SIXTH DAY

Wednesday 22 May 2013

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

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

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Corrections should relate only to inaccuracies. New matter may not be introduced.

Sarufa M. Haro
Principal Parliamentary Reporter

SIXTH DAY

Wednesday 22 May 2013

The Speaker, (**Mr Theo Zurenuoc**) took the Chair at 10 a.m., and invited the Governor for Eastern Highlands, **Ms Julie Soso Akeke** to say Prayers.

> 'God Papa, yu Bikpela na yu wokim olgeta samting long graun. Mi laik tok tenkyu long givim mipela dispela gutpela kantri. Tenkyu long gutpela pipol bilong yu, husait mipela makim maus bilong ol. Yu givim mipela dispela wok long wokim, givim mipela wisdom long wokim wok long lukaut na hamamas bilong ol pipol bilong yu. Lukautim mipela, mipela daunim mipela yet na honorim yu. Mipela kam long yu nau na tok tenkyu long olgeta samting yu wokim long mipela. Its all in your plan,help us and guide us, Amen'.

QUESTIONS

Mr WILLIAM POWI –Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. My question is directed to the Minister for Forest but since he is not available, I would like to reserve my right to ask my question later on.

Mr SPEAKER – You may reserve your right.

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Attorney-General.

Before I ask my question, I would like to commend the Attorney-General for the steps that he has taken since taking office to make a concerted effort to attend to legislative issues that concern Papua New Guinea.

My question is in relation to the numerous inquiries that we have conducted.

For the last 37 years, Papua New Guinea has been struck with a series of terrible situations, scandals and so forth that has brought us regional and international infamy.

As a result we have put in place systems to conduct numerous inquiries to investigate. None of these has resulted in anything tangible but have only seen frustration, anger and bitterness from our people.

02/06

From these inquiries and investigations, no one has been successfully prosecuted and jailed. None of the properties, amounts of money and resources that have been stolen from the people have ever been recovered and given back to the people. And every year we are constantly committing to new inquiries and investigations and recruiting old magistrates, judges, retired public servants, accountants, lawyers, and et cetera. They are not resulting in anything tangible.

Mr Speaker, there are a lot of media publicity about these events here in the country and abroad but at the end of the day, no one has been held responsible and jailed and none of these resources are recovered.

Mr Speaker, I am proposing a radical shift so that we do not continue to define insanity whereby we do the same thing over and over and expect different results.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, I must remind you not to enter into debate but please ask your question.

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General to quickly call a forum of some sort. And let us consider bringing in international intervention and investigators and set up a prosecution team and a dedicated court to hear these cases once and for all.

Let us go through with the *Taxation Act* and the *Proceeds of Crimes Act* and recover all the properties that have been stolen. And those proceeds can then be used to carry on this investigation and fund them.

Can the Minister tell us if he has plans for setting up such an activity and consult with the Prime Minister so we address this issue once and for all?

Mr KERENGA KUA – Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable Governor for his question. I can not answer for the shortcomings of deliveries rising out of the various investigations and inquiries into the past. But, it would perhaps be useful if in due course the Governor gives me the details of the inquiries and investigations that he refers to so that can assist me to give him a very pointed answer.

Generally speaking, he is on the right track because there are a lot of frustrations about the lack of deliverables subsequent to Commissions of Inquiries which are usually established under the *Commission of Inquiries Acts*, administered by the Prime Minister, and internal investigations in various departments and sectors, and et cetera. But it is true and we know that subsequent to these kind of investigations and inquiries, we don't usually procure successful outcomes in terms of prosecutions, recoveries, and et cetera. And it's a matter that we need to address.

But in a general sense, I do not believe that these are because of any shortcomings in the overall legislative framework as we have it now. I think we have sufficient laws and procedures to be able to address these issues but it is in the performance that we fall short and I think we should pick up on our performances on a Department by Department basis, a Minister by Minister basis or on a Cabinet basis and on a Parliamentary basis.

We need to remain focus and speak the same language and we should be able to deliver some outcomes. But if we say one thing in public and do something else in private in the performances of our various powers and functions under the different legislations, then of course, there will be a tug of war where there will be a pull and push effect and we will not be delivering outcomes that our people expect. So when public issues arise leading to investigations and inquiry and so forth which lead us into taking up position openly on the Floor of Parliament, then we should follow it through with real action rather then say one thing and go behind the scenes and pull in a different direction and suffocating, frustrating and defeating forward motion when it comes to the implementation of the findings of all those inquiries.

I am aware that there were two recent inquiries which findings remain to be implemented. One is the shipping disaster in the Morobe Province and the report has been tabled through the Prime Minister and the recommendations are being actioned as we speak.

The other inquiry which is yet to be tabled is the SABL (Special Agriculture and Business Leases) and that is in the hands of the commissioners. Parliament has been pushing for the Commissioners to table their Final Report but they have not done so as yet.

03/06

We must continue to push for this report because it is long overdue and over-paid. The Parliament must demand for the completion of this report so that we can take up the follow-up action. We know that it is a lack of action on the part of the commissioners. And if the report is tabled, I am sure this Parliament is committed to ensuring the recommendations are put through the processes and implemented quickly.

The other inquiry is into the Department of Finance. The Report was tabled in Parliament but by an order of Court, an injunction was placed on the implementation.

I want to assure this Parliament that I got the clearance from the Prime Minister to move those proceedings ahead. For some reason unknown to us, those proceedings had not been progressed either by the State or by the plaintiff and it remained in abeyance until this Government came into office. And now the will and determination is there to bring it into finality, hopefully in favour of the State so that we can move forward with the implementations of the recommendations of the findings.

I understand that the Chief Secretary was in the process of setting up a team to oversee the implementation of the recommendations when the injunction was served on him. An application has been filed by our lawyers six weeks ago, and I am assured this morning by our new lawyers that we should be given a date in the course of this week and our motion should be heard within the next week or two. The outcome should be achieved before the next Parliament sitting after this recess when we should know where we are headed with that inquiry.

In order for me to answer the question in detail, if there are any other inquiries that the Governor is concerned about, he can provide me with the details in due course and I can work with him to ensure that whatever remains outstanding are dealt with from the perspective of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

Mr RON GANARAFO – Mr Speaker, my question to the Minister for Health is in relation to the front-page article of the *Post-Courier* on the Goroka General Hospital, where the doctors and the staff intend to close down its operations.

As you will have noticed, this matter has been appearing in both newspapers; the *Post-Courier* and *The National* since last Friday. I would like to point out that it reflects or portrays a management issue that has been developing over the last 10 to 20 years, which has been affecting the lives of people who go to the Goroka General Hospital for treatment. Instruments and equipments in the hospital have broken down and as a result, when patients go to the hospital, they have to be referred to other hospitals. I am not surprised that this is happening. It is a very serious matter.

Can the Minister tell us when he will go to Goroka and get first-hand information and change the management and the doctors?

Mr MICHAEL MALABAG – Mr Speaker, I do realize the seriousness of the situation in Goroka because it has been going on for some time.

04/06

When the Member for Goroka raised it in the last Parliament session, we sent two investigation teams down, The first team was purely on clinical governance and the other team was on financial management or audit. The teams have done their work and reported back to me. There are quite a lot of issues and some of those issues were in regard to the Chief Executive Officer.

Mr Speaker, up until 2012, there have been a few problems with the Chief Executive Officer so when the staff came out with it, they asked for his replacement, which we did by appointing in another Acting Officer.

The other issue was lack of management by the current senior executive management. This resulted in low staff moral and decline in service to the people and also patients dying of preventable diseases. In other words staff were losing confidence in the management.

The nurses more or less are looking after the patients at the Goroka Hospital. The Director for Nursing Services, is more in control of her Division but the problem is there is no avenue that is provided by the senior executive management in order to support the implementations for her programs effectively.

Mr Speaker, the Office of the Director of the Medical Services is also in complete disarray. Those are the serious issues I want to highlight over here because it's essential that we must know about this. The Director of Corporate Services is also lacking in effective management skills in order to manage the corporate services section within the hospital and so it carries on.

As for the issue of referring patients to Kujip and Kundiawa hospitals, this has been happening and it's true. It has also resulted in a death in one hospital, where a patient was referred to Kundiawa and died while on his way there. So yes, on the evaluation and auditing of these cases there are a lot of standards of care, which are also sub-standard and totally unacceptable. So the Goroka Hospital is now unable to cope with the current population demands. The infrastructure has aged over the years and although the new additions are being built, it is still congested and not conducive for staff and patients.

Mr Speaker, in answer to the honorable Member's questions, Dr Max Manape was appointed two months ago to replace the other CEO, so he is still there. We must not forget that Eastern Highlands Province is one of the three provinces that came under the *Provincial Health Authority Act*, which means there are now on their own more or less. So the senior executive positions of the Eastern Highlands Provincial Health Authority, the acting positions also have to come under the spotlight because it's been ongoing. It's been rotated so we are giving directions to the Board that when the new appointments happen, the current ones should not be considered, and that's straightforward.

