

FOURTH DAY

Friday May 17 2013

DRAFT HANSARD

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FOURTH DAY

Friday 17 May 2013

The Speaker (**Mr Theo Zurenuoc**) 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 Central, **Honourable Kila Haoda**, to say Prayers:

‘Our God, our Lord and our Saviour through time and space, you are Holy, and through your holiness you created us to manage your creations including this Parliament. Lord, we acknowledge your presence in this Parliament. And we humbly come before your kingdom just as we are. We are sinners, Lord, have mercy upon each one of us, forgive our sins and forgive those who have sins against us. We thank you that every day is a blessing to us and through you we were elected as leaders to represent our people in this Parliament. Tell us great things as hidden and open as how we can serve our people and lead them at the same time. Lord, give us the love and peace to serve you and our people and give us the wisdom to separate the good from evil. If a thing can be changed for the better, Lord, give us the knowledge to cause the change. Give us the courage to try to speak from our hearts. Give us the will to blow the whistle of the faults as we serve the people of PNG, in Jesus’ mighty name, Amen’.

QUESTIONS

Mr POWES PARKOP – Mr Speaker, I wish to direct my questions to the Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, landowner companies under MRDC are spending a lot of money overseas such as in Fiji. And just recently they have invested in building a new hotel at Ela Beach. They have not completed the controversial five star hotel at 4-Mile of which millions of landowner money has been invested.

Mr Speaker, my main concern as the Governor of NCD is that we are signatories to the project agreement, yet implementation has been delayed for a long time now.

My questions are:-

(1) When will the five star hotel be completed?

(2) Are there any plans in place to fast-track the construction phase?

The completion of this hotel will bring in investments.

(3) If there are no plans, can the Government invite new investors to be partners with landowner companies so that the hotel can be finally completed?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable Governor of NCD for his questions on this development at 4-Mile, Boroko. This land was owned by Works Department and was given away for the construction of this casino hotel.

The development of the Casino was done by Gobe Resources Development which is a landowner company for the Gobe Oil field landowner group under the chairmanship of Mr Philip Kende. They partnered with the Korean Investor at that time and the NEC gave them the approval to do so.

02/04

But the licensing arrangement for a casino is done through the National Gaming Board. As of today, there is no clear legislation that manages casino issues in the country, and as a result of that, not so long ago, I said it publicly that I don't think Papua New Guinea was ready for a casino because we don't have a disposable income that Papua New Guineans can go and just waste let alone look after their families. We are struggling

to keep up our standard of living for individual families. We have found that most of the customers or our existing gambling facilities are public servants and we know that most public servants with their salary packages are not able to afford to gamble but we continuously see many of them in these gambling houses.

Mr Speaker, at some stage, we need to slow down this gambling. I am advised by the National Gaming Board that some pokies operators have been given notice for the termination of their pokies and operators licenses because specific conditions have not been met. So as a result, a number of pokies operators have been given notice that their licenses will be terminated very soon.

We will allow that to be managed by the National Gaming Board because we don't want to have any political interference because it is a business interest where people have invested money and we must respect and due process must take place.

However, specifically in relation to the casino, I want to assure the Governor that we want that building to be completed but unfortunately from the reports that we are getting, MRDC commissioned an engineering group because of a continuous complaint that building standards were not complied with. For instance, the concrete structure of that building is probably 15MBTU which is the normal standard, but that building had only 5 so the structural issues needed to be raised. So they engaged Kramer Engineering, a leading engineering company in the Pacific, and from the findings of this report, that building was condemned.

I want to assure this Parliament that NEC will now re-visit the decision of the casino license or approval that was given. In fact, some commitments were made to government, especially the Works Department that they will be building some office accommodation for them when we surrender the land for that project. That has also not eventuated so there are a lot of commitments that were made in terms of this project but has not been fulfilled so I will say that the likelihood of it not continuing is very high.

I understand that there has been some change of shareholders in that project and we will give opportunity to the new shareholders to give us a proposal on how they can complete the building structure and the project as a whole. But in terms of the casino operations, a casino license amendment Act has to be established by this Parliament, but we are not ready to pass that yet.

I want to assure the honourable Governor and the Parliament that we want to encourage the landowners and protect their investments but these the investment decisions that they take and ultimately it is not the responsibility of the entire government or the country to protect their decisions. If they have made a mistake then they have to pay for the costs that are associated with those mistakes.

I also want to advise Parliament that MRDC through Petroleum Resources Kutubu, Ok Tedi Resources and the others are now embarking on construction of some major world class hotels in the city in preparation for the APEC Meeting. And one is being proposed at the back of the Hohola National Forestry Authority Office and one next to Ela Beach Hotel where MRDC is planning to build a six star hotel.

03/04

So the landowners are starting to make good investments in the country. We know that they are buying investments in Fiji, Australia and elsewhere but we are trying to encourage them to invest in our own country so that we can create more jobs.

This is a booming economy. Everybody else is investing here so why are we investing elsewhere when the economies around the region are struggling when our economy is booming, so I don't see the logic in them taking their money to invest elsewhere. But I am very certain that those investments, when they come, will do the city proud and our country proud.

Mr CHARLIE BENJAMIN – My question is directed to the Prime Minister and I would like all the other ministers to take note.

With the serious law and order problems and mass jailbreaks in the country, culminating with the latest escape of our maximum security prisoner, public interest and concern in law and order is now paramount. The amount of money spent on this one escapee is in the million.

A few weeks ago, the Prime Minister expressed an interest in building a maximum security prison on an isolated island which will address the issues of mass escapes and further crimes.

Such an island would need to be isolated and of course 200 miles from the nearest mainland, preferably State-owned and have access to an airstrip.

Mr Speaker, my electorate, mostly Ninigo group of islands have several of these islands available, which are uninhabited and fulfill the criteria. Four of my islands have airstrips capable of handling light to medium airstrip. The PNGDF CASA can land there.

Is such a prison being seriously considered and if so, can the Prime Minister please give this project to us?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you very much to the honourable Member for Manus for this very important question that he has put forward to this Parliament today.

Mr Speaker, I have had discussions with several of our leaders in Government and also leaders in public service about the serious issue of the escalating law and order problems in the country.

We know that this law and order issue is the result of many years of neglect in some of the infrastructure in that sector and also neglect in capacity in terms of people who are going to enforce laws in our country.

To give you an example; for 10 years or more we have not trained one police officer, not even a single investigator or prosecutor. So when you look at all these issues, including the lack of magistrates, lack of judges, I want to say that the Government is looking at a wide range of issues to address many of which now lead to the law and order management problem that we have.

Mr Speaker, one of the decisions that Cabinet has recently taken is also increasing the number of judges. We've now increased it from 27 to 40. We are now talking with the Australian Government to assist in jointly funding the Waigani magisterial court so we can lift the capacity of magisterial services in the country.

We are now talking with many Members in the Parliament about how we can strengthen police presence in the districts. We have already started talking with the police constabulary and the Bomana Police College which is now up and running to increase the output of policemen and women to up to a thousand per year. Only last year we had 300 and the previous year we had 200.

Gradually but surely we are building capacity in these areas and I think that over the next two or three years you will see that there is a real chance for us in addressing the law and order issues in the country.

One of the issues that we are now looking at is to plan with our development partners to build a maximum security facility in the country. What we have done is that in many prisons around the country, you will note that minor and serious crime offenders are being housed together.

04/04

Those that have been imprisoned for minor crimes have been influenced by these serious criminals. As a result, we have not corrected the behavior of those who can be corrected but more so, we are now strengthening the influence of many of the criminals who are hardcore in that sense.

Therefore, we believe strongly that we must now have a maximum security prison on its own so that we will remove hardcore criminals and place them in an environment where it is totally controlled. We have, as a matter of courtesy, started discussions with several Governors, especially from Manus and Milne Bay to see if they will agree with us to put up this facility in their provinces.

With that, I am glad to say that after discussions with the Member for Manus Open and the Governor of Manus Province, they have both agreed that they will facilitate an island where we can build this prison.

Therefore, I would like to assure the honourable Member for Manus that, '*taim em askim em bai kisim nau*', so we will certainly agree to do that.

I would like to thank the people of the Manus Province, especially their leaders who have come to the rescue of this country on many occasions. Two such occasions are the current law and order issue and the asylum seekers.

We have made commitments but we have not been able to facilitate any sites regarding the asylum issue. The Manus Province then put up their hand and they have honoured every aspect of the agreements established with both our Government and the Australian Government. With all that, once again they have come up with a facility that is

going to be developed and we will start the process of planning as our aim is to start construction in 2014.

