monitory and reporting aspect. We are in partnership with the banks and those schools that have accounts, the process is all electronic and it will be wired directly into their accounts.

Mr Speaker, if we run the risk of going to the provinces again, we will be going through another system, which may cause delays.

The first major expenditure for this Government in January was not in roads and bridges but it was in education and we dished out K250 million to school accounts right across the nation.

Mr Speaker, we will work on this process and it is only a matter of time when we can effectively and efficiently deliver productively to all the schools in all the provinces throughout the country.

**Mr TOBIAS KULANG** – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister for Works.

Mr Minister, the people of Kundiawa-Gombogl are grateful for the allocation of K25.7 million in the last Government through the ADB Road Rehabilitation Programme to upgrade and seal a 10.5 km road.

Mr Speaker, the greatest question now is when we will this project be completed? The projected completion of the project was January 2012.

Mr Speaker, I was in the electorate and from my assessment, almost 50 percent of the work is complete. It is almost over a year now.

Mr Speaker, my questions are as follows:

(1) Is the Minister aware that the Contractor, Shorncliffe, has deployed earthmoving machines which are old and rundown, and the breakdown of these machines have caused delays?

(2) Can the Minister explain how we can deal with this contractor?

**07/07**

I have a copy of the variation that the contractor put through ADB to claim 55 percent variation of the contract. Not long they will rename this country, country of variation.

(3) What with the Minister do about the variation?

(4) In the case that the contractor did not fulfill the task because we did not honour the variation claim and it said it lacked finance, equipment and manpower, what shall be done to the contractor in such cases?

Mr Speaker, please take note of the next question. I note that there is a Parliamentary committee called Public Works Committee.

(5) What is the function of the Public Works Committee?

I visited the Parliament of Australia last year and I saw that that their Works committee played a key role, similar to the role of Public Accounts Committee. During major works projects, this committee was involved in assessing all procurement and tender documentation, and in between the construction period, this committee also checked the construction sites to ensure that the project is on track as planned. Once the construction is completed, the same committee engages engineers to evaluate and advise them whether the construction is in line with its tender and scoping requirements.

I want to ask the Minister for Works, what is the function of our Public Works Committee? Is it performing a similar role? I have also heard that you are planning to set up an audit committee, and I think they will perform the same functions.

(6) If that committee, which I believe is a bipartisan committee, will carry out similar duties, then when are we going to inject resources into it to carry out its functions?

**Mr Patrick Pruaich** – Point of Order! Mr Speaker, as you are aware, the Committee is a sub-committee of the Parliament and I don't think it's fair that the Minister for Works should answer that question because it does not deal with policy of the Government. Thank you

**Mr SPEAKER** – Your Point of Order is in Order. I will allow the Minister to respond to the other questions asked by honourable Member.

**Mr FRANCIS AWESA**- Thank you Mr Speaker, I also thank the Honourable Member for Kundiawa Gembogl, Tobias Kulang, for those important questions.

Firstly, this Government, under Peter O'Neill, committed the K25 million for that important road link. The commitment was done according to the costing done by ADB, Works and all other stakeholders. I am unaware that the road is incomplete and I'm glad that you highlighted the problem to me.

All contracts awarded by the Government, is based on the bill of quantities and the distance, and all these are considered. In the normal Government process, there is a variation.

Mr Speaker, the variation must not exceed 10 percent of the original value. If there is a requirement for variation in exceeding 10 percent, it must go back to the Central Supplies and Tenders Board. Therefore, I am not aware of the variation that the honourable Member is referring to, but I will check and advise him as soon as I can.

Going back to the first question, as I said, I am not aware of the problems that exist on the 10.5 kilometer road and Twenty-five million kina is a substantial amount, and one would have expected them to finish the job within the time given which is 12 months. We will be checking on the performance of the contractors and the supervising engineers involved. This is what I have been saying in the last session of Parliament; this is the same problem we have been facing. The State supervising engineers are scheming

with contractors to shortcut a lot of things. Sometimes the job is not done and they certify a lot of the claims. It's an ongoing problem. That's why I said that we will set up an audit team comprising of engineers and they will go out on short notice when we receive complaints from people to ascertain the problems on the ground and take appropriate action.

For the second question in relation to variations, like I said, there is some variations in the order of K18 million. I think that is what you are referring to. I want to assure the Member and Parliament that this will not be entertained under any circumstance. It's not proper for contractors to cheat. They get a contract with the Government and then they don't complete the job and go for variations. This has been going on for a very long time and it's the intention of the O'Neill-Dion Government to stop it.