As you can see in the newspapers, yesterday and today, the Board and staff too are complaining about the Provincial Health Authority Board over there. The point I am trying to make here is they were appointed in 2011 for a three-year term so, their current term will expire in two months time and when that does happen, there will be new changes to the Board but in consultation with the Office of the Governor of Eastern Highlands.

We will then be able to put new people in there to run all the health centers and hospitals in the Eastern Highlands. At the same time, there are doctors who are moonlighting. When I say moonlighting, I mean that they work at the hospitals and at the same time, they work somewhere else and getting money whilst the Government is paying for their services. They are being double paid.

There are about five doctors working at the Goroka Hospital and some of them go as far as Western Highlands to work.

Mr Joe Sungi – Point of Order! The Minister should answer the question, specifically, on what the Ministry and the Department of Health will do in response to the problem in Goroka.

Mr SPEAKER – Your Point of Order is in order. Honourable Minister, please be specific in answering the Member's question.

Mr MICHAEL MALABAG – Mr Speaker, I am coming to that. In order to o the resolve these issues, we must define exactly what issues are involved. That is how you answer a question and that is what I am going to do. Let me finish by talking about the symptoms.

After the series of situations that occurred up until now, and when the Member for Goroka raised these issues, our management has been in touch with the people over there.

The Honourable Member raised issues in relation to the steriliser, laundry, morgue, pathology, blood bank, x-ray, ward and clinical congestion, water supply, manpower, staff attitude issues, and medical equipment. Our people have been in consultation with the people in Goroka regarding a number of those issues. Meetings were held and the Hospital Manager was part of the evaluation team for preparation of tenders for the CSTB.

The value of these equipments is going to be around K2.5 million.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Minister, you are taking up a lot time answering the question. We only have 45 minutes of Question Time, so please answer the questions quickly so that other Members may have their turn in asking their questions.

Mr MICHAEL MALABAG – Honourable Member, we have people on the ground and we are addressing these issues. The Unions have also come out and talked about these issues and we have taken everything into consideration.

I am also sending two officers to Goroka this afternoon to address these issues and if necessary, I will also be going to Goroka on Monday.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr ROBERT GANIM – Mr Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister for Education, Honourable James Marape.

Mr Speaker, education as we all know is one of this Government's priority areas for this nation. Basically, the Government is focusing on creating opportunities for every child to attend school from Elementary to Grade 12. That is the reason why the Government has allocated substantial amounts of money for tuition fees in the 2013 Budget.

It is of course the role of the Education Department and the Teaching Service Commission to ensure that this Government policy is achieved, and hopefully, by the end of this year, we will have a positive report on this policy.

Mr Speaker, nevertheless, the Department of Education and the Teaching Service Commission have failed to address issues that can make the government policy fail.

For this reason, I would like to raise the following questions:

(1) How can the government be sure of what it will achieve at the end of the year following this massive education funding?

(2) What are the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that will reveal the success of failures and the structures of the policy in order to make improvements in the years ahead?

(3) In recent weeks, there have been continuous media reports that 3000 to 7000 teachers are still off the payroll.

If this is true, this will of course affect the education and learning of some 50 000 students throughout the nation.

6/06

(4) Can the Minister tell this Parliament and the people throughout this nation about the Government's or Department's immediate plan to address this problem?

Mr Speaker, it seems putting off teachers from the payroll is an ongoing issue, happening every year for the last 15 to 20 years. This is jointly the fault of the National Department of Education and the Teaching Services Commission. The teachers throughout the country are tired of this.

(5) Can the Minister assure this Parliament that this practice will stop? What plan does this Government have in place to improve on this problem?

(6) How can the Government achieve its goals and objectives in education if teachers are continuously being affected in this manner and the education of our children is being compromised?

Mr Speaker, this leads to my next question on pay increase for teachers. Teaching is a notable profession but in this country, the Government does not recognize the importance of teachers. Over the years, the PNG Teachers Association has fought numerous battles with the successive governments to have teachers pay increased.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, ask your question.

Mr ROBERT GANIM – (7) Can the Minister assure this Parliament that the Government will do something to increase the pay of our teachers, instead of allowing PNGTA to continuously fight for the teachers pay increase?

(8) With the ongoing teacher's salary problem, can the Department of Education decentralize the function of teacher's payroll to the respective provinces?

Everyday, about 30 to 40 teachers are seen at the Teacher's Headquarters at Fincorp, Waigaini.

(9) What are these teachers doing around these buildings when they are supposed to be in the classrooms teaching our students and why are they compromising our children's education?

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, many of these teachers are ghost teachers, who persuade the Department Officers to put them on the payroll.

(10) Can the Minster tell us how he can address this problem?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Member for Wabag who by background is an educationist. I know he is well qualified to make this statement as his previous capacity was running the Education Sector in the Enga Provincial Government which he did very well. I take from him that his qualifications make him speak on this issue with some authority.

Mr Speaker, education is the number one priority of the O'Neill-Dion Government. As consistently and over-time we have seen a substantial increase in the budgetary appropriation in the Education Sector.

The Prime Minister and his Government continue to maintain that increase trend to the education sector and this year, the education sector in total is receiving almost one-quarter of the 2013 Budget, and that has placed education on the priority list for this Government.

07/06

Mr Speaker, the mechanism of increased funding towards the Education Sector has also attracted us to also look at the manner of disbursing funds to schools and we are trying to ascertain the level of succession as far as getting the facts we want from the monies going to the schools. This year a total of K652 million is going straight to schools nationwide and the massive injection of funds into the schools calls for the Government to be proactive.

In relation to the first question he raised as to the objective of those interventions, I want to say here that three years ago statistics showed that 53 per cent of school- age children where in school. We have made a big improvement where today 70 per cent of

school age children are in schools throughout the country and that is a direct result of the Government's Free Education Policy.

This policy has seen an increase in enrolments and the problem now is lack of space in the classrooms and teaching staff accommodation and by 2015, our target is to reach a 100 per cent enrolment rate as per the UN Millennium Development score card.

We have a problem in ascertaining the data as to knowing which schools are operating and which ones are not, but we will publicly put out the names of schools that have received the subsidies and how many in each province and electorate as per the list provided to the Education Department.

The law specifies clearly that education is now a development function and both the Provincial and District Education Advisors are the key officers of the State respectively. I ask each Member to connect with these people in your electorate and province to ensure that the simple reporting mechanisms are taking place.

Let me be the first to admit that the FinCorp Haus, which accommodates the Education Offices is far from the rural areas and there is no direct data link between the Education Department in Port Moresby with provinces and districts. The Government has seen the deficiency we are making in small allocations to the districts and we expect to have every district to furnish their reports to the department in order to update our live data by end of August. This is to show which schools are operating and to see the trend in which they are using these funds.

We have identified the problems and the Government is proactive this year and has approved for a survey to take place and it will be done later this week. The survey will get the District Administrators and Education Advisors to report back what has been done last year and early this year so that we study it and continue our commitments because the Government is committed to continue towards supporting Education in the country.

We are committed to making sure that the Free Education Policy runs the schools costs in the next five years that this Government is in power so that we continue to have increased enrolments as this Government wants 100 per cent enrolment for our school-age children.

On the issue of teachers who are now going to be put off the payroll as shown in one of the daily papers numbering about 7,000 it's an on-going issue and this goes back to one of the basic fundamental issues of management. Education is a development function and if the District Education Officer is collecting data on the ground on enrolment and submitting them to the Provincial Education Advisors, this problem will not occur.

08/06

In regard to this, I wish to inform all the Provincial Members or the Governors that they should take ownership of Education in their provinces like one or two Governors who have taken the initiative to attend to their education system in their provinces. I encourage all of us to work together to maintain those data and at the termination of every school year, the Education Advisers at the District and the Province start to come to work with your Standard Officers with your reports and furnish them so that by the commencement of school year we already have teachers submitting for enrollment.

We have noticed in the past that some teachers were not enrolled or filling out ghost enrollment sheets and just collecting their salaries in Port Moresby. A huge data verification should take place at the close and the start of every education year.

Mr Speaker, we know that there is a lot of breakdown in our systems and I ask every Member and Governor to take ownership at your provinces and districts and assist us to filter this untidy mass in the Education Department so that come 2014 and 2015, we have a new system in the FinCorp Haus to run its course in resourcing schools and maintaining standards in our schools.

The teacher resumption form is a must for teachers and I am appealing to the 7 000 plus teachers, if you are hearing me and if you have not filled in your resumption forms, you must not blame the Education Department for putting you off the payroll or putting you on the street. It is you causing disaster to yourself and your family plus the children that you are suppose to be teaching as well as Papua New Guinea as a whole. This is an appeal to teachers nationwide that if you are filling in forms and for some

reasons they are putting you off the payroll then go to the Education Department to claim your justice.

Mr Speaker, there have been instances where many teachers did not fill their resumption forms. We seemed to face this problem in March every year, therefore, we are attending to this issue now so by March or at the commencement of the school year, we should complete and conclude all these problems.

As for this year, approximately 8 000 teachers for some reasons did not submit their names and their enrollment forms. In my Ministerial Statement tomorrow I will highlight this and we will see the provinces that are slow in submitting their enrollment forms for the teachers.