If someone has been sentenced to life imprisonment for murder or other serious crimes, he/she will be flown direct from wherever they are to the island where they will serve out their sentence in a maximum security facility where escape is impossible.

That is the ultimate aim of the Government because we are all sick and tired of all the breakouts from our main prisons. As stated by the Governor of Oro, our jails are being treated as holiday camp. When the criminals want to have a bit of rest they go in and then come out whenever they please.

The other thing is that, we have seen so far that some of our corrupt Correctional Service Officers have been compromised, especially some of the female officers. I think that this one person who has escaped recently is becoming like a cult figure and some people are attracted to this kind of behavior. An armed robber and rapist is not a hero or role model for anyone. We need to treat them as dangerous people. I would also like to appeal to those who are harboring him to turn these criminals in because I am sure they are sleeping somewhere and are in contact with somebody. Those people who are abetting criminal behaviour will also be punished and that is why the full force of the law must be enforced.

Mr Speaker, it is a good idea that we separate all the hardcore criminals so that we can better manage them and keep them from escaping. I would also like to stress to this Parliament that we are going to build the first private-run prison facility and we will call for tender on its management. This is in light of the fact that most of the correctional services in the world have been privatised. Therefore, we will start with this particular maximum security facility as a private entity.

Mr CAMILLUS DANGIMA – My question is similar to what has been asked by the Member for Manus and request the Attorney-General and Justice Minister, Honourable Kerenga Kua to tell us –

Mr SPEAKER – Your supplementary question must be directed to the Prime Minister. You make it a new question later on as I will reserve your right to ask your question and you may ask the Attorney-General now.

05/04

Mr CAMILLUS DANGIMA – Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Attorney-General. The death penalty is a means to slowing down the escalating law and order problem throughout the country.

There are two roads that we can follow; the evil way or the godly way. Criminals choose to follow the evil ways; just like the criminal that just escaped. These kinds of people must be sentenced to death.

Can the Attorney General inform the public and this Parliament how soon the death penalty will be enforced?

Mr KERENGA KUA – Mr Speaker, I think it's a very timely question.

We should dedicate some Parliamentary time to discussing this issue because it requires debate on the Floor of this Parliament and throughout the country so that people can express their views as well.

It's been in our law books for a long time and even the Courts have already imposed the death penalty upon certain individuals for violent crimes, but it has never been implemented.

Some time ago the Member for Lagaip- Pogera, Honourable Nixon Mangape, asked the question on when we were going to implement the death penalties of those inmates who are already on death row. And at that point in time, I think he ignited the debate that spread throughout the country, and my response was that if there is a sentence that is imposed by the Court that is waiting to be implemented then we have to proceed with it.

So at that time, I was only dealing with the people for whom the legal process had already concluded and the only thing that remained was for the sentence to be implemented by the Executive arm of Government. But that then generated debate on the

further use of death penalty to a wider range of crimes as a means to combat the law and order situations that we face ourselves in the country.

The debate has now taken off on two fronts, and I'm encouraging people to discuss it because as we draw up the systems and procedures for implementation of what's already concluded matter affecting those who are already on death row, we also talk about the possible use of the death penalty as a deterrent to many other offences as well so that we see over the course of time whether increased use of death penalty on some other serious offences can also lead to the deterrent of those crimes and the growth that we continue to see.

We haven't fully concluded our legislative drafting as yet. The Constitutional Law Reform Commission through its chairman, Honourable Ben PoPONAWA, has already been instructed to start looking at amending our *Criminal Code Act* and other legislations which create offences with the view to increasing penalties as a whole in most sectors.

For example, you look at the *Motor Traffic Act* and the *Motor Traffic Regulation, Summary offences Act* and the *Criminal Code Act* itself plus various other legislations that create offences and then you look at increasing the penalties; like the fines that are prescribed. Most of the fines were prescribed 20 to 30 years ago. Inflation has overtaken the impact of those fines so they no longer serve as a deterrent.

They will also be looking at increasing prison sentences over a wide range of criminal offence and within those to also look at increasing the use of death penalty as a deterrent. Above all that they will also look at the possibility of introducing corporal punishment as part and partial of this overall scheme of increase in our response to crime in this country so that for little misdemeanors and summary offences such as spray painting on the streets, you might want to use corporal punishment.

This will be a deterrent towards those people who commit these sorts of low level crimes but also having an impact on society.

06/04

The whole of gamut of penalties are being looked at in all the legislations and Ben Popenawa is responsible for that through the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission.

In due course, they will bring a recommendation to Parliament and the legislative draftsmen will draw up the legislation from there.

I would also like to caution the legislators to bear in mind that, this is a hot issue at the moment and the citizens are discussing this as a contemporary issue. But we must approach it in a sensible way without having ourselves rushed to some legislative framework which will not achieve the outcomes we want to see.

So we will need to have our people air their views because these are very important legislative reforms. We need to listen to our people and the NGOs, the churches, mothers and fathers and everybody.

I have been monitoring the discussions so far and the people are desperate to see some legislative reforms that are designed towards increasing the penalties that are available under our laws. The majority of our people are inclining to support that and we, as a government, are inclined to do what the majority of our people want. So we are moving in that direction but that should not stop those people with the opposing views to articulate their views because we need to move with those views too.

The churches and the NGOs need to speak their views so as everyone else. So we will move in the direction where majority of our people want us to move. We need to move forward and do that, so we are moving forward now.

Mr Speaker, finally, some amendments will be introduced as soon as the draft legislation is ready which will amend 614 of the *Criminal Code Act*, which provides that the only means by which you implement the death penalty is by hanging a person until he is declared medically dead. That is the only prescribed procedure. However, people felt that we needed to introduce alternative means so that there is a range of ways to implement the death penalty so that appropriate means can be chosen depending on the mood and circumstances of the country. So the amendment that we will be tabling next week would be to introduce additional means of implementing the death penalty. I will go through the details when I introduce the Bill.

But in relation to the Member's question, it is a serious issue and the Government has been dealing with it and the final drafts will come through this Parliament over time.

Mr PETER IPATAS – My questions to the Prime Minister are in relation to law and order, which is the most important issue in this country at the moment.

While on the topic of making legislative changes and looking at long term solutions, a Committee was established to deal with the guns issue in this country.

A report was produced by this Committee and has been sitting there.

(1) Can the Prime Minister tell us whose interest are we protecting?

We should outlaw firearms in this country.

(2) When will the Prime Minister introduce a law to ban guns in Papua New Guinea?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – I thank the honourable Governor of Enga for his questions. Again, guns are becoming a serious issue in the country. He is correct in saying that a report was commissioned by the current Member for Goroka when he was the Minister for Internal Security. This particular report was completed and compiled and has been sitting there for some time.

07/04

I tabled the report in Parliament in 2011. The report is now with our bureaucrats and technical people to take appropriate measures and recommend to us the legislative reforms that we need to do.

Mr Speaker, I agree with him that a total gun ban should be in place. As part of the legislative reforms, I assure the Governor that it will be one of the priorities that we will put forward to tackle the law and order issues in the country.

It is easy to identify and track down owners of guns that are licensed through the normal process, if they are used for the wrong purpose. Therefore, we are critically imposing tough laws during the coming months against people who are making homemade guns, possession of unlicensed firearms and selling and buying of illegal guns in this country.

Mr Speaker, I urge all the Members to support these laws. Apart from guns, drugs and alcohol also contribute largely to some of the law and order issues affecting

this country. For example, when one is drunk or has used drugs and is in possession of a gun, he becomes more hostile.

I agree with the Governor of Enga and we will be introducing and taking ownership of the recommendations of the report.

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognizing the people of Northern Province.

My series of questions to the Prime Minister concern the national security of our country.

Firstly, I wish to commend him for his actions to bring about new legislation or penalties for serious crimes that are being perpetrated throughout the country.

My questions are in relation to the National Intelligence Organization (NIO)

- (1) Can the Prime Minister inform the Parliament if the NIO still exists?
- (2) What has happened to this organization that has provided vital security information the NEC and NASC?

Once upon a time NIO had a staffing of 80 plus members and it enjoyed sufficient funding through a proper guidance. Its purpose was to provide necessary national security advice to the National Government, NASC, Members of Parliament and the Ministers, and et cetera. That organization seems to have faded away whilst other economies are improving their intelligence and national security capacity.

The number of staff has now been decreased to 40 members and the services are deteriorating. I believe they are incompetent of providing any national security advice to the Government.