**06/07**

We will take very positive action on that.

In relation to the Public Works Committee functions, most of these functions are not working so I'll leave that to the Speaker ensure all parliamentary committees are working.

If any extra funding is required, it will be on top of the 10.5 kilometers. But the contractor has not completed this job so we will not entertain it. We will go in there, check the machines, check the contractors work to date and we will also have to review the performance of some of the contractors, such as the one you referred to.

**Mr LOUTA ATOI** – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock. Before I do, I would like to give some insight. There is no doubt that agriculture, fisheries, and tourism sectors will form the pathway to economic recovery and financial sustainability for the people of North Bougainville and Bougainville as a whole, whilst we are waiting for the mine to open. It is about creating wealth and creating employment opportunities for the rural communities and our youth in the region.

Mr Speaker the state is set for the people of Bougainville and I also want to thank the Prime Minister and his cabinet for the foresight and the bold decisions to declare this year to be the people's year.

Mr Speaker my questions are:

(1) What is the Ministry and the Department doing about implementing the MOU signed on 15 February 2011 of the transfer of powers and functions to the ABG?

(2) Considering the problems that you are going through in your department right now and the importance of this Department to the People of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville in terms of Economic Development, isn't it about time we restructure the concept similar to what the National Fisheries Authority is going to thorough right now?

Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL** – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the Member for his very important question because agriculture is a very important sector in the economy of Papua New Guinea.

Agriculture sector contributes between 24 and 28 percent to our GDP. The sector is the backbone and the foundation of our rural people and the heartbeat of our seven million people because this is the sector that produces the food we eat. The day the sector stops producing the food, our heart beat will also stop beating.

Relating to the first question, I am not aware of the details of the MOU that was signed between my Department and the Autonomous Government of Bougainville, but I will request for the MOU and until I examine the content and what it refers to, I will give you the relevant answers in writing.

For the second question relating to problems in the Department .The Department has obviously gone through many problems in recent times, including the appointments to the head of Department. That matter was settled by the National Court about two weeks ago, but the Acting Secretary then sort review in the Supreme Court and that case is again heard this morning or maybe this morning. So I will await that decision.

Nonetheless, the Government has moved to rationalize the agriculture sector. It has done so firstly by rationalizing the commodity boards. After that the Government will also rationalize the Department so that the Department must also respond to the

commodity boards. The farmers too many times deal with the boards, they do not deal with the National Department of Agriculture.

**07/07**

The National Department of Agriculture is a department that is very much concentrated in Port Moresby and not in the districts. Many responsibilities of the department has been delegated to the provincial, districts and local-level governments, particularly the extensions and trainings programs with the farmers. But I want to assure you that once we complete the rationalisation of the Commodity Boards, which includes OPIC, Spice Board, Fresh Fruit Development Agency, Livestock Development Corporation, Cocoa Board, Coffee and Coconut Board, the Government will also go further and do a functional and expenditure review on all other agencies, particularly the regulating agencies such as NAQIA.

We will also carry out assigning on the National Development Bank so that we realign all the government agencies to serve the farmers. The farmers are the most important people in the whole chain. As much as everyone else is important in the value chain, if we do not have the farmers and if they don't continue to grow, we will not have any industry. This is what will happen and I hope I have answered the question.

**Mr GORDON WESLEY** – I direct my questions to the Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resources and I want all the Ministers and the Prime Minister to take note.

I have two simple questions to ask the Minister but before I do that, let me enlighten him and the Members of this Parliament to appreciate the root cause of the problems caused by the total ban of the beche-de-mer industry and its impact on our people on the islands and coastal villages. This will help guide the Minister with the political will and the responsible government can make sound judgment in making right political decisions for our people. Undue hardships caused by the extension of the moratorium period have been impunitive and unduly imposed on our people and even deprive their privileges for no fault of the people in particular Milne Province and again in particular Samarai-Murua.

Milne Bay Province is an example of one of the largest exporters of beche-de mer in the country. It has about 140 average quota for annual export. The Province has gone below the quota at any one time compared to other provinces. This shows that there was already a good care and sound stock management. This has been an important initiative by the local fishermen and the pioneering exporting companies established in the province for many years.