Mr Speaker, in regard to the salary of the teachers, the Government has already approved our pay structure for the Education Department where teachers are paid on qualifications and not on the class of your teaching.

This basically means that a master's degree holder who chooses to teach at the elementary school is paid at the masters degree level, and this is the policy that we are currently working on.

With this, I also wish to inform this Parliament that over the last four years, we have increased teachers' allowances and we have approved an increment of 14 per cent over the last three years, which ended last year. However, we have had discussions for an increase but that increase will come with the policy review that the teachers will be paid on qualifications where a master's degree holder teaching at a high school is paid at a masters level.

Mr Speaker, let me also inform this Parliament that the one teacher teaching in one school he/she receives one teacher allowance. I believe it is a K3 000.00 for that allowance while the headmaster in a school is receiving K10 000.00 allowance for administrating the school on top of this annual salary and the deputy headmaster receives K5 000.00 for assisting the headmaster of the school. The subject heads receives K3 000.00 as the subject heads of the school.

This Government is meeting the demands of the teachers appropriately. It may seem small as yet but teachers and public servants must appreciate that we operate within the limited budget to pay. We also have rural allowances for teachers who are teaching in

the disadvantage districts or remote schools. Those brackets of allowances are already specified and we have to negotiate within the context of affordability as a Government to see how much can we continue to increase as time goes by.

But the nation must know that the Government has been proactive in lifting the allowance and we have given recognition to the teachers. We would like to inform all teachers on the field that the O'Neill Government is putting education as first priority because the teachers are the key players within the education system. We are planning to look into your terms and conditions and this will be discussed soon. We will only stand to improve from where we are today and I ask all us to work together.

In regard to the teachers, who are not on the payroll and go to FinCorp Haus to report there. Teachers must not report there but your first point of reporting is to their district and that is what is specified in the law. If not then go to your Provincial Head Office, which is also specified in the same law. I am sorry that in FinCorp Haus extreme cases, we will handle their cases, but we will advise them to report back to their provinces and districts to furnish their resumption form.

09/06

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – (*Question No. 1 is omitted due to power outage*).

(2) Will the Minister assure Parliament that all those involved in this incident will be terminated as a deterrent to other members of the Force in the future?

(3) Why did the police hierarchy not do anything to stop this officer from firing his weapon when they saw he was highly intoxicated?

(4) Can the Department of Police be held responsible to meet the cost of medical expenses, evacuation and hospitalization costs resulting from the actions of this reckless police officer?

Mr NIXON DUBAN – Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor of West New Britain for his questions. The Governor knows that we have been working closely to reduce the tension in the province but unfortunately, we have a situation where someone has been wounded and he has been hospitalized.

Let me assure the Governor that this is an isolated incident and the person who discharged the firearm has already broken the standard operational procedures for the Police Force. And I want to assure the Members that investigations will be carried out and if he has been found to have breached those standard operational procedures, he will be charged like any other criminal and dismissed accordingly.

This is a case that we do not want to leave unattended. It is becoming an issue as most of the time we want to do good things for the Police Force but there are individuals who are doing things that are not in the best interests of the Police Force.

As Minister, I have always maintained that we will deal with them as criminals and they will face the consequences by being dismissed and charged.

With the question related to meeting the cost of hospitalization, evacuation medical expenses for the victim, I do not think this is a question I can answer very well as we will only concentrate on the criminality of the incident and whatever the investigation recommends would be the position that the Department will take.

Any other matter apart from that will be left for discussions when we finish the investigation report.

Supplementary Question

Mr TITUS PHILEMON –There was a similar incident in Alotau by mobile Police on special operations in the province.

Can the Minister also inform me and the people of Milne Bay about the investigations that were conducted?

Mr NIXON DUBAN –Thank you, Governor. As you know, I have been in Court for the past weeks and I have not had the time to attend too most of my duties but let me assure you that I will find time to check on the status of that investigation.

I would like to also state here that Police who are engaged in activities that are outside of the standard operating procedures and create problems that they bring unto

themselves are creating an image that our Police are not doing the right thing. So for us to ask the Department to pay compensation will set a bad precedent for this country.

We should not encourage that; the person who caused the problems must bear the responsibility and be accountable for his or her own actions.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – EXTENDED TIME FOR QUESTIONS

Motion (**by Mr Wera Mori**) agreed to –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent the time for Questions Without Notice this day being extended by 20 minutes.

Mr WERA MORI – I would like to ask questions to the Minister for Petroleum and Energy. My questions are important because they may have some serious security implications in the future.

Mr Speaker, the identification of true and genuine landowners in any projects especially in the extracting industry is of paramount importance.

10/06

I would like to make a specific reference to the identification of landowners in the LNG project area.

Mr Speaker, currently, the project is been advanced and developed under the Kokopo Based Benefit Sharing Agreement. I would also point out here that in 2014, the first gas will be piped out of Hela Province.

My questions are:

(1) Is the Minister aware of the potential problems it will have if the genuine and true landowners are not identified at the earliest opportunity?

(2) If royalties and dividends are to be paid into trust accounts while we wait for the landowners to be identified, what guarantee will there be, to ensure that those funds are safe?

(3) Has the Department of Petroleum together with Shengli Oilfield Highland Petroleum Equipment Company who are the project developer taken any steps at all to start identifying the genuine landowners?

(4) If not, when will the process take place to avoid what could be a time bomb?

Mr Speaker, this is to avoid people living in settlements in Port Moresby to claim to be landowners when the genuine landowners are left in the project site-some have ventured into Port Moresby only to be dealt with by our Security Forces.

Mr WILLIAM DUMA – Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for Chuave for raising important questions in relation to royalty payments received by genuine landowners.

Mr Speaker, in relation to the first question; my department and the project proponent particularly ExxonMobil and even the Government led by the Prime Minister are well aware of the very important issue surrounding the need to identify genuine landowners. The Government and my department tried our best to deal with this issue over the last nine years.

In relation to the LNG project there are two components; the first one includes only the new gas project areas and the second component includes the existing oil project landowners, who will then join the LNG project.

Mr Speaker, the oil producing landowners comprises of landowners from Kutubu, Moro and Gobe. It is the requirement of the *Oil and Gas Act* that before benefits are paid to landowners there has to be proper and adequate landowner identification studies. In relation to the oil producing areas and before a PDL license was issued particularly for the Kutubu area, the Government made sure that there was in place a landowner identification report. And based on that, landowners have been receiving their benefits since oil production commenced 20 years. That report and the lease have always been updated to include those who were after the project started and we have had no problems with the genuine landowners from those oil producing areas.

Mr Speaker, in relation to the new LNG project segment one must remember that when you involve three provinces with people coming from different ethnic group it is not straight forward.

But before a Petroleum Development License (PDL) is issued, the Government makes sure that at least the majority of the genuine landowners are identified.

Mr Speaker, it was on that basis that when my department conducted the LBSA in Kokopo in 2009, we had a basic report that showed who the landowners were. We dealt and negotiated with their representatives.

11/06

As a result, we have the LNG project agreement. Now that we have the project agreement which sets out the benefits for the landowners and the State, the next thing for us to do is a house to house survey. And like all the other government departments, we always had issues trying to get funds released but that is not an excuse. The O'Neill-Dion Government has recognised that and it has allocated K10 million to undertake that process.

Mr Speaker, my department has already recruited the people we need and trained them. It is the intension of my department to go out and make our presence known to them. We have already started opening offices in the project sites and employees of my department will be on the ground to conduct house to house surveys and head counts.

Mr Speaker, within the time period that is available, we will ensure that only the genuine landowners are included. We have a mechanism in our review that has revealed that, for some reason some genuine landowners were left out, but we have a net that will capture them. So it is not as if once we starting getting money from the LNG shipment, they will be paid out immediately. There will funds left behind to cater for that and we recognise that.

Mr Speaker, I can assure the Parliament that no single genuine landowner will be left out. It is a very complex exercise requiring the full exercise of our local Members of Parliament and the governors of respective provinces have a duty to cooperate with my department to ensure that the people they represent are not left out. It requires total commitment and cooperation from all the stakeholders and our leaders.

Mr Speaker, in relation to the question of what guarantee is there to ensure that the funds are safe; my department does not hold funds. It is the Treasury and the Finance who keep trust accounts. My Department is only a trustee. There is a safety mechanism in

place to ensure that even if there are funds which cannot be paid to the landowners for the reason that genuine landowners have not yet been identified, we have a mechanism in place to ensure that none of these monies are touched until the genuine recipients or the lawful recipients have been identified then the monies are released.

Mr Speaker, in relation to whether my department and the developer are doing anything, yes, the world's largest energy company who has invested in our country have a proven record of trying its very best to comply with whatever requirements of any country it is operating and Exxon Mobil has always been aware of its responsibilities. We have been working together to ensure that this very important exercise namely the landowner identification studies, are completed thoroughly and all the genuine landowners are included.

Mr Speaker, I can assure the Parliament again that even after the landowner identification studies have been completed, monies will not be released immediately. We have a duty to ensure that no one is left out. It is not a straightforward exercise, it is a very hard process and at time very frustrating exercise. It requires wholesome government approach to support my department and its employees.