The function of a National Security agency or an Intelligence community is vital to economic progress since such a community will determine what opportunities and threats exist as globalization takes place while we continue to develop.

(3) Can the Prime Minister confirm whether there are plans in place to review the functions of the NIO?

(4) Can the Prime Minister also consider establishing the position of the National Security Advisor to oversee the function of an intelligence community?

(5) Can he also consider the assistance of Members of Parliament who have experience in that area?

I ask the Government to take immediate action because we are now a country that is blind in so far as National Security is concerned.

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor of Northern Province for raising very important questions regarding the NIO.

I also want to acknowledge Governor's experience in this area. In his former position as the Commissioner for Customs, he was very much at the frontline of many of the issues that he has raised.

The NIO is in existence but has been sleeping for a long time. And just like every other security apparatus like Defence, Police and CIS and many others Government institutions, it has been run down and certainly it needs some time and proper attention.

08/04

We have made decisions in the past that have contributed to this, including the retrenchment exercise that was carried out where many of the departments around the country were virtually. That is why many of the senior officers who were there and contributing positively to the departments and ensuring these organizations were run in a manner that we all expect unfortunately left for greener pastures to organizations that were suited to their own needs. As a result, only a skeleton staff remains, which the Governor has mentioned.

So I want to assure the Governor that we are working with the office of the Chief Secretary. Of course we will take on board the suggestion for the position of a National Security Advisor; it is a good suggestion and we will take it on board.

Right now NIO has an acting director and we need to put a permanent person in there that can take charge of that organization and run with it quickly. One of the frustrations that we have is the public service machinery and the appointment process, which takes a bit of time.

I want to thank the Minister for Public Service who gave notice a few days ago and we will address that and shorten the appointment process, as the delay continuous to

frustrate the appointments of our senior public servants, but I take on board what the Governor has stated.

Mr NIXON MANGEPE – My questions are directed to the Minister for Police and are in relation to police operations in Pogeru.

(1) Can the Minister explain why the Police in Pogeru have been using hire-cars in the last six years?

(2) Can he also tell us who is paying for the hire of these vehicles at K800 per day?

We only have one Police Force but it seems in Pogeru we have two different teams. One faction acts like the military with their own Commander and ammunition.

(3) Why is this happening?

Mr NIXON DUBAN – I thank the Member for his questions. I think those issues he raised can be discussed, but I do not want to discuss it here further. There are a lot of police issues in the electorate that we both need to talk about as I am not sure about the arrangement of police presence there and whether they are providing security for the company is unknown to me.

But it is one issue that I will raise with the PPC, so I request the Member to meet with me and address the issues that he has just raised.

Supplementary Question

Mr BIRE KIMISOPA –Mr Speaker, the Police Minister recently made an announcement in Parliament that he will seriously consider an agreement with the Queensland Government in relation to the policing exchange program for 150 police personnel from PNG going down to Australia and 150 of their personnel coming to Papua New Guinea.

Can the Minister bring before the Parliament the amendments that are required to bring back the ECP, the policing component that is urgently required in this country?

The amendments relate to the constitutional provisions where it spells out questions about immunity from prosecution. I urge the Minister to bring this before Parliament because this country is already inundated with law and order problems and the Haus Krai is just a tip of the iceberg.

09/04

Mr NIXON DUBAN – I thank the Member for Goroka for his question.

Mr Speaker, I believe the Prime Minister has had good discussions with the Queensland Premier in their recent meeting, and we are looking forward for the arrangement to take effect. I am sure the issues surrounding the constitutionality of those arrangements will be looked at. We need to take a decisive stand as to how that can be arranged. As we move into the final stage of those discussions then some announcement will be made in accordance.

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – Mr Speaker, I wish to direct my series of questions to the Minister for Justice and Attorney General, and I want the Prime Minister and Ministers for Finance and Treasury to take note.

My questions are in relation to the high level white collar crime and corruption at the Department of Finance and Treasury.

Before I ask my questions, I would like to take this time to thank my colleague Members of Opposition who contested under my party banner and who have been with me from the lobbying to the formation of the Government and who have now moved to Government. I want to congratulate them and the decisions they have made is in their own interest as leaders. I wish them all the best. As I told them at the beginning, if you wish to join the Government at any time then you may do so because I will be a proud man in this country to be a one- man- opposition. But don't forget that politics in PNG is unique and so what goes around comes around.

Mr Speaker, my questions to the Minister are in relation to a fraudulent payment of a staggering K71.8 million from the month of February 2012 to May 2013 by the Department of Finance to a firm; Paul Paraka Lawyers.

Mr SPEAKER – Leader of Opposition, you have raised a sensitive question. I must inform Parliament that this morning, I was issued with a copy of a letter dated 12 October 2013, advising me as Speaker that there is a court order in place barring Parliament from discussing this issue. And until such time I confirm the content of this letter, I will not allow questions relating to this particular entity or the matter you raised to be discussed on this Floor of Parliament. I need to seek legal clarification on this one.

Leader of Opposition, please resume your seat.

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order! Mr Speaker, that particular order you are referring to does not stop me from asking questions. Parliament is the supreme authority. We need to discuss and debate corruption at the highest level in this country.

Mr SPEAKER – Thank you, Leader of Opposition. As the Presiding Officer, I need to seek legal clarification on that matter, therefore, I ask you to hold onto your questions until I do so.

10/04

MR KEN FAIRWEATHER – I wish to direct my questions to the Minister for Agriculture but he is not here, I wish to reserve right ask him next week when he is present.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I will reserve your right to ask your questions next week when the Minister is present.

Mr POWES PARKOP – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me another chance to raise my questions.

I direct my question to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and it is in relation to the people of West Papua.

Mr Speaker, some of these people have been in Papua New Guinea for more than 30 years. They have been living here and haven assimilated with our people. Some are employed here have raised their children here but their status is –

Mr Francis Marus – Point of Order! Mr Speaker, the *Standing Orders* does not allow a Member to raise questions twice in a day. However, as the Speaker, you can use your discretion to allow him to do so.

Mr SPEAKER – Thank you, I am using my discretion in allowing him to raise his questions.

Mr POWES PARKOP – Honourable Member for Talasea, I think the other Members have no more questions to ask.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr POWES PARKOP – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for using your discretion in allowing me raise my questions.

As I was alluding to, many of these people have been here for a long time but we have not determined their status whether they will remain as refugees or residents. Their status is in limbo.

(1) Does the Minister intend to address this issue and grant citizenship to these people who have served our country?

(2) Can the Minister also waiver the K10 000 requirement for those who want to become citizens?

Some of the refugees who have been here for a long time don't have that kind of money so can the Minister use his discretion to remove the criterion so a lot of these people can become citizens if they qualify because as far as everything is concerned, they have been loyally serving our country.

Mr RIMBINK PATO – Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor of NCD for his questions.

In relation to the status of our brothers and sisters from West Papua who have been living in Papua New Guinea for a long time, there is at present a major review in relation to all the laws concerning immigration and citizenship. And one of the matters of focus in

that review is the determination of what status we will give to the former residents or former citizens of West Papua who have been living here for a long time, including the issue of determination of whether or not they should have the benefit of a waiver of the fees relating to the acquisition of PNG citizenship.

So the answer is; there is a review underway and they will have the benefit of the process of that review. We are also seriously looking at giving them the benefit of the waiver of the requirement to pay K10 000 to acquire Papua New Guinea citizenship. At the same time, as I stated in my answers to questions in Parliament yesterday, we are also looking at those who intend to return; what are the things we must do in our bilateral relationships with Indonesia and what kind of holistic development, bilateral, economic, political and infrastructural investments that both countries should take so that there is the freedom to move between both countries without the sensitivity of whether there should ever be a question that there is a need to come to Papua New Guinea to live here; or be faced with the concerns that they are faced with which gave rise to the questions that the Governor has asked me.

11/04

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance) – I ask leave of Parliament to make a personal explanation.

MR SPEAKER – Do you claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Yes, Sir!

Mr SPEAKER – Go ahead, leave is granted.

Mr JAMES MARAPE - Mr Speaker, based on the inference made by my learned Opposition Leader this morning, I wish to make some clarification so that the public knows.

Mr Speaker, I seek your concurrence because the Opposition Leader has stated that the Finance Department was implicated in facilitating corrupt activities.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Minister, I made a ruling to disallow the questions from the Opposition Leader.

I think it is better we leave it as it is until such time I seek legal clarification and advice as to whether or not to entertain these questions.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Question proposed –

That Grievances be noted.