Mr Speaker, it was until the National Fisheries Authority had gone on its own way and issued excessive and uncontrolled fishing licenses to both national and foreign groups and individuals without proper monitoring and closed monitoring with the maritime provincial authorities. Unlike Milne Bay Province, many maritime provinces have lost all their dry marine resources because of the past irresponsible and unacceptable practices by NFA. This is where the root cause is and how the moratorium on the harvest and export of beche-de-mer was imposed on small and venerable fishermen and their families in Milne Bay Province.

Mr Speaker, having said that, I now turn to my first question.

(1) Since there is no scientific evidence, proof or report presented in this Parliament to justify the need for moratorium, will the Minister confirm or deny that Milne Bay Province is the only province in the country that has the beche-de-mer stock and some of the remaining endangered species in the country that NFA is deliberately using the moratorium as a cover-up of their past blunted mistakes and failures in order to fully stock-up the nation's fish stock at the cost of innocent and struggling fishermen of Milne Bay Province?

(2) Can the Minister inform this Parliament and the nation on the future of the beche-de-mer industry and the alternative plans he has for the people of Milne Bay and the country, in particular Samarai-Murua and other districts sharing common border with Milne Bay Province to compensate the loss of income and hardships the fishermen faced since the total ban was imposed three years ago?

**08/07**

This will keep family members from being unemployed and prevent them from drifting to town and causing social and law and order problems.

(3) Will the Minister consider the following options?

(a) Lift the moratorium this year and allow for three months once every year thereafter as a trial test and reduce the quota by 50 per cent subject to annual review of the stocks.

(b) If the moratorium is not lifted, offer social security to all the fishermen and their families, including free education and free health services to the tune of income lost and social benefits enjoyed from the past.

Mr Minister, try and send you officers down there and get them to live like those people who are living down there now, they won't even last a week. They've got nothing else to turn to.

(c) Create alternative economic initiatives in the form of investment opportunities in the gas and oil industries development or mining to fund projects such as fishing, processing and marketing outlets of fish products for those families that have been affected.

I'd like to also to stop sending down your enforcement task force who are terrorizing my people with M16s. They are not criminals; they are human beings, so please stop them, Mr Minister.

**Mr MAO ZEMMING** – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to thank our Deputy Speaker of Parliament and the Member for Samarai-Murua for the good questions he asked.

The issue of sea cucumbers has been a concern of the people of Milne Bay for a while. Milne Bay has four electorates and they depend on the sea. Three of these electorates are on the sea while one is on the land, so they have a genuine concern for the lives of our people.

Mr Speaker, I am happy with the Member's comments but I wish to remind us of the law which we enacted in the Parliament to secure and sustain our resources. The National Fisheries Authority is tasked with the job of enforcing this law to sustain our resources.

Mr Speaker, I acknowledge the problems in Milne Bay. Milne Bay Province is not worse off than other provinces. Scientific studies conducted by NFA has revealed that

Milne Bay is not that bad with the stocks it has, some provinces have depleted their stocks completely.

Sea cucumber is a resource that has a unique reproduction method. It has to move the length of one or two soccer fields and because it moves very slowly, it is hard for it to reproduce quickly.

We humans have brains and are able to recognize the problems but money motivates us to quickly deplete everything of our seas without consideration for the future generation.

That's why, the National Fisheries Authority, the authority mandated under the Fisheries Act of 1998, to ensure sustainability in our resources. So, I sympathise with our Member from Milne Bay Province for frequently asking these questions.

There is a sea cucumber management committee set up by the National Fisheries Authority. This committee has done a review and discovered that stocks are returning slowly. October will make it the fourth year of the moratorium.

I have met with the Managing Director and the Prime Minister the day before yesterday and discussed this issue. Stocks are slowly returning. We will receive the report of the scientific study and then we will give some time for the lifting of the ban.

Mr Speaker, it is true that there is a lot of illegal harvesting happening. Yesterday the Provincial Member for Milne Bay asked me about the boats. There are three sea crafts we bought for the purpose of policing these things. One will be based in Vanimo, the other in Alotau and the last one will be in Port Moresby.

I couldn't answer this question because I did not have the answer yesterday but I am pleased to answer it today. These boats will come under the National Fisheries Authority. We will manage them but we will work closely with all the provincial governments of the Maritime Provinces.

Back to the question on sea cucumbers, the discussions are already taking place and we are awaiting the report from the scientists.