Mr Speaker, I must take this opportunity to ask the local leaders, the governors and Members in the LNG project provinces to cooperate and not take sides and favour their supporters but to assist my department to ensure that all landowners are included so that they receive what they are entitled for.

Supplementary Question

Sir MICHAEL SOMARE – Mr Speaker, although the Ministers answers were quite satisfactory in regards to the agreement, let me say that that the agreement in its initial stages did not take into account the creation of Hela as a province on its own There is still tension amongst the people because Hela is not part of Southern Highlands anymore.

Current decisions must take into account that Hela is now recognized as a province because the pipeline starts from there to Southern Highlands, Gulf and then to Central province. Hela people, are asking why should their entitlement be shared. The

Minister needs to clarify this and inform the people how it is done. He has explained very well in Parliament but explaining to the people is another matter. So the Minister should be aware of the tension that has been created.

Mr WILLIAM DUMA – I thank the Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare for this very important question.

Mr Speaker, when the LNG project agreement was signed, the former Governor of Southern Highlands who is the current Governor of Hela Province, Honourable Anderson Agiru and the Members of that province at that time; Honourable Issac Joseph, Honourable Francis Potape, Honourable John Kekeno and Honourable James Marape, made sure and were all aware that Hela province would become a fully-fledged province.

12/06

When we signed the agreement, Mr Speaker, there was a provision in the agreement which recognised the existence of Hela Province and the intention was that once the Hela Province came into existence, depending upon where the projects and the oil fields and the gas fields where located, their benefits would then be apportioned.

It is now a matter for the representatives of those two provinces together with the department to start the process to apportion the benefits that will go through to the respective two provinces.

Mr Speaker, no landowner from both the Hela Province and the Southern Highlands will be left out. The agreement recognizes that there is a specific provision which caters for that. It is a matter of time before the two Governors from Southern Highlands and Hela and I sit down and iron out this issue. It is an agreement which has captured this very scenario that the Grand Chief is alluding to.

Mr JOE KOMUN – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have three questions to direct to the Prime Minister Peter O'Neill and I ask the Minister for Treasury to task note.

My questions are in relation to Finance Companies and their interest rates. A lot of our people, especially public servants and small people rely on Finance Companies to seek short term assistance. I have found out that instead of assisting them, these

companies are pushing them right to the brink of bankruptcy. The rates they charging are just too much and our little people cannot meet the repayments.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I must remind all the Members that we have limited time for questions. You must structure your questions in such a way that you capture the points you want and ask the question straight away.

Mr JOE KOIM KOMUN – My questions are as follows;

(1) Is the Prime Minister aware that some finance companies are charging interest rates up to 150 per cent?

Some commercial banks are displaying colourful advertisements but they lack the corporate responsibility by devising plans or products that will not assist small borrowers but push them further into bankruptcy. By that, I mean the banks and finance companies devise packages like Bride Price payment loans and holiday loans and lure customers saying they can deliver in 24 hours. I don't think the banks are assisting the Government in trying to help the people to sustain their livelihoods, but instead they are attracting them with these so-called advertisements and become slaves to the banks and the finance companies. As a responsible Government, I ask the Prime Minister.

(2) Can we take some measures to curve this problem of high interest rates?

A lot of finance companies are assisting our small businessmen in lease financing and hire purchases but the rates are too high. Most banks lease at rates which are affordable.

(3) Can the Government get the banks to tow the line and be comparable with the commercial banks so that at least everybody is treated fairly?

Instead of some people trying to access quick money but the rates charged by the finance companies are too high. That's the price they pay to run a business, but I believe as a responsible Government, we need to protect our small businessmen and women.

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable Member for Anglimp-South Waghi for his very important question about the interest rates and the

operations of many finance companies in our country in terms of lending to our small and medium sector businessmen and women.

13/06

I want to inform this Parliament that tomorrow the Treasurer will make an important statement in relation to the State of our Economy in so far as how it has performed over the past quarter, so that we can keep track of what is happening in our country.

This will give the opportunity for us to debate this issue further, but just to answer the Member's questions, I would like to say that it is true that the interest rates are far too high and we know that the amount of liquidity, which is the amount of cash that is available within the financing sector, is quite high and at record levels. The amount of liquidity is close to about K7 billion out there in the financial system with excess savings, which banks can lend out to borrowers and to the government.

We are now working closely with the Treasury Department in terms of financing our own budget deficit. We are borrowing from the domestic market because of the excess liquidity that is available. Therefore, the Treasurer will highlight some of these strategies so that we manage our economy in order for it to grow at the pace that we want.

In terms of the interest rates, they are monitored by the Central Bank and all our monetary policies are also managed by the Central Bank on behalf of the Government. We must maintain some level of independence into the management of monetary policies. If we do not, we may face a financial crisis similar to that of other countries who have made a mistake of allowing their governments to interfere with their monetary policies. As a result, and because of poor management of the economy and bank and financial systems, the entire system collapses and the country gets into a crisis that we are now seeing in many parts of the world.

We do not want to enter into that situation and we have been fortunate so far that we are able to sustain a very good high safety network which has been able to protect our banking system and we are not exposed to many of the shocks that many of the financing communities are facing in many parts of the world.

Nevertheless, interest rates are still very high. Comparative to many of the other countries within the region, the margins between what customers put into banks, for example IBD and what the banks lend out, is very high. This is where the banks are passing on their inefficiencies to the customer, meaning that the few of us who are borrowing to the limit or over-borrowing are paying the high interest rates and have experienced that the spread is too high.

Therefore, the banks need to make sure that they make their own deficiencies better so that they can pass on the savings onto the customer. I will, therefore, ask the Treasurer to bring this up with the Governor of the Central Bank so that we can reduce the spread and lend money cheaply to our people.

What is also necessary for us to do is we need to take a hold of all the so-called backdoor financing companies, which are not registered by the Central Bank. We know that people who have excess amounts of money individually are lending to other individuals within the community, and because it is their own money, they can lend it to anybody they want.

The Central Bank is regulating people who are taking deposits and then lending to other people so that they can regulate that market, but it is very hard to regulate individuals who are lending money to other individuals. Nevertheless, I understand that the interest rates are going up to 150 per cent, and nobody can afford that. It is like the money schemes that we were experiencing before in the past. Some money schemes were paying 100 per cent and so forth, but most of them have collapsed because you cannot sustain a banking system or lending system on that kind of interest rates. And as they say in the financial world, 'you are robbing Peter to pay Paul', therefore, eventually things will catch up with you.

That is why people like Noah Misingku is nowhere to be found because many of the depositors around the country are looking for those kind of people. Therefore, I want to discourage our people from borrowing money from people who are not registered as financial institutions under the *Central Bank Act*.

If customers have a complaint, then they can go directly to the Central Bank and go to the Governor's office and register their complaint against a bank that is registered by them. This is so that they can discipline them and take action against specific cases

where people have been forced to pay high interest rates when it is unnecessary when there are substantial amounts of money within the system to reduce the interest rates.

14/06

In our country, we have a high culture of defaults. There are a lot of people borrowing money who are not repaying their loans off. Once that happens, it not only affects that customer but the entire borrowing community. Everyone who is borrowing money from the banks tend to pay higher interest rates because many individuals are not repaying their loans.

This is now happening quite frequently within the community and we need to discourage people. When you borrow money, you have to pay because you are affecting the next Papua New Guinean who is trying to borrow money. This will help interest rates to come down.

Mr Speaker, there's a credit rating been established between the banks so when you borrow money, your company or your name is individually registered. When you apply for a loan, the banks will confirm with this Credit Agency if you have repaid all your debts from any previous loans from other financial firms or banks. This is to make sure you are a worthy customer to lend the money to. So the chances of you getting a new loan are very limited if you have a bad history of repayment.

Our people have to learn and worry about their credit ratings so that they repay their debts faithfully and have a clean record so other Papua New Guineans can borrow money also.

But I want to assure the honourable Member that we will work closely with the Central Bank in making sure that we manage those issues about interest rate spreads, credit ratings and bad advertisements that he is talking about. Just because the banks have a lot of money, it doesn't mean that we encourage anybody to borrow money. It is criminal to lend money to someone when we know that they are not able to pay it back. That is the kind of lending we want to discourage in this country.

We must get into a savings culture; we have to save for tomorrow. When you have families and obligations, you must learn how to save your money. For example, if you are earning K100, you must save 20 percent or K20 .You do it habitually and you

will become use to it. As for us, we spend everything and then depend on relatives for tomorrow. This is putting more pressure on the other person. You are responsible for yourself, so let us respect each other and our relatives because they have families and responsibilities. We must save money and not use it up unwisely during fortnights on drinking sprees, which only leads to domestic violence and additional problems.

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION, YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THREE MAJOR PROJECTS – MINISTERIAL STATEMENT – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER

Ms LOUJAYA TONI (Lae - Minister for Community Development) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Department for Community Development is pleased to present to this honorable Parliament and the seven million people of Papua New Guinea a report on the its achievements and progress towards implementing the three priority impact projects as agreed to in the Leaders Summit in February this year.