Sir MICHAEL SOMARE (East Sepik) – Mr Speaker, I have a little grievance that I wish to express on behalf of the people of Sepik, which I hope the Ministers for Civil Aviation, Transport and the Treasurer will take note of.

We have been told that there is a big crack on the airport runway in Wewak. The Ministers for Civil Aviation and Transport have not confirmed when and why the Sepik people cannot travel to Madang, Mt Hagen or Port Moresby. No report has come from Civil Aviation or Transport to verify that.

If they load 60 passengers, for example, in a Q400 and then crash and die, who will compensate them? Will the Minister and Government compensate them?

That is what I want to know. It is courtesy and also for safety reasons that if there is a problem in a major airport, Civil Aviation must inform the public because lives are at stake.

A lot of passengers are stranded and cannot travel anywhere because Air Niugini cannot fly in.

Can the Minister inform me later on whether anything will be done on the airport runway?

I am also concerned of the way we carryout maintenance work. If there is a crack in one of our feeder roads, we fix it by patching it up with bit of concrete and don't think about the lives of our people who are travelling these roads.

Mr Speaker, during 2010-2011, the former Minister for Transport in my government, who is the current Treasurer, committed K43 million for the main wharf in East Sepik, and another K40 million for the upgrading of our airport. Why are these allocations not reflected in your budget? These two items have not been included in the current budget we approved.

The previous Minister for Civil Aviation and Transport gave an undertaking that they will upgrade our wharf and airport, however, the funding was not allocated.

Another problem in the East Sepik is that our port is not deep enough and I am asking if there are any technical experts who can inspect to see which area is deep enough for a port because in East Sepik the beaches are too sandy and they stretch out for miles into the ocean. We prefer a depth that can work, and with the money they allocate to us, we can do a proper feasibility study and construct a new wharf.

At the moment, our biggest concern is the airport. The people of East Sepik and West Sepik are affected because it is has been impossible for planes to land Wewak in the last three days.

I wish that the Minister for Civil Aviation can take note of this and get his director to have a look at our airport. That is very important. Passengers from East Sepik and West Sepik are denied their rights to travel to places of their choice because jet planes cannot land there.

Even though we have access to passenger ships, there are businessmen who want to fly in and out on a daily basis to conduct their business, but this situation has hindered their activities. We have ships going in and out such as Lutheran Shipping and Coastal Shipping, but obviously this is going to take a long time for someone who wants to do business in Port Moresby.

I ask the Minister to upgrade our airport. Please, come and look at it and give us assistance, and do not forget us because we also attended to your woes in the past.

Mr BOB DADAE (Kabwum) – Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for recognizing me.

This morning the honourable Governor of NCD quipped that Members don't have questions to ask, but in fact they do. In my case, the Minister for Sports was not here so I could not raise my question so I am taking this opportunity to talk about sports in this country, and I also like the Governor for NCD and the NEC to take note of my debate.

12/04

We have seen in the media that the next South Pacific Games in 2015 will be held here in Port Moresby alone. The Ninth South Pacific Games in PNG in 1991 was hosted in Lae as well as Port Moresby. Another possible co-host for the next Games can be Goroka as it has produced many of this country's great sportsmen and women.

Therefore, to date, there has been no acknowledgement or news of Lae or Goroka co-hosting the 2015 South Pacific Games. Lae and Goroka are ideal hosts for the Games as it will provide sports entertainment for almost 75 per cent of population of the country. This is because the majority of the country's population is situated in and around the regions of these two cities.

Sport is one of the unifying factors that can bring this country together. This country has more than 800 different languages, tribal groups, regional groups and on top of those factors that can work against uniting a nation is the law and order problems. Therefore, sport is one way that can unite our people. That is why when we are planning these kinds of games we must consider all these kind of factors.

Also, NCD is already facing problems in traffic congestion. How are we going to accommodate and move all the athletes around when you cannot even address the traffic issues our citizens are facing? There is a traffic jam in every street you drive through. Will the new roads proposed for the city be completed by 2015?

The Governor of NCD and Minister for Sports should also know that NCD is only the capital of this country and does not reflect the whole of PNG. Business communities are not only located in NCD alone but also in Lae and Goroka as well. I am mentioning these two cities as they have the facilities to cater for the Pacific Games.

The South Pacific Games is an opportunity for the country as it will create business opportunities for our people who are located where these Games will take place. Therefore, we have one and a half years before the Games, so it is not too late to consider Lae and or Goroka to co-host the Games as well.

Mr Speaker, I urge the Government and the NEC to hold some of the Games at the Sir Ignatius Kilage Stadium in Lae. This particular stadium has produced more gold medals in 1991, even though NCD hosted most of the games and this is an historical fact.

Lae is blessed and if we want PNG to win the 2015 Games we must ensure to host some of the sports events in Lae or in Goroka. This is not just for sport but for the unity of this nation, in terms of business opportunities and the improvement of infrastructure developments.

I would like to see soccer to be hosted in Lae as soccer is our country's national sport and not rugby. If you go to all the corners of the country of our four regions you will find soccer. You will not find rugby being popular in Morobe Province in case some of you do not know.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr BOB DADAE – We have invested millions of kina in the 2015 Games and if we want to recoup some of that money, then some of the events should be held in Lae. This is because many people throughout the country can easily make their way to Lae to watch the games. Goroka is also good venue to host the games as many Highlanders love to watch sport.

13/04

They will be flooding Goroka, therefore in the interest of business and unity of this nation, and in the interest of putting up sports infrastructure in this country, I want Cabinet to make a decision to establish some sporting avenues in Goroka and Lae so that our people from the other parts of Papua New Guinea can attend.

It has been one of my major concerns because I've read in the daily newspapers that NCD has been at the forefront of all these activities. Papua New Guinea cannot be represented by NCD, it is made up all the provinces..

Mr TITUS PHILEMON (Milne Bay) – Mr Speaker, I would like to also contribute to this Grievance Debate.

My concern is on transportation and communication. I believe that without these two vital assets in such a country like Papua New Guinea, we cannot be able to achieve a lot of things that we want to do. We won't be able to deliver in health, education, socio-economic and infrastructures in this country without transportation and communication.

Yesterday we heard the statements of the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Works. I was pleased that the Minister for Works has suggested re-introducing the PTB.

Mr Speaker, for Maritime Provinces, Id like to ask the Minister for Transport who is also in charge of the National Maritime Safety Authority to re-introduce the marine fleet for the coastal provinces.

Mr Speaker, the cost of transportation in the Maritime Provinces is very high. During the early times when maritime fleets were operating in this country, service was delivered to the rural areas, unlike today. It's a big problem. We are not able to deliver services to our rural communities on the outer islands because of the cost to charter boats. The transportation of our people is also a big concern that I would like to bring to your attention.

I ask the Minister's for Transport and Works to consider re-introducing the marine fleet again. This will help service delivery.

My second concern is in regard to the report presented by the Minister for Works. This is on the declarations on some of the road projects within the country that have been continuously receiving funding from the National Government. I believe Alotau East Cape road is also a National Highway and I would like to request that the Minister for Works include the East Cape road in its funding for upgrading and sealing in the 2014 Budget.

Mr Speaker, I mention this because the Minister for Planning, Member for Alotau Open, and myself have already started sealing a portion of the East Cape road, about 56 km. This road has continuously served the traveling public not only from Alotau, but also from Kiriwina Goodenough, Esa'ala and Samarai Murua electorates. The people from these areas have to travel through East Cape to reach Alotau.

It also serves visitors from other provinces who travel to visit the southern tip of this country, which is East Cape.

14/04

I urge the Government, especially the Ministers for Works and Transport to list this road down for funding in the 2014 National Budget.

Lastly in regards to the fisheries and maritime resource owners, I am glad that the Minister for Fisheries will be lifting the moratorium in Milne Bay so that the people will be able to harvest the beche-de-mer.

Mr Speaker, it is about time the National Fisheries recognize the fisheries resource owners. They are not recognized and only get a trickle out of their harvest and instead of them benefiting, the middle men end up with most of the earnings.

Mrs LOUJAYA TONI (Lae – Minister for Community Development) – Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I would like to take this opportunity to make a personal explanation and clarify the position on the issue of the Lae Port Title Basing.

As Member for Lae and being a Member of the Principal Landowner Group of Buslum and Wapiguhu, the scenario was straight forward when I made a public statement in the media last week to state the importance of principal landowner groups wanting to stand with the Government basically to break the existing monopoly.