Mr Speaker, this is not a political decision to make our people on the coasts suffer but rather it is a decision based on scientific research which shows that if we harvest these resources quickly what will we say to our future generations. That's why the

National Fisheries Authority is there and it is mandated to manage and sustain our resources.

I wish to thank the Member for Samarai-Murua and his governor for the series of questions they have asked regarding sea cucumbers. We have already discussed this and we will give a definite answer to lift that ban for a short time, maybe two or three months, we will allow our people to harvest and sell sea cucumbers.

But in the meantime, I wish to warn our people who are illegally harvesting and selling sea cucumbers to refrain from doing so because if we get you, you will face the full force of the law. You can be imprisoned for these illegal activities.

So, Mr Speaker, to cut a long story short, I want to say that we have the answer already.

**09/07**

We are waiting for the review in October as this will be the fourth year of the moratorium. After we have sighted this report then we have it relaxed for about 2-3 months before we can be able to start selling beche-de-mer.

I want to say that the Government has given a lot of money to Members and this includes Members from the Maritime Provinces, please attend to the people's queries.

**Mr WERA MORI** –Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I go on to my question, I would like to wish you and the rest of the Members of Parliament a Happy Easter, on behalf of the people of Chuave.

My questions are directed to the Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, arising from Ok Tedi's 8<sup>th</sup> Supplementary Agreement, the Ok Tedi Development Foundation was established under a trust deed. This trust deed was obligated to deliver community oriented projects to landowners affected by the Ok Tedi mine that dwell along the corridors of the Fly River under the community mine continuation agreement.

Mr Speaker, communities affected by the mine are marked into nine main zones from the mine site down to the mouth of the Fly River. The Ok Tedi Development Foundation has been successfully delivering community oriented projects to those

landowner communities and fulfilling its obligations under the stature of its trust deed since it was established.

However, there have been strong speculations that a group with political connotations under the auspices of Ok Tedi mine Interest Association has changed the trust deed to take over from Ok Tedi Development Foundation. If this is true then it is daylight robbery and corruption in its worst form.

The Ok Tedi Mining Interests Association has no capacity to manage community affairs, let alone have carriage of some K59 million parked under the Ok Tedi Development Foundation.

My questions are;

(1) Can the Prime Minister confirm that the trust deed was changed from Ok Tedi Development Foundation to Ok Tedi Mining Interest Association?

(2) What are the motives to have this trust deed amended and to serve whose interests and for what purpose?

(3) Were there any involvement of Government Ministers assisting the Ok Tedi Mining Association to have this trust deed amended and in whose interests?

(4) Why is it that the Office of the Attorney-General nor the Solicitor General were not consulted nor involved to vet these amendments since this concerned a major agreement that was entered into by the state?

(5) If this is possible, can the Prime Minister revoke the changes of the trust deed and have the current arrangement remain with greater participation input or control by the Fly River Provincial Government?

**Mr PETER O'NEILL** –Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Member for Chuave for his questions on the Ok Tedi Development Foundation and the related matters. This has been the subject of many discussions taking place in the country. Of course some of these are positive and others are not.

And we understand that there are many people with vested interests around participating in this debate. It is healthy and we want to encourage that and I understand that from the debates taking place in and around the Western Province itself.

The Ok Tedi Development Foundation, as I know it, was established by the PNG Sustainable Program and Ok Tedi Mining Limited under the agreement as the member has correctly put. That particular foundation is owned jointly by these two organizations. There is no government involvement in the manner in which this foundation is run.

The foundation was set up with very good intentions.

**10/07**

There has been no involvement from the government in which this development foundation is being run. We know that the foundation was set up for good intentions.

Mr Speaker, the foundation was set up to serve the nine main villages of the landowners surrounding the OK Tedi mine area. But this foundation does not extend down to the river villages that have experienced enormous damage from the mine.

That is why those villages have taken up a position that is now before the courts in relation to some of the claims that they are making to establish some programmes along the river so that those villages also get the services that they truly deserve.

Mr Speaker, from what I understand, although I have not received a full briefing on this particular issue, the K69 million issue is now before the courts. And the courts are yet to determine whether the contracts or claims from the principal landowners along the river system are in order with some of the agreements with Ok Tedi mine.

Therefore, I want to assure the Member that there will be no funds expended without due process being followed. No funds will be expended as far as I am concerned and I want to assure the Member that, that instruction will go to all the relevant departments and Ministers insofar as this issue is concerned.