Mr Speaker, before going into the Ministerial Statement, I would like to state from the outset that for the purpose of executing a very successful Youth Ministerial Meet last month, both the Acting Secretary of the department and I buried the hatchet then and we pulled of with other line departments, that is Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Events Council and Sports respectively.

From that time up until yesterday, I would like to confirm that we have a working relationship with my Secretary. We signed our working agreements yesterday and met with staff and stakeholders in the afternoon to state that we can only go from strength to strength and affirm the delivery of the three priorities of the impact projects by the end of this year.

Mr Speaker, with regards to the list of achievements, allow me to begin with planning documents that have been achieved.

We have completed a revised Corporate Plan 2013 to 2016, and the Plan captures the existing and new key strategies that the Department will implement for the next four

years subsequent to the recent National Government directives through the *Alotau Accord, PNG Vision 2050, Development Strategic Plan and Medium Term Development Plan.*

15/06

The Annual Operational Plan 2013 is another completed task focused on operationalisation of the District Focal Point, submission of the CRC Periodic Report to the United Nation, Reviews of Legislation and Policies and establishment of the Churches Secretariat.

Mr Speaker, the Annual Management Report 2012 details the outcomes of the three corporate goals. Key results areas of improving Corporate Governance and Community Livelihood and Enhancement and furthering human Rights. Conjunction to this reports brief outcomes from the National Censorship Office and the National Council of Women.

Mr Speaker, the Department has also completed and launched the Youth Corporate Plan 2013 – 2016 to meet the challenging situation and needs of an ever-growing youth population. The Corporate Plan 2013 – 2016 aims at changing the focus of the National Youth Commission and its approaches towards youth development in Papua New Guinea.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, the Office of Censorship has completed and launched its five-year Corporate Plan and its key activities being receiving the Censorship Legislation Regulations and guidelines to ensure improved controls, conducting organizational and functional reviews of the Censorship Office, development and roll out of National and Provincial Advisory Committees, development of censorship benchmarks, assessment of PNG systems against international standards, greater focus on enforcement and compliance and audit of the censorship function.

Mr Speaker, in the area of policy submission, the revised National Council of Women Bill that has been passed by this honourable Parliament and certified by yourself, the transitional period of the Bill is 12 months and the *Act* becomes effective as of June this year. This will see all National Council of Women executives within the network be interim executives until the elections are held. The AGM was held up in Mt Hagen last

month and my staff and I have submitted funding request to the Finance and National Planning departments to execute and enable NCW to carry out its responsibilities.

Mr Speaker, with regards to church partnerships, the purpose of this submission is fourfold. Firstly, to identify and bring all churches into accessibility through a directory of the service they provide, we need to know that, and outsource early childhood and community mentorship programs to them. Review funding arrangements in line with department priorities and church partnership and for policy and legislative changes to empower Christian churches.

The Department of Community Development and Religion as the mandated agency did the submission to the Minister for National Planning on the government directive as per the NEC decision N0. 61. This decision is directing the Department for Community Development to establish a new look Ministry of Religion or Churches. We will have to confirm that one after our consultative meetings. The consultative meetings with the churches is something that we want to hold. First the national consultative meeting in Lae and then several regional meetings with the churches before the end of this year.

Social Protection Report submission. Mr Speaker, a similar formal submission on social protection will be lodged to the NEC for approval to fast-track the establishment of a Social Pension Policy for the disabled and elderly persons as stipulated in the *Alotau Accord* and to give prominence to both financial and institutional backing in order to bring this to fruition.

Mr Speaker, the current progress is as follows: An interim secretariat has been established to progress directive with a clear and precise timeline and framework. An initial meeting with the key development partners, World Bank and the Department for Community Development and Religion, executive management team to map out a realistic action plan as well as recommend appropriate social pension model using findings from the approach implemented by the New Ireland Provincial Government.

Mr Speaker, the World Bank as a development partner is committed to provide Department of Community Development, Religion and Youth technical assistance that will ensure advisory support such as the recommended social pension model harmonizes with our existing traditional safety net system.

I would also like to add that European Union is another developing partner that expressed keen interests to be involved in both programs, funding capacity building where social protection is concerned as well.

Mr Speaker, allow me now to take the liberty to inform this honourable Parliament also the other partners who have been working closely with the Department and who are intending to assist us with our agenda.

16/06

Basically, AusAID is indicating assistance to establish an Office for Churches and their involvement with gender, disability and the ICT policy; World Bank assistance to Social Protection focusing on the elderly and disability; UNICEF to build capacity of Civil Registration in preparation for the EID Child Protection Programs; UNDP will assist in gender focusing on Women and Leadership and to seek our assistance, especially in community capacity in enhancement initiatives and working closely with them to achieve this; UN Women with gender programs; the UNFPA, again, on gender programs and to mention the EU again, they are especially interested in non-State Sector grants.

Mr Speaker, allow me to touch on programs that have been facilitated successfully. I thank the National Government through the National Youth Commission under my Ministry for hosting the 8th Commonwealth Youth Minister's meeting with the theme "Young people at the Center of Sustainable Development".

The recommendations from the communiqué or outcome will be vectored into Youth Development and Empowerment Programs. An information paper is being prepared for Cabinet to consider concessions for Youth involvement and representation in the MSG and Pacific Plan as well as within a Youth Parliament at the Provincial and District level.

The priorities of the National Commission includes:

- Revitalization of the National Youth Commission
- Youth friendly centre of National Youth Development training centre to be established in the districts

- Youth empowerment and entrepreneurship development

Mr Speaker, also the Department hosted a National stakeholders and Development Partners forum from the March 25th –26th, 2013 at the Holiday Inn Hotel.

The forum facilitated discussions for collaborative and partnership support for the Department for Community Development Annual Operational Plan and revised the Corporate Plan 2013-2016 incorporating the O'Neill-Dion Government directives particularly the *Alotau Accord.*

The forum provided that opportunity to exchange ideas, views and strategies amongst partners and stakeholders aimed at improving partnership for delivery of community development initiatives.

Mr Speaker, you will be pleased to hear that the National Council of Women hosted a successful Annual General Meeting in Mount Hagen last month.

A policy submission is now initiated for NEC consideration for funding to revitalize and ground the National Council of Women network throughout the country with a view of an improved funding allocation in the 2014 Budget.

I wish to thank you, Mr Speaker, for signing the instruments of the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities this year.

It further strengthens the efforts made by the Government of PNG in the area of mainstreaming disability into the Public Services systems and processes and hence, highlights the Government's commitment to addressing disability and disability issues through progressive development. A detailed submission for Disability Program funding for 2014 across for Religion involving infrastructure and training is forth-coming.

Mr Speaker, by September this year there will be a high level meeting on Disability and Development at the United Nation Headquarters in New York to receive and recognize the Government's ratification. I wish to thank Honourable Rimbink Pato, the Foreign Minister, for facilitating this outcome.

Some achievements that the Government has in support for disability mainstreaming are as follows:

(1) Piloting of 2013 LLG Election; common roll update for Morobe Provincial (Lae Urban LLG and Umi-Atzera Rural LLG = a total of 109 PWDs enrolled). April 13th

to 20th, 2013, DFCDR (NACD Secretariat), PNG Electoral Commission and Electoral support Program (AUSAID).

(2) Extraction Industries Transparency imitative CSO consultation at Alotau, NBP on April 22nd – 26th, 2013.

(3) UNCRPD Training facilitated by Pacific Island Forum secretariat at Gateway Hotel, NCD on April 30th – May 3rd, 2013.

(4) GESI Policy inputs.

Mr Speaker, the Budget implications with regard to fulfilling the three (3) Government's priorities within the Department are as follows:

For the establishment of the Office of Religion, plans are in progress to host the National Consultative Forum for the churches and other faith based organizations in June 2013, which will be followed by four regional follow up forums.

It is intended that the churches be funded in the 2014 Budget to support such initiatives as the early childhood learning and community resource and learning centers.

17/06

Mr Speaker, although priority projects were approved there is no funding appropriated in the 2013 Development and Recurrent Budget. The funding submission for K3 million is now before the Minister for National Planning for consideration and approval, and we hope that it can be heard so that we can achieve that list by the end of this year, so that we can say that we have achieved our National Consultative Forum for churches and the regional meet in the four regions.

One million kina has been allocated for Disability and Elderly Pensions under Social Protection. This has been allocated by the government; however, the Department is still waiting for that fund to be released for this priority area to be fully implemented as directed by the government.

At this time, the Ministry has initiated the interim establishment of a secretariat to formulate concept note on the policy framework for NEC consideration towards institutional support and pace for policy development.

The approach undertaken initializes the government's directives as per activity 61 mentioned earlier on the present policy on the Disabled and Elderly population of this country.

Lastly, I must also mention the unique identification (EID) as one of the priority projects for this Ministry and Department to integrate the civil registration have the EID system permanently housed in the Civil Registry Office as the legally mandated institution tasked to establish legal proof of identity in Papua New Guinea.

There is also ongoing dialogue between key government agencies with regards to biometric and subsequent introduction of EID and I am pleased to state to Parliament that the Minister for National Planning has taken the lead and hosted a meet this week and there will be another one by lunch time today in the State Function Room.