Having said that, I have been well informed because I did the research for my Masters at the University of Technology on the Ahi workforce at the Lae Port Title Basing Project.

For records sake, Raibek has never paid my school fees but took ownership of the research, and paid for a laptop and a printer. Using the laptop and the printer purchased

by Raibek, I completed the research on the Ahi workforce at the Lae Port Title Basing Project, so I am well aware of the situation which is on the ground now.

In my capacity as Member for Lae, I stand to ensure that the people of Morobe as well as the principal landowners and the rest of Ahi benefit by way of participation within the Lae Port Title Basing Project.

Part of the situation at the Lae Port Title Basing involves the laying off of Port Services labourers because of the Gantry cranes taking over; the need for a sustainable exit plan for those who are laid off; the need to re-look at the major stevedore players, Consort United Stevedore and Raibek in the Lae Port Title Basing and the monopoly that they enjoy as being owned by Steamships and Swire Group of Companies.

Taking a look at Raibek, it consists of 51 per cent shares owned by the Ahi people and 49 per cent shares by Consort, however, in real benefit sharing terms cash payouts of dividends whether K10 000 to K20 000 to the Ahi clans amounts to as little as K10-K20 in an individual clan members pocket.

The Raibeks investment in educating the Ahi people has mainly being in-house and therefore, when the opportunity came to be able to work forward to improve the livelihood of Ahi people so that they break out of the rut of being generational port service labourers, the principal landowner groups decided that it was time to open up to have other stevedoring companies come in to the Lae Port Title Basing Project. So when they saw the opportunity for a fourth player wanting in on the Title Basing Project, they decided that the two principal landowners and the people of Butibum village align themselves with the Government so as to participate in bettering the benefit sharing package to them.

15/04

I am pleased to note that the State Enterprise Minister is working on the benefit sharing package that would include seed funding, shareholdings, and et cetera. But what we have now, Mr Speaker, is two factions.

One faction of the Ahi people are working with the Opposition and the other faction is with the Government. I would like to read in part, a letter from the Butibam people with regard to participation in working with Government and it reads, “....The

people of Butibam village have made clear our stand of the current issues surrounding the Lae Port Stevedoring issue, now humbly submit and expression of interest to partner with the Government, it is an agency that the PNG Ports Corporation Limited, Provincial Government and potential private partners who intend to pursue and work together in development at the Lae Port Title Basing....". Further to that, they said in this stevedoring business we have a long history in this business going back to the colonial era and until we ourselves struggled to established Raibeks Stevedores in the early 1990s. This, however, is being shared with our Ahi villages and also partnering with Swire and Steamship had been neglected in the right of participating meaningfully on our land. With our two brother impact clans, Wuapihu and Bushlubus, pusuing their interest in new title basing project, we now seek to work together with them to ensure that our people are empowered to see real benefit on our land.

Mr Speaker, this is now coming from the people of Butibam village and their intention to stand with the two principal landowners groups. The letter has also all the clan leaders within Butibam having signed this document. They have minutes of their two main meetings held in the village and the resolution that they came up with, which I will read in part; "....we the Butibam villagers put forward our resolution dated 17 April 2013 that we will not participate in strike and the proposed closure of Lae Port on 19 April 2013 pending decision to the Petition demands dated 18 April 2013 on the following grounds; as landowners we have been participating only as laborers within the Lae Port operations with Raibek Stevedores, a subsidiary of Ahi Holdings Limited. We are not being empowered by our subsidiary and partner to meaningfully participate Ahi's assist the Butibam villages to establish business ventures and participate in Lae Port operations in capacity building. We feel that our partners in our current joined ventures have deprived us in decision to developers to participate. As impact villages to the current development, we invite genuine stevedoring companies to be our partners in stevedoring. A committee has been set up to carry out the ground works in preparation for stevedoring partnerships..."

Mr Speaker, as Member for Lae, I see the opportunity to break that monopoly and to better the benefit package not only for Ahi but for the people of the nine districts of

Lae. Again our people do not include the involvement of participation and shareholding equity component for provincial government.

This is a win-win situation but why there is negativity is simply because it is a divide and rule tactic, which we can do our research on like what happened in South Africa but we do not want it to happen in Lae District.

Mr FRANCIS MARUS (Talasea) – Mr Speaker, I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Leader of the PNG Party and the Leader of the Opposition for his understanding to respect the decisions of the elected leaders of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I wish to say that the people of Talasea has petitioned me and asked me to move to the Government benches in consultation with him and I am happy to say thank you very much for releasing me.

However, I am equally concerned and disappointed about his outburst with words, which were un-parliamentary. He should have respect for the elected leaders to make their own decisions.

On behalf of the people of Talasea, I thank the Prime Minister for receiving me into this Government. On the same note, I congratulate the newly appointed Clerk of the National Parliament and we the people of Talasea would be happy to work with you.

Mr Speaker, I also wish to convey my apology to the political impasse that took place last year and if I have caused any inconveniences to Members who are now in the Government that I will be joining, I say sorry on behalf of the people of Talasea. We are aware of how politics would end up in one way or another in the game of politics, but as elected leaders of our people, we must work together for the good of our people and Papua New Guinea.

16/04

We must be happy to work together to move our people and country forward. On behalf of my people, I want to thank the Prime Minister for his leadership and diverting huge sums of money to the districts. I assure you that my people of Talasea will support and work together with you.

I will spend a large component of my funds to develop infrastructure and assist the youth in my electorate. The Government has so far forgotten the youths and is more focused on investment opportunities for the country. Now we are talking about assisting the police to curb law and order, but I want to clarify here that the youths are not the cause of the social ills that we are facing today. The problems that we are faced with are being created by the system.

I am appealing to the responsible managers in the district that I will invest in the youths to get them involved, thank you.

Mr WERA MORI (Chuave)– Thank you for recognising the people of Chuave.

Mr Speaker, we know we have problems but when we try to address those problems, we cannot. I am thankful for the presentations we have heard from the Ministers for Works and Transport and also from the Minister for National Planning.

What they have done is capitalise on the situation and try and bring practical solutions, and I would like to contribute in that area. It is very good that we have a Government that is trying to invest in lasting solutions because the people are tired of hearing political rhetoric.

For this reason when the problems are identified, we must identify the solutions specifically. One of the main problems associated with infrastructure is the changing weather pattern. We are experiencing weather change in this country.

In early days the kiaps did a fine job of collecting rainfall and creating their own weather pattern from the data or information they observed from the rainfall, sunshine, and et cetera, but due to global warming our weather patterns are slowly changing and this is affecting our infrastructure. At times it is raining non-stop and other times it is too hot.

Roads are deteriorating at a fast pace and bridges and wharves deteriorating as a result of changing weather patterns. It is a very sad issue and I would like to give an account of a village called Gadavisu which is 35 kilometers from the coast in Wedau, Milne Bay Province.

What happened was that someone had bought a vehicle and drove it up there but could not drive back because as soon as he drove there, the road got cut off due to continuous rainfall. And to date, that vehicle is still there.

17/04

I am glad that the Minister responsible for global warming is present and listening. I want all the districts managers to start collecting all the data information on the weather patterns around the country. They must make it their business to refer to the rainfall data so that it will go towards how we are going to mitigate. The weather patterns in this country change all year around and so it is not only for construction of the roads alone but it will be helpful to any constructions we want to make. We can not plan on things where we do not have all the data information and its very essentials. I am very happy to hear most of my colleague members who have supported this idea of having quality data in place and that is very important. I think it is about time we got to pin those district managers to make sure that such data must be collected and managed and processed so that at least it must become part of the planning process. So we do not want to build a road that will waste away in three weeks or so.

Mr Speaker, I want to elaborate further on the National Agriculture Development Program. Most of the time when I go to Kundiawa or Goroka town, I see written on the sides of the NADP vehicles, 'Agriculture - Grow the economy', and I wonder, how can we grow the economy when these vehicles are driven to towns such as Kundiawa and Goroka. It totally fails the people of PNG. I ask through the Chair, it will be better for us to have funds available straight to the districts for the rural people to get loans to start up small projects in agriculture rather than giving to a juggernaut where we will not see the tangible output. It is very important that it must be addressed because otherwise money will be thrown down and not utilized.