I again would like to stress here that the agreement between the PNG Sustainable Development Programme and the Ok Tedi Foundation was that the Ok Tedi Foundation would look after the nine villages surrounding the mine. And PNG Sustainable Development Programme was to look after the rest of the province, particularly those living along the Fly River system.

Mr Speaker, nevertheless, PNG Sustainable Development Program has failed to live up to the expectations of our people in the Western Province. That is why these frustrated landowners are now taking up the issue. Therefore, as a responsible

government, we have an obligation to listen to them. We cannot shut them out because Ok Tedi Foundation is the only vehicle under which we will deliver this service.

I have the opportunity to sit down with the Ok Tedi management and discuss this issue with leaders and Members of the Western Province as well as PNG Sustainable Development Programme officials. There must be equal representation in all these organisations that we create because if people feel that they are left out they will have trouble adapting to the programs that we are trying to deliver.

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform Parliament that there is now an agreement coming into shape that will include the involvement of the Provincial Government, local members and the other relevant landowners along the river system, so that they can participate in the Ok Tedi Development Foundation. Once that is done then everybody will be fairly served by these funds that we are talking about.

I know that we are talking about hundreds of millions of kina that the Department of Mining is managing but I would like to assure that no toea will be spent until we are all satisfied that it will serve the interest of the people of Western Province.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

### **MOTION BY LEAVE**

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

Leave granted.

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS –  
REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS**

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

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent Notice No. 37 of Government Business this day being called on forthwith.

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN BILL 2013**

**Second Reading**

Debate resumed from 15 February, 2013 (See page ...).

**11/07**

**Sir PUKA TEMU** (Abau – Minister for Public Service) – Mr Speaker, I wish to support the honourable Minister in introducing this very important Bill to address the issues of our women in Papua New Guinea.

Mr Speaker, our women form close to 50 percent of the nations population and they continue to play very important roles in the nations development.

Some good examples are the churches throughout the country where women are very organized and they provide a lot of leadership in community development programs and with the skills they learn from the various programs the churches deliver they use that to contribute enormously in the family level.

Mr Speaker, it is only right for Parliament to support the Minister in her efforts to better manage and give support to women throughout the country through the establishment of the National, Provincial and District Women’s Council.

Mr Speaker, as Member for Abau, I have also established a District Women’s Council and like all other Joint District Budget Planning Prioritization Committees we have women representatives on board.

Mr Speaker, for the law to give them prominence, and allow them to be better organized and allow Parliament to give them some finances every year, I think Parliament would be doing a honourable job in supporting the Minister in passing this Bill.

Mr Speaker, when you organize women well through legislative support they have always risen up. We cannot ignore the people's signal after the 2012 National Election. This country voted in three women leaders who are now on the Floor of this Parliament. After many years of just one voice, our people also want women to participate on the Floor of this most honourable Parliament.

Mr Speaker, we all come from families and when a woman is well organized and well educated and well supported, the family improves the society improves, and the nation improves.

Mr Speaker, as the Minister for Public Service, we also introduced in the Public Service General Orders, which I will be bringing some amendments to give support to women through the Gender Equity Policy which I introduced in the Department of Personnel Management and now it is incorporated into the Public Service General Orders.

Mr Speaker, this Asia Pacific Region is looking at Papua New Guinea and we need to support them.

On that note, I also wish everyone a very Happy Easter celebrations.

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

That the question be now put.

Motion – That the Bill be now read a second time – agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

## MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

A Message from His Excellency, the Governor-General dated 27 March 2013 was announced recommending the expenditure of public monies in accordance with *Section 210* of the *Constitution* insofar as the Bill relates to and provides for such expenditures.

### Third Reading

Leave granted to move the third reading fourth-with.

**Ms LOUJAYA TONI** (Lae – Minister for Community Development, Religion and Family Affairs) – I move –

That the Bill be now read a third time.

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

That the question be now put.

Motion – That the Bill be now read a third time – put.

The Bill requiring an absolute majority of 56 Members as required by the *Constitution*, the Speaker ordered that the bells be rung.

**12/07**

**(Voting in progress)**

**13/07**

The Parliament voted (the Speaker, **Mr Theo Zurenuoc** in the Chair) –

**AYES – 66**

**NOES – 0**

The Bill passed with the concurrence of an absolute majority as required by the *Constitution*.

Bill read a third time.

### **SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT**

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

That the Parliament at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 14 May 2013 at 2 p.m..

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 11.40 a.m..