In concluding, I would like to say that my Ministry continuous the role of the Welfare and Civil Registry services. All our polices and programs are interlinked and fall under the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Religion respective goals and priorities of the Government of Papua New Guinea.

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Public Service) – I move –

That the Parliament take note of the paper.

Mr SPEAKER – I now suspend Parliament for lunch but I will allow you to continue your debate after lunch.

Sitting suspended from 12 noon – 2 p.m..

18/06

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Public Services) – Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for Community Development for presenting her Statement. It is a challenging Ministry with diverse programs throughout the country. I thank the Minister for showing that leadership. And there are a couple of areas that I would want to support the Minister, especially in her endeavors to get the implementation program going in the country. After the former Minister, Dame Carol Kidu left, she rightfully filled the shoes,

particularly in demonstrating the clarity that she has now disclosed during her statement here.

Mr Speaker, the Minister's call for developing Youth Friendly Centers in every district is a right call. Young people are very vibrant and if we encourage them to doing the right things, they will contribute meaningfully for the benefit of the community and the country as a whole.

Therefore, during this time of economic prosperity and when the Government has given enormous volumes of money dedicated to the rural areas that many of us are in charge of, we must listen to the Minister and take the challenge and established Youth Friendly Centers throughout all the districts. And I am making a commitment as the Member for Abau and we have established the Abau Youth Council and funding was allocated this year. And we have a very dedicated young officer who is the JDP youth representative. He is now tasked to communicate with the Community Development Department, National Youth Commission and Law and Justice Sector. They are now focusing on how to help the young people to address the many issues they face. So I am glad that the Minister is heading in the right program. In this Youth Friendly Centers, there are diverse programs that young people can go through where the Churches can come in. Mr Speaker, Abau is known for the music produced by Paramana and others. My young people are very talented musicians and so in these types of centers, music can be a focal point, where they can come and learn music rather than roaming the streets of Abau, Kupiano, Moreguina and et cetera. You know in teaching music you are setting their mindsets right in terms of orderliness, focus and planning and also to improve their own lives.

In the viability training programs, I have personally engaged some of them. Some have formed a security firm to look after Kupiano town. Before, we had drunkards on the streets but now they are behaving.

It's a highly valued program. Young people who were wondering whether there is light at the end of the tunnel, the Government has now recognized their needs and showed them the light by way of establishing these offices that they can go to and engage in the programs there

Youth Friendly Centers can achieve a lot of things and therefore, I commend the Minister for articulating it in this statement.

I commend the Minister's initiative in planning the National Consultation Forum with the churches in June of 2013.

Mr Speaker, you and I know that without the churches, we probably would have lost the momentum in developing our young nation. We need to continue to acknowledge the input that the churches have made over the years. And their role under the Church-Government Partnership is a very clear policy. How can we structure the mechanism and processes so that churches are supported properly and their accountabilities as well? Churches have demonstrated very well in two priority sectors of our Government, which is health and education. Without them, we would be struggling to provide and cover the nation with health and education programs.

So the national consultative forums with the churches is a very good initiative. I know that the leadership in the church is looking forward to working closely with our Government. And with the leadership now provided by the Prime Minister through the Minister now, I think we can establish a very valuable partnership with the Churches.

I also want to commend the Minister on the Social Disability and Elderly Program and she has established a Task Force.

19/06

Honourable Sir Julius Chan is not here in the Chamber but he got this program running and recommended this important issue in Alotau. I think now we really need to take on board the issue of disabled citizens of our country in particular.

I would want to point out to the Parliament the provision of the *Constitution* where we can actually appoint three nominated people to be Members of Parliament. In the last term of Parliament, we were looking at three women but during the presentation which the Minister has made; this gives us an opportunity for the Ninth Parliament to nominate one disabled person to be a Member of Parliament. Why can't we make provisions to allow a representative of the Disabled on this Floor of Parliament? The *Constitution* allows for that.

Mr Speaker, through your leadership and the Minister's leadership, we should be entertaining this issue in the Ninth Parliament to recognise majority of the people. I believe it will give them a lot of boost and improve their status in Parliament where their voices can be heard. I truly recommend that the Speaker as the head of the Legislature should take the initiative and mobilise through the Coalition Government and Opposition to entertain this matter because it is about time we recognise such people.

Other then pensions for the disabled, we need to consider their other needs and include them in our main stream planning in our bureaucracy, such as planning for roads, buildings and PMVs where they can be given special seats. How do you get the disabled up to the fourth floor or into Parliament? I know that in Divine Word University, most of the buildings have two way entries that allow for wheelchairs. We should amend our building policies and legislations so every PMV in the country whether it is rural or urban, must have special seats and rails for the disabled and pathways for wheel chairs. There are no provisions for urban planning for those things. Now we need to bring disability issues into the mainstream policy planning and programs. So, I commend the Minister for raising these very important issues.

Mr Speaker, my second last point is in relation to Civil Registration. I think this is a very important issue. I just came from the EID system meeting at the State Function Room and we were debating that there is an enormous need for us to put money into expanding the infrastructure on IT throughout the country. There are State agencies like Telikom and Bemobile in particular and other private providers who can do this.

We need to bring IT technology to cover the entire country so that we can all access the Civil Registration database. There is no reason why I cannot access the Birth Registration Certificate from a computer terminal in Kupiano Town in Abau. This could be possible if I had the IT infrastructure there. I don't have to come to Port Moresby to the Civil Registry Office to register a newborn baby.

Mr Speaker, now is the IT age so we as decision makers must narrow the digital devide. We cannot allow the rural sector to be distanced from all the IT infrastructures. NCD and other urban centres have computer laboratories and the school children are using computers and as a result, they are computer literates but the rural areas do not

have this service so children and even most teachers are computer illiterate. In this day and age, we cannot deny the children their right of computer literacy.

It is wrong for leaders to widen the digital divide.

20/06

Mr Speaker, I believe it is very important for us to have an IT database and to access the Civil Registry database. I am proposing for the Minister for Planning and through the Minister for Community Development to look at it and prepare to budget for 2014. We must now have e-districts like the e-commerce and e-health so that we can have the data base developed for all our wards, LLGs to the districts. We must adopt this system so that every district must become an e-district so we can develop a database at the district level right up to the National Statistical Office for planning purposes.

Mr Speaker, to link to the Civil Registry database, I strongly recommend that we now talk about e-district so that the entire country is linked. I believe in terms of accessing records of persons can be done in the Civil Registry or there and then.

Mr Speaker, I also like to highlight something on the current DSIP programme and there are five major programmes; health, education, infrastructure, law and order and economic growth.

I am strongly suggesting in this debate that we establish a sixth program and that is, community development. Community development must be included in the chart of accounts, so that, we can dedicate some money to community development. For instance, I want to dedicate K1million to community development in Abau. If we look at the youth friendly training centres alone the womens' programme is a much bigger area. Community development is bigger than education, health and any infrastructure sector because it almost covers all of these sectors. It covers, sport, churches, culture and music et cetera. When we really look at it is like the whole or entire youth population is involved in the district.

Mr Speaker, I strongly believe that in the chart of account that we recently developed, we establish a community development as a separate program; the sixth priority program in PNG under the O'Neill-Dion Government.

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL (West New Britain) – Mr Speaker, I also like to contribute to the Ministerial Statement by the Minister for Community Development, Religion and Family Affairs. We all understand that it is one of the most important departments which addresses modern issues of the country, the women and youth.

I said yesterday that it is not about the amount of money we put in each department, but it is always about the attitude of each individual whether it being women or youth. However, every time we tend to blame youth that they are drunkards, drug addicts or womanisers going to night clubs and et cetera.

Mr Speaker, I wish to pose a simple question. Who is actually manufacturing beer? Who are actually running the night clubs? Who is actually supplying drugs? It is not the youth running the night clubs, manufacturing beer, selling beer and illicit drugs. It is the older generation for the sake of money. However, we feel comfortable to blame the youth that they are causing all these activities such as consuming alcohol and womanising.

I think the older generation must also be blamed for all the damages that has been already caused. I am not saying that the old generation is perfect but I am saying that it is time that we ask who is at fault; the youth or the older generation. Many times we blamed the youths. Mr Speaker, it is also very disturbing to see women drinking in pubs and smoking in the public places. In any society if there is any degradation of women's values then the whole family and the country has failed. Women and girls are valuable in each country because they are our mothers and sisters. However, it is very disturbing to see some women behave after consuming alcohol especially in the public places when they claim to be leaders.

Mr Speaker, I think it is our attitude that will change us and make us fly high like the air that is in the balloon to make it fly high. If our attitude and behaviour are right and positive we will develop and progress into the future. If we can change our attitude we can see lot of changes in our country.

I believe, we all know and hear the story of David and Goliath in the Bible. David is a tiny man and Goliath is a huge man. All the villagers were scared of Goliath and said he was too big for David to defeat. David then responded, No, he is too big to miss and so he killed Goliath with a slingshot. This is a beautiful country and we are blessed with

resources but we must properly manage them. As I have said, everything comes back to our attitude and behaviour.