Mr Speaker, my other point is that; PNG is fortunate to have a lot of extractive industries both in hydro carbon and mineral sectors. But I particularly want to elaborate further on gold. I know that we had about 3 500 – 4 000 tonnes, which weighs about 1 500 tonnes and on balance, we may have about 2 500 tonnes. I would like to point out to this Parliament that before it is too late, PNG must now seriously consider having gold

bullions in reserve. So that at least we can be able to see something tangible for our children of future generations. Why I say this is because from practical experience in PNG it takes about 25 years to bring a new project on stream. And at the same time now we are mining in the vicinity of 60-80 tonnes of gold. And over the next 30 years, unless we bring one new project on stream, we may face the danger of depleting our resources. And I do not want to be in the grave and have children curse us that we had nothing to leave for them behind.

Mrs DELLILAH GORE (Sohe) – Thank you Mr Speaker, I want to join with my other colleague members and add few remarks to this debate and bring to light some of the issues concerning my electorate.

Mr Speaker, Sohe electorate is one of remote electorates in the country. Most of the bridges in my electorate always face natural disasters and all the bridges have been washed away by floods.

While sitting down and listening to these good ministerial statements presented by Minister for Works, National Planning and so forth, it saddens me most because in all those statements presented nothing has been done or mentioned about Sohe District or Oro Province for that matter. It really troubles me most because Sohe District experienced a natural disaster in 2007, and it has happened again.

Mr Speaker, now more than ten bridges have been washed away by floods and there has been no help as yet. But only one bridge, the Kumusi Bridge, will be funded by AusAID. What will happen to those nine bridges?

18/04

Mr Speaker, the women and children of my electorate are stranded because of the bridges that have been washed away. The women are unable to get to the closest hospital which is at Popondetta town, a very long way away. Pregnant mothers are unable to cross the river and while waiting at the banks of the river, they give birth and return home. Very sick women die in their husbands' arms and they are taken back to their villages for burial.

What plans does the Minister for Works have in place to fix these bridges? The first thing I did when I won the election was give my submission to the Minister but to date, I am still waiting. The bridges have not been repaired and women and children are dying in Sohe district because there are no hospitals in districts and clinics and aid posts have closed down.

Mr Speaker, I appeal to the Government that when we are building better roads and bridges for other districts, please, do not forget Sohe District.

Mr SASINDRA MUTHUVEL (West New Britain) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognising me because I have been desperately trying to get your attention for the last two days.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr SASINDRA MUTHUVEL – Thank you Mr Speaker, I also wish to participate in this debate on some issues affecting my province and the country as a whole.

I have been repeating these same sentiments many times in relation to our population, geographic and ethnic standard of West New Britain but I will keep on repeating until I get some attention from the National Parliament.

In West New Britain, we have almost 24 000 square kilometres geographical area and a population of almost 242 000 from the 2011 preliminary report but in reality, we may have more than 300 000 people. We have only two districts; one is Talasea district and the other one is Kandrian-Gloucester. Talasea district has seven LLGs and Kandrian-Gloucester has five LLGs where some LLGs have populations of over 50 000 people. For instance, Biala LLG has a population of 58 000 which is eligible to even become two Open electorates.

So the geographical difficulties and disposition of the province which includes isolated islands, very long coastlines and rugged terrains makes it very difficult for service delivery. I cannot blame my two Open Members of Parliament because they are also looking after very large areas. The Talasea Electorate starts at Hoskins Airport all the way to Biala and to Balivitu islands so it is a big electorate hosting over 200 000

population. It also concentrates a mono-crop which is oil palm which was introduced by the colonial government through the World Bank. When they introduced this crop, they did not have any consideration of the future population growth. What was meant a particular family, today we have three or four families staying in a four-hectare oil palm block and they are killing each other over land disputes.

Many people from Sepik and the Highlands and from all provinces in the country live in West New Britain. We are hosting the entire PNG in West New Britain and looking after them but to date, the government has no alternate plan on how we are going to address this serious issue; recent flooding which washed away like what the Member for Sohe has mentioned, roads and bridges. This has caused huge damage to this industry and yet the government has not given any assistance to industry which gives more than K120 million to the national purse.

The flooding has mostly affected the small holders but the company is not worried about it. The roads are cut-off, the company is unable to go and pick-up the harvest and for more than three or four months, people are suffering because the fruits are rotting and cannot be sold. I have no money to stabilise or assist the oil palm growers.

Also because of the vastness of the province, it causes lack of policing in strategic areas like Kariai Kove and Kandrian-Gloucester.

19/04

All the names I mentioned are very remote areas, many of them have no road linkages, and can only access them by sea only. It will take you from 14 to 18 hours in the open sea and this has become a perfect place for staging criminal activities and many may have cultivated drugs for sale in other provinces. So it becomes a criminal haven.

Multi-ethnicity is also the cause of a lot of sensitivity within the people. Because of the mixture of people there is always tension between 'asples', so-called indigenous people and settlers, LSS block holders, Oil palm block holders which includes all the provinces of PNG, highlanders, Sepiks and others so there is always ethnic tension.

We are sitting on a time bomb and we don't know when that pressure will build up to a stage where it will explode. It is also true that the landowners do not have land with titles to them so that they can participate meaningfully in economic activities by getting loans from banks.

Local landowners are using their traditional land to grow oil palm while LSS which is a government initiative to bring people from other provinces to settle in West New Britain creates incessant tension between these people.

So we need to address this and that is why law and order is a serious issue. I believe that West New Britain has the second highest rate of crime. And I will not be surprised if these escapees end up in West New Britain, it may happen today or tomorrow. I have not idea but if it does I will let you know, that is the reality because one of them is born and brought up in West New Britain.

So the ever increasing population, geographical disposition and law and order issues because of the multi-ethnic divides underscores the criminal requirement for West New Britain to be given some more districts and electorates.

This province is too big to manage. We truly deserve it, in terms of population density and in terms of geographical landmass of that area. If you are talking about the general standard of the Constitution which stipulates that if you have 30 000 population you can get an additional electorate. Since I have close to 300 000 people I am supposed to have 10 electorates. I am not asking for 10 electorates but I am asking for at least two additional electorates for effective service delivery to go to West New Britain.

I also wish to say that all of these things are contained in the Electoral Boundaries Commission Report. If we can implement this to break Kandrian-Gloucester Electorate into two, with one comprising of Gasmata, Kandrian Coastal, Inland and make it Kandrian Open and another as Gloucester, Kove-Kaliai, Bali-Vitu because these three have the same culture and customs and make it Gloucester Open.

And in Talasea also where Talasea-Kimbe Urban and Mosa LLG can be one district while East and West Nakanai can be another district.

So, overall, I think if we have these four electorates than we can guarantee some service delivery in the province.

I also wish to thank the Prime Minister who mentioned in the morning that sooner or later he will ban pokies. I will welcome that initiative and that which he said gambling will cease in the country. If those things come to pass I will be very happy because those things are a big issue in the province.

Whatever money people earn is spent on pokies parlours. We have close to four or five poker machine operators in the province already and I could not do anything about it because it does not come under the provincial government.

For that matter, we are running the provincial government but the governor does not have power. The governor is not the chairman of any body except peace and good order committee. By ex-officio all those things are supposed to be chaired by the administrator, be it liquor licensing, or forestry board or whatever board you can name.

I have spoken to the Minister already but he said no but according to Section 25 of the *Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Governments*, the governor is not even the chairman of the JDP&BPC. The governor can only appoint a PEC member to become the chairman of JDC&BPC.

I have papers and copies of these claims if anybody wants to read them to verify my statement.

20/04

There has been a lot of negative talk and I do understand how the Open Members feel, especially those from the larger provinces like Morobe, Madang and Eastern Highlands where the Governors get almost K60 million to K80 million.

In my case I received K10 million from the Government and I had to follow the compliance where I had to spread the money among minimum priority activities like 30 per cent for infrastructure, 20 per cent for education, 20 per cent for health, 10 per cent for agriculture activities, 10 per cent for law and order and 10 per cent for administration. If you then do not follow this guideline then you held for misappropriation.

Therefore, I would like to appeal to the Minister for Planning and the Government to give us some flexibility so that we governors can consult with our Open Members and discuss how to spend the and if possible adjust some of the percentages in order to cater for other impact projects. As it is now, the guidelines are very strict and my budget will not be approved if I do not adhere to the breakdown percentages.

I am not sure how the other provinces do theirs but as for my province we put all the money into the budget appropriation and it is documented in the 2013 Budget. This is a public document so the general public has access to it –

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, your time is up. Please resume your seat.

Mr FRANCIS POTAPE (Komo-Margarima) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I would like to join in the Grievance Debate.

I would to talk about a major event that is going to unfold after this Parliament Session. The LLG elections are coming up and where I come from, the area is getting very hot with tension. I believe that throughout the Highlands Region the council election tensions are very hot today.

With that, the provincial government of the new Hela Province made a decision for the LLG elections to be deferred. Nevertheless, we have not gotten any response regarding this decision. Therefore, I would like to basically say that through this grievance debate that our Public Service machinery is not well established and we are doing what we can do, but it would be good if the LLG elections in Hela is deferred at least by one year.

If the elections are to go ahead in the Hela Province then the government's position must be made known now. There is talk that the president's election will be held inside by the councilors while others say that the people will vote for the president. Whatever decision the government makes there will be a lot of unsatisfied people at the end. This is because I have seen people who want to contest the LLG presidency already spending their time and money. If they then find out that the president will be elected by the councilors inside the Chamber then they will be disappointed. Therefore, I am calling

on the government to take a position on this quickly because we are not far away from the LLG elections.

I am not going to talk about the other provinces or districts but for Hela in terms of the Public Service machinery we are not ready for this coming election and would rather see it deferred. If it is going to happen then we would like to know if the election will be done on the inside by the councilors or by the people outside.

Another point that I would like to raise here is concerning Bosavi. As it is, Bosavi's six council wards are in my electorate while seven are in Nipa-Kutubu. When Hela became a province Bosavi is now in limbo. Therefore, I thought that Bosavi would all come under the new Hela Province. I am not really sure about this and therefore, the department of Inter-Government Relations has to take a position regarding this issue.

If Bosavi is going to be split up –

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I will have to interrupt you here.

Honourable Treasurer, may I remind you not to your mobile phone while in the Chamber.

Thank you.

Mr FRANCIS POTAPE – If Bosavi is going to be split up then the Government has to make known its position regarding this issue so that that the six council wards in my electorate can be declared LLG and then seven council wards in Nipa Kutubu side can also be declared and LLG so that has not been done.

21/04

That is why I think that position has to be taken and therefore the LLG elections in Hela must be deferred.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I want to make known that we established the Electoral Boundaries Commission when I was the Minister assisting the Prime Minister in the previous government.

I want to support the call made by the Governor of West New Britain that some Provinces are too big, like for me Koma Magarima is too big, I can not look after that electorate.

The population is also growing and by law, one Member of Parliament can only look after 36 000 eligible voters and some of us are looking after more than that. So I call on the Government of the day and the Prime Minister to that it's about time we fund the Electoral Boundaries Commission and they must now go out to the districts and provinces and determine which electorates can be split up to form additional districts in Papua New Guinea or within that province.

My final point is the 2012 National Elections report.

That report must be tabled as it is very important. I tabled the 2007 National Elections Report in 2011, almost four years after the election and one year before the 2012 elections. That report came out very late.

We need to talk about the political Party system, nomination fees and many things. I am calling on the Electoral Commissioner to fast-track the 2012 General Election report so that this Parliament can debate it so that we are better prepared for the 2017, which I believe will be bigger and better.

If we sit on it, then it might come out in 2016 and the same pattern will repeat and we won't be ready again. To cut down all the election petitions, the Commissioner has to table the report for Parliament to debate and make some good recommendations.

Mr SOLAN MIRISIM (Teleformin) – Thankyou, Mr Speaker, for recognizing the people of Teleformin. I have only two brief points to raise.

Firstly, I want to thank the Minister for Works under the O'Neill-Dion Government for making infrastructure a priority in this country and for focusing more on the rural areas.

My electorate in Teleformin can be accessed only by plane because there is no road. I am thankful that for the first time my district has been prioritized for a road construction.

This Government recognizes all the rural places where roads must link and I commend the Governor of Central province for mentioning that when there is a road

service will follow, this is true. Out of 20 or 25 remote districts in Papua New Guinea, I want to thank the Minister for Works for making Teleformin a priority in its list of areas needing roads.

I thank the O'Neill-Dion Government; it is indeed for the rural people. We have seen a lot of service delivery in infrastructure and education it's going all the way down to the village people. Funds are reaching the villages through the provincial governments. I am pleased with the Work's Ministers ministerial statement and I look forward to its implementation. When that road is constructed, I believe the 50,000 people of Teleformin will pledge their support for this Government forever. The roads must link all the remote areas. As for the maritime Provinces, serve their needs as well, that is the way forward after lacking for 37 years.

My other point is, as we know Teleformin is one of those remote districts but is next to Ok Tedi mine. We are under the title preferred area, but we have not received any tangible benefits in terms of development grants.

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Successive leader have failed to follow-up this issue and so we have been cut off. The O'Neill-Dion Government is taking over Ok Tedi Mining next year. Therefore, I request and urge the O'Neill-Dion government to include Telefomin in its development grant plans. I urge the Minister for Mining to take note to increase the 2 per cent tax credit scheme so that OTML can assist with the building of roads to Telefomin. This is because OTML can only assist my electorate with development grants if the national government increases from its current 2 per cent.

Telefomin is currently listed under the preferred area and shares the same culture and lingo with the people near the mine area. Now that changes will be taking place, I want Telefomin to be recognized as a beneficiary as well.

Telefomin also shares the same border with Western Province and the Shu Association of Hela Province. Our people have had relationship with the people of Kapiago, Tari and Komo-Magarima. In doing so, we share similar customs and have inter marriages. So I urge you to include Telefomin in the Shu Association.

The people of Telefomin have experienced rubbish coming out from Porgera Mine. So we are supposed to be included in its tax credit scheme as well so that my people can realize the minimum benefits.

I commend the government because the rural community will now be focused and we can continue to work together until 2017.

Mr DANIEL MONA (Goilala) – I thank you Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I want to also contribute to the debate. I thank the Governor of Central for making a mention about a road issue in my electorate.

Continuous landslide has occurred in my electorate and the Officer of the National Disaster accompanied me to my electorate to do assessment reports. However, until today, nothing has happened.

This clearly indicates that under the international law, any disaster that occurs whether it be landslides or other you have to respond after certain hours. However, PNG is the worst in the world because we do not respond to disasters. For instance, the boat that sank in Fischhaffen, Australia has a very good response system in place and if it had not been for them more people would have died there.

Because our response system is very poor, we need to improve the National Disaster Office and the other coordination departments that work side by side with them such as the department of Works, Police and Defence. It is time that we have a ministry or a department responsible for disaster and emergency in PNG.

23/04

I am not sure who is responsible for the quick response in the disaster and emergency in this country.

Mr Speaker, we have small dingy and aircrafts in place but who is going to enforce response unit during disaster and emergency. We cannot push it down to the provincial governments because they do not have the capacity to enforce it.

The National Marine Time Authority has a very small budget that they cannot go because every time we ask them for emergency assistance, they cannot help. Their

response was they are not responsible for smaller ships or boats. Thus, we really need to overhaul the National Disaster office.

Mr Speaker, it is a major issue throughout the country but let me highlight to you some of the events that we should do. In the government system, you have public servants running the disaster offices, at the national level you have the Secretary for Health, Secretary for Finance and all the bureaucrats, however, when it comes to disaster response, it is very poor.

When we ask for the National Disaster to meet immediately to respond to the emergency, they would reply that they are too busy and their mobile phones are off. It goes down to the provinces where the Governors are struggling to look for money to attend to the disaster zone.

Mr Speaker, under the *National Disaster Law/Act* there should be a District Disaster Committee headed by the District Administrator and for the in the provinces, it can be headed by the Provincial Administrator. And at the National level, it is headed by the Secretary of the Provincial Affairs. But how effective and efficient will it be when it responds to disasters or any emergence for that matter.

I have been working in the Central Province for donkey years and I have seen that responding to disasters is a very big issue. Now as a Member of Parliament we need to address it or else it is no use talking about it. I am very sorry to see village people trying to locate the missing people in the sea without the assistance from the Government or the National, Provincial or District Disaster office for that matter.

We have 14 Maritime Provinces, but where are the Government Search and Rescue boats? There is nothing for such events, yet we buy so many fancy cars and we do not have the money to find search and rescue boats. In addition, even referring back to all the 22 provinces, where are the emergency and disaster vehicles? Some provinces are lucky to have such fleets due to the fact that they experienced a lot of disasters and emergencies. A classical example is West and East New Britain and maybe Madang Provinces, but how about other provinces?

Mr Speaker, I firmly raise this concern because I see there is no disaster response unit or fleet in those provinces. Disaster does not occur only in one place at the same time but at various places from time to time. Consequently, our disaster response is very

poor; we need to overhaul and we need to look at it critically and address it sooner the better.