Mr Speaker, I wish to say too that we must really and truly acknowledge the importance of the church services. The churches have been playing a very vital and important role in both spiritual and human development. It is very surprising to see that children attending international schools do not pray before their classes resume or even have assemblies in the mornings.

21/06

My children go to Kimbe International School and they do not even pray in the morning before they start their classes. The school says that because they are an international school they cannot pray one type of prayer. I do not understand that logic because there is only one God. At least you start the school with a prayer so that the children can start their day fresh. We must include such moral values in our school curriculums for all the students and grades.

Mr Speaker, I would like to stress the importance of churches. The Minister for Public Service, Sir Puka Temu also mentioned the churches. Without the churches, my province would be really struggling considering the remoteness of the Kandrian district and the Talasea district. Almost more than 50 per cent of education and health services are provided for by the various faith-based organisations.

Therefore, I really must acknowledge the kind services that they are providing for my province and also for the whole country. This is one of the areas that we have to concentrate and invest money for bringing and teaching moral values to our people. Irrespective of whatever faith we all follow, we cannot use religion to differentiate people. God has given us the free will to decide what faith you want to follow and that you stay loyal to that faith.

Mr Speaker, every faith is talking about one God and different faiths are like different rivers flowing out to meet in one big sea. Therefore, God is like the sea and the different faiths are the different rivers flowing to the sea. Our people should then understand the importance of various faiths. Many may ask that if there is only one God

then why are there many different faiths. The answer is that God knows what to give to each of the faiths.

We must appreciate that fact and promote church activities so that they can bring and teach our people moral values. Without morals values, we cannot bring any development to this country.

We also have various women's groups and we must encourage them to register if they want the government to assist them whether it is under DSIP, PSIP or from loans. In West New Britain, we have a few women's group called Women in Agriculture and Women in Fisheries. I give some support to these groups rather than focusing on individuals. As a group they can work together so that they can get loans also from the bank and repay those loans.

We must encourage these women's groups to register and support them in involving them in income generating activities. The same also goes for our youths. We have to get our youths involved in activities that will bring development.

We can talk about education, health and all those government services but we have to create employment opportunities for our people.

Mr Speaker, these are a few points that I wanted to raise, thank you.

Mr TITUS PHILEMON (Milne Bay) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to commend the Minister for her statement to Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to commend her and her Department, especially, the Youth Commission for the successful hosting of the Commonwealth Youth Minister's Conference that was held in Port Moresby.

Mr Speaker, when you talk about community development, we are talking about social development at all levels regarding our people in the community. It is a very important ministry. We should support this Ministry and the work of community development that is taking place in the country.

Mr Speaker, let me tell you a story of myself. Today, I am a Member of Parliament, but I had started off as a youth leader in my home province on Rosell Island. At that time I was employed and when I went back to my island home, I organised my youths where I got elected as a youth chairman of the island. After that, I also became the

Provincial Member for Rossel Island. From there, I continued to rise until I became a Member of Parliament.

I believe that similar opportunities that I had are still available to our people today. We should then make such opportunities available to our youths of today. We have spoken and supported many programs and projects but we have forgotten about our own youths. The area that we have forgotten will one day become a big problem.

Mr Speaker, let me repeat myself, if we forget and neglect our youths, we will one day face a problem. Therefore, it is only fitting for us now to support our youths. Many a times, we only circulate then through certain activities, and if look at Port Moresby today, our youths are being idle and doing things without any purpose. This problem is also present in Alotau as well.

When I became the Governor, I saw that in my province the Community Development Office did not function in the way that we wanted it to function. This is one issue that I would like to highlight to the Minister because the Community Development Officers must be supported.

You may say that you will support them now that you got funding, but that is what we have been trying to do in Milne Bay Province. We will still need the assistance of the Department of Community Development to help our provincial office.

When you talk about community development the name itself speaks for itself. It refers to the community and our communities are made up of people, but when we look at supporting them, we over look the name and we do not give much recognition to it. At the local government level, community development officers, also known as CDOs, spend their time gardening and fishing for themselves. They do not get involved in what they are required to do and this is the same at the district level. This affects the communities at these levels when there is no recognition and support given to them.

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Mr Speaker, let me commend the O'Neill–Dion Government for the funding I received as the Governor of the province.

For the first time in this country, I am able to assist some of the activities of women, youth and churches in my province. We see the importance of youths during

election period but after the election we do not consider them. I know this is not applicable to everyone but I'm sure sometimes this happens.

Another group of people we seem to neglect are those that are mentally retarded. In Alotau, the number of people experiencing mental breakdowns is increasing. Recently, there was a report published about the lack of support and maintenance of the Laloki Mental Hospital. This is bad because these people belong to a community and are part of us. When you have all the big things happening in Port Moresby, Alotau, Lae and Rabaul, and everywhere, where do these people belong? Let us consider their welfare and not neglect them.

Mr Speaker, I am sad to say that I have also witnessed homeless people sleeping on the streets in Port Moresby. I want to highlight to this Parliament because they are our people and our responsibility. I'm saying this during this debate so that as leaders of this country, we can decide on what to do about our people. We must not concentrate on the wealthy people but those that are not well-off.

Mr Speaker, I would like to commend the Minister for her support and the Government as well for the church partnership. I say this wholeheartedly and I know all the Members support this Church-Government Partnership. Many times we have talked about it and we should support it.

I want to commend the Prime Minister for taking the lead in making funds available for this program. This is good news for the churches; I think it has been too long. I believe most of us here have gone through churches' health services and attended church-run education institutions.

Mr Speaker, in Milne Bay, I have established a committee called Church-Government Liaison Council and I am their chairman and the church leaders in my Province are members in that Council. We funded the Council this year and we will continue to fund their activities. This will indicate to them that we support them.

Mr Speaker, in some remote areas of this county the churches were established there even before government presence.

23/06

I can only praise the O'Neill-Dion Government and the Minister for taking this direction. They have set an example for us in Milne Bay and we are riding on this by giving that support to the Churches. We will continue to fund them and facilitate for their programs.

On the issue on Social Protection of the Disabled and Elderly Persons, I would like to commend the Minister for taking on this issue and I think it is very successful in New Ireland Province. Some of us in other provinces would like to see the same because the people who are elderly are mostly forgotten and left behind. When you go to villages, you may not see the elderly because they usually hide away in the village huts. Sometimes we forget them and they die of hunger or because of neglect and lack of love from their family. If we go down and tell them that that this is the support that the Government is giving to them, it will have great impact on them. We may not know how much these people have contributed to the economy and strength of this country and when they grow old we forget them; that is not right. We must cater for their welfare and support them. For some reason, you will not find many elderly people in this country today; I think in the part of the province where I come from, not many people grow old very fast. I don't blame that on some kind of lifestyle but I think for some reason our people are dying at a younger age. It would be a big problem to assist them with funds and look after them, both the Elderly and the Disabled people. Sir Puka stated that we should have a disabled person to represent the disabled people here on the Floor of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, let that be the wisdom of Parliament to try it, but I for one would support that idea. Despite their disability they have been able to represent our country in the Games, conventions and many other international events where they have flown the PNG Flag. It will be a high recognition for them, if we take that step.

Mr Speaker, there are many things I would like to say but the challenge I really want to leave with the Minister while I appreciate her paper and commend her for the job well done, is regarding the Provincial and District Community Development Offices. The National Office is supposed to assist in the operation of their establishment in the provinces and it must be closely monitored and must be activated. So many functions and

training workshops are taking place but when you go to the villages, districts or the councils, you don't see results. Sometimes, they train for themselves; they don't pass it on to the people that deserve to know it.

One of the biggest problems that we had was regarding the women, which is now been resolved by the enactment of the Bill regarding the Provincial Council of Women. But I think they have their own politics and this sometimes affect the majority of the women in their area of responsibility. The politics and indifferences in the women and as youth movements and sporting groups affect the whole community and the whole organisation that is why we have to be very precise in terms of giving directions. Let me inform Parliament that I will not wait for that function is a national function. Since I took over office and since funding has been coming from the National Government and the National Service changes that have been taking place with finance and tendering requirement and now with the Public Service, whether it is national or provincial function it's not an issue to me as long as you are providing service in my province, I'm there to support you.

Mr Speaker, I think it is now right time that we forget if it is a national or provincial function. Some provincial governments say they can not do this or that because it is a national function. We must do away with such attitude because this is the time to develop Papua New Guinea.

24/06

It is our responsibility whether it is national function, provincial function, district function or a local level function. This is our role and responsibility so we must act since we are providing goods and services to our people.

With this, I support the Minister and the Ministerial Statement presented to the Parliament.

Mr JIM KAS (Madang) – Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for Community Development for her Ministerial Statement to this Parliament. I support the comments of the Minister for Public Services and other Members as well.

Firstly, I commend the O'Neill-Dion Government and the Government as a whole for stepping out of the normal frame of mind and getting professional advise from within and abroad to frame a budget that suits PNG. It is for the first time in the history of Papua New Guinea, the National Government has answered the wishes of the little Papua New Guinea people.