At the National level yesterday we talked much about planning, but this planning must also capture disaster in the plans. We know that we have a National Disaster Plan for the country and they have certain provincial disaster plans but how to make it work is major problem. It goes back to the reforms in the public servants and it is the same public servants that are running it so, if they are loyal public servants they respond quick. For example, if they receive the call in the night or during the bad weather, they move. If they are not committed then no body will attend to the disaster.

Mr Speaker, like the Member for Chuave said, we will continue to have El Nino and La Nina, which means that you'll have long continuous dry or wet seasons and when the pattern changes, we will face lot of problems, particularly health problems due the flood related diseases. How would the Health Department immediately attend to such emergencies when you have officers expecting duty allowances before he/she could attend to the disaster zone.

Therefore, I feel that we must have a plan for the disasters in this country. I am sure if one more ship or boat sinks tomorrow, I am sure that more people will continue to die because we do not have the capacity to respond immediately. I do not think we will response immediately even the Defence, Police or the CIS. When we ask, they say we do not have the pilot or no fuel to fly the aircraft. Basically, we still have small administrative issues connected to disaster management in this country.

Mr Speaker, we need to critically consider and plan this issue and if we need to have a department set up, let's do it because the country will sooner or later flush with cash within the years to come. This is for the good of our nation and the citizen of this country.

The Government must be responsible and if there is a big landslide and covers the whole village, how effective and efficient will our response be? There is no need to give any examples because it happens in nearly all the provinces, whether it is to do with sea disasters, landslides, floods or volcanoes.

We see or hear National Disaster officers say that they are not engineers so we should go to the Works Department instead, and vice-versa. They are pointing fingers at

each other when a disaster like large landslides occurs and a huge landmass is blocking the drive. Everybody is pointing fingers at each other and at the end the work is not done while the people are suffering.

There are a lot of issues that we are aware of in relation to disasters and emergencies and I wish to suggest that the Government should establish a Department of National Disaster.

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Divisions that respond to disasters like the Health sector, NGO's, Red Cross, Caritas, UN, Defense Force and Police must coordinate work as a team when emergency situations arise. We must be readily available and responsible and have the will power to assist and move fast otherwise we will lose a lot of lives.

As in the case of William Kapris, as soon as a prisoner escapes, we immediately lock the four corners and pick him up. If you don't have fuel and vehicles on standby and when the prisoner's escape, there is no way of catching them. If the Police have an effective response unit, they will be able to attend to problems that arise at odd hours like 2 o'clock in the morning. Likewise with the Fire Department; if there is a fire during early morning hours, they can be able to respond right away if there is an effective response unit. Why do you think fire trucks are stoned? It is because by the time the fire brigade arrives, the whole house has burnt down. The government has to look for money again to fix the fire trucks that are damaged by stones. How do we solve all these problems? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr PETER O'NEILL (Ialibu-Pangia – Prime Minister) – Mr Speaker, I, too, wish to join the Grievance Debate, but firstly, I want to welcome the honourable Members who have joined the Government ranks. We understand the sentiments expressed by the Leader of Opposition.

Let me welcome the Member for Talasea, Member for Komo-Margarima and the Member for Lufa. I thank them for joining us in our struggle to make a difference for the betterment of our country. It is not about building up numbers.

I am a bit aggrieved by what has been published in the *Post-Courier*, in that, we have persuaded these Members to join our ranks with the promise of giving them funds for District Services Improvement Program. This is obviously not true. This is not true because these three Members know that no such discussion took place. We never approached them. They made this decision based on the recommendation of their own people and at their own will, and we welcomed them. We cannot continue to play this kind of politics where we go around and try to destroy the others reputation. This is uncalled for.

I have been a leader of Opposition before and at one stage, our numbers were reduced to only four Members. One time, my brother Byron Chan and I were the only ones sitting there, so we've been in that position before. Let's not get upset about these things. Let's be constructive and work together to build a better country for our people. We need to engage in a constructive way. It is not about numbers. Numbers are there for us to pass legislation and to make sure that the laws we pass are good for our country.

Now that we have a good majority of Members, we will make some changes that will bring stability, not only to this Government but for future governments.

So, Mr Speaker, the *Post-Courier* has also stated that we need to look to other governments in the world that have strong Oppositions that lead with the Government. This is more of a westernized culture because our culture has taught us that there is only one chief in the village. Of course there will always be a faction that will oppose the chief but at the end of the chief has the final say. There is no such culture in our villages where there are two chiefs. It is a foreign aspect and not that of the Melanesian way.

25/04

Mr Speaker; we must not hurry into making decisions to adopt foreign ideas, customs and behaviors from outside into our society. Most of these new ideas and behaviors introduced by outsiders bring disadvantages and destructions to most of our societies today.

After 40 years of Independence, I think it is about time that we must try to reason and balance out some of these newly introduced behaviors and ideas. Our good Lord has really blessed us with good knowledge, wisdom and understanding to reason out what is

good and bad in our society and try not to adapt too much on outside influence but live to what is expected of us.

Mr Speaker, before I conclude, I want to elaborate on the issue of local level governments (LLG). Now the local level government elections will be soon held, electorates are following this same trend or tradition of lobbying and as in the formation of Government after National Elections. This same trend or tradition is practiced back in the electorates. Now that the election of council president is around the corner all the intending candidates go to camps and take the councils in buses and engage young boys to provide security for those you might defect to other camps. This sort of mentality is practiced here in PNG only. And I think it's about time we seriously consider to stop this tradition or behavior. Let's ignore this mentality completely and work together and appoint one person.

The Government will fully support this coming election of council presidents to go ahead and allow the people to vote for their council president. We won't allow for few provinces to vote their council presidents but involve all the provinces at the same time. And if the need arises for us to amend the whole *Constitution* then we will do so for the benefit of the whole country. We won't ignore certain sections of the law and practice only selected ones and say, we will amend or use that law later; no, we won't do that. We will consider the whole lot. This attitude of amending the laws and then disagree again must be stopped for once. We have already made the law and it's almost five years now so leave it as it is and continue with the election process.

Thirdly, I want to add few remarks on the state of our economy. This coming Thursday, the Minister for Treasury will present a full report on the status of our economy starting last year up until this year's first quarter. Basically, he will report especially on the changes in the commodity prices on copper, gold, oil and et cetera that we have extracted. Our revenue collections and expenditure will most probably be affected if we do not check. But Minister for Treasury is aware of all this changes and he will try to come up with a solution to please us.

We are operating on what we have budgeted for in 2013 National Budget on this Floor of Parliament. Our main aim is to keep our expenditure under control because we have a big deficit and we will work according to our budget. But if we are not careful

about it and over commit then it will blow up our deficit and our expenditure limits we have agreed on. We have experienced these problems every year. Expenditure blow ups only affects the budget but as for revenue estimates it works well.

The other issue on misuse of funds by Finance Department, we are fully aware of this. This problem of misuse of funds by officers from Finance goes back some 15-20 years and we are still fixing up this mess created by some individuals from the Department. Therefore, this coming week, the Minister for Finance will present a report and make some announcement to clear some of these issues of processing of claims.

We have now involved the fraud squad to go in and investigate and we have suspended officers in charge of the processing and approving of claims. We have also requested for the Australian Federal Police to come in and assist and engaged Interpol to track down on money deposited into accounts in other parts of the country. So all these partnership arrangement is in progress right now whilst we are talking.

So we have seriously taken into account many ways to correct and track down this problem. I also strongly believe in the presenting of reports by individual Ministers for us to understand what they have been doing in the last four months of this year. They have worked according to the budget handed down and I am very happy with this opportunity.

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Mr Speaker, I am pleased with the reports presented by the Minister for Works, Minister for Public Service, Minister for Transport and the Minister for Planning respectively. We are going to do this every quarter so we should not be shocked at the end of the year and say what the status of the country is. We must know all these information now so that if there are some mistakes, we will fix them in Parliament so that our country will be always on the right path. We must deliver what we have committed to the country and this is not going to be easy.

Many of our public servants do not perform their duties accordingly and it will require time to change this culture mentality and this Government is committed to do that. I am very pleased to get those reports to Parliament and Papua New Guinea.

Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak in this Grievance Debate.

Motion – That the grievances be noted – agreed to.

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, before we adjourn, the Parliament wishes to acknowledge presence of the Morobe PEC Members who are seated at the Public Gallery.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourned.

The Parliament adjourned at 12.50 p.m..