This is a budget that is suitably addressing the issues and concerns. The people of this country have their wish that one day a government would respond favorably to their demands and wishes. A concern which was raised by many ward councilors, council presidents and the members of the former provincial assemblies was that the National Government should empower the provinces financially.

Mr Speaker, I commend this Government for its wisdom in taking a bold stand in getting out at the traditional mindset in framing a budget that has answered the question or concern that has been affecting the people for a long time.

With the Ministerial Statement, I commend the Minister for her very good statement to this Parliament. But firstly, I wish to raise a question concerning youth. What is youth and what is the right age to be known as a youth? I think one must not call himself/herself as a youth when he/she is a grandfather or grandmother.

The term 'youth' has been extremely abused by many Papua New Guineans in this country and Madang is no exception. In Madang, this term has been commonly used but let us define the term 'youth'. What is youth? I believe the age of 12 to 21 is the definition of youth but any age from 22 years and above is adulthood.

I would like the Minister to define the term youth. What is the right age to be called a youth? It would be embarrassing for me to call myself a youth after having two or three children.

Mr Speaker, I also wish to talk about the National Council of Women. I wish to suggest that if the Minister could oversee this issue and address it accordingly. The women must critically fix their organization.

I would like to give an example affecting Madang provincial Assembly. The five council presidents did not resign to contest the National Elections, yet they wanted to walk into Madang Provincial Chamber to attend the meeting but were dismissed. They wanted to assume the position of presidents. A classical example is the President of

Provincial Council of Women in Madang did not resign to contest the National Elections and now she resumes her role as the President of the Madang Provincial Council of Women. This is unacceptable and I do not accept her as the President of the Madang Provincial Council of Women.

Mr Speaker, I think the women are creating problems themselves. Let us not pretend that everything is fine. I ask the good Minister to assist them to address their issues.

The Members of Parliament has created a Women's Office by enacting legislation to govern the women's affairs in PNG. Parliament again in its wisdom amended a special Women's Bill, which has also given recognition to our women.

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We are doing a great job and we have recently amended the special bill to give women more recognition. I want to tell the women that when we are giving them that recognition that they deserve, they must not use their own experiences or whatever they go through at home to affect the way they conduct themselves in public.

I commend the Parliament for not approving that bill to have reserved seats for four women. These seats are for those mandated by the people. I am saying this because my wife does not believe in getting a free seat in the Chamber.

She believes in doing it the hard way and if she can say that women have to get elected to come here, the fruits of it are right here. We have three honourable women in the Parliament. On this same token, I want to disclose to Parliament that I am the Deputy Chairman for people with Disability in Madang. And for the last seven years I have been on the Board, I am happy with this Government and the suggestion brought up by Milne Bay Governor that one of the areas that we should all look into funding is community development. Now I am a bit restricted because the criteria that the Finance Minister has set out is for very big areas.

I also support the proposal to include community development as one of the areas because then it relaxes me to give K100 000 to my center for disabled on Madang so that the center can be well catered for. This brings me to say that I think it is an insult to the

people with disabilities to label them as disabled. Let us stop using that phrase and classify them as people with special needs.

My other contribution in this area would be on civil registration or electronic registration and I fully support that. When civil registration was first being tried I was one of the first to be freely registered. When the concept of being registered was being mooted, my family was one of the first to be registered under the free program that was incorporated.

I want to say that when we find that people's names are not in the common roll, it should not be a problem finding them on the registry. We should make it compulsory that when a child is born they should be registered right away. If this is done in the ward level and compile it through LLG and districts, we will know the exact number of births and updating the Common Roll will not be a difficult task to do.

Civil registration must be made compulsory and for the purpose of informing this government, my government has committed about K400 000 to the appointed representatives in my provincial assembly. K100 000 each to the churches, CSO forum, including women and children, women and business representatives in Madang. I thank the government for listening to the people.

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Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – Thank you Mr Speaker, I would like to make some comments in relation to this very important discussion that we are having.

Firstly, I commend the Minister in her efforts to bring about the changes that she is obviously determined to bring about and her efforts to report to us.

Following on from where my two colleague Governors have finished, I want to discuss the issue in regards to women, youth and disabled people or person with special needs. I also want to make mention of the fourth group of people that we need to take note of and that is our elders.

Nowadays, elders are an increasing issue of concern in many societies and economies. And they will become an issue of concern for us here in PNG as well.

In the past, our culture took care of our elders. We all remember that at one time or another we were responsible for taking care of our grandparents. And our families took care of our needs of the elders.

But now our culture and society is evolving and cultural values are being eroded. Now elders are no longer respected and in many instances, no one seems to take care of them.

The Governor for Milne Bay mentioned that many people are now dying without reaching their full maximum age. That is because of the lack of care in our societies. It does not have anything to do with medicines but care and consideration. And if they feel that they are not cared for or considered than they will die and that is reality. We need to develop policies to look at how we can engage them and care for them. We are experiencing all manner of economic booms and development. And perhaps we can look at how some of this economic boom could be made available to assist our elderly. One day, we will all be elders and who will care for us? And that is a consideration that we must make.

In regards to persons with special needs; one example is that, I had a good friend and he is a young man who does not have the benefit of sight. But he made it as far as university, he walked the Kokoda Trail and he wrote three books. What an achievement, and yet he lived in a settlement. Both his parents passed away when he was still a small boy. At one time he said, 'brother if you want to know more about discrimination and stigma then I can tell you because, I am expert in it, but my only disability is your ignorance.'

These people are very productive people. They have great capability and capacity to contribute to economic development. Therefore, we must find means and ways to engage them so that they are useful and we can use their talents and skills. And I commend the Minister for her efforts to bring them into this scope of development. And we all of us Open Members and Governors must find it in our Budget to try to engage them.

This group of people relies on Churches, NGOs and Civil Society's, State and Cultural Society's to work together to provide for them. They are working very hard but they lack

resources and support. Our cultural societies are eroding away and they are being overshadowed by corporate interest.

Nowadays there is a price on anything and everything and you can see it wherever you go. Whatever it is that you want, someone is willing to supply it for a price. That philosophy is eroding our way of life, our culture of sharing and caring is slowly diminishing. What are we going to do about it? Globalisation is occurring very rapidly and everyone has a mobile phone and laptop. And life has become increasingly consumerist. What are we going to do about that?

The State is not as effective and efficient as it should be. It is slow to respond. We are supposed to provide law and order, health, education and infrastructure for our people. And these four groups work towards that with the Churches and Civil Society leading the way. Therefore, the State will need to step up and I join with the rest of the Members in commending the O'Neill-Dion Government because they have made it possible in their Budgets. And we are now enjoying the opportunity to be able to address our needs in our provinces.

We have to look at our cultural societies. What are we doing as Melanesians? What's happening to the family unit?

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We see all manner of violent crimes being committed and there is no respect for the elderly and concern for children. Our women are oppressed, brutalised and suppressed everywhere you go in Papua New Guinea. Why is this happening? Is this a negative impact of the corporative strategy that is driving globalisation? How do we counter that? How do we consider that?

All these groups, NGO's and civil societies, State and council societies must start coming together so that it can be driven by this Ministry. We must start searching for answers for what is happening in our country.

The most important strategies to ensure progressive society are economic empowerment, administration and enforcement of the laws so, are we doing enough to economically empower these people, women, youths and people who have special needs; the elderly for instance? If you economically empower women for instance, much of

those benefits will trickle down to the family and society. When a woman operates a business, her relatives are happy because they are going to benefit one way or the other. When men do business, some do good business where it benefits their families, society and the community but others gamble, drink beer and womanise so we must think about empowering our womenfolk; economic empowerment for women and youths.

We must be very cautious with our youths and we also need to give them room to develop on their own. Otherwise, as the Governor for Madang said, they are youths but they have spouses and children so what kind of youths are we talking about? We have plenty of such youths and the NCD Governor is aware because they front up at his office with all types of claims. So when are we going say enough is enough and we are not going to spoon-feed them anymore. You are already an adult so get up and maintain yourself.

So these are some considerations that I would like to make. I want us to seriously think about what is happening insofar as globalisation is concerned. The rapid development of technology is changing the way we live. It is forcing the culture to evolve. While globalisation and corporate interests bring benefits, it also brings negatives and we have to be considerate of those negatives.

Look at drugs and alcohol for instance. They are the major problems in our society. If you go to all the places, there are plenty of drug addicts and alcoholics. They are ruling the societies and the leaders in the villages and churches are unable to control them. Not long, they will form their own political parties. So how are we addressing the drug problem and alcohol abuse? When I say alcohol abuse, I am referring to illicit alcohol.

If I tell you some tales, you might not believe but they are true. In some of our settlements here, mothers are giving coffee punch to their babies. If a mother wants to go to the informal sector to sell betel nuts and gamble and the baby cries a lot, she feeds the baby with this drink and it goes to sleep. This is a fact and it is already happening.

The school children are also accessing internet on the mobile phones and watching pornography and they already know these things now. The parents are not concerned, they are busy with their informal sector activities going around selling Asian junk goods and are not concerned about their children.

So we must really look at the negative development taking place in our societies and see how we can address it. The only way to address this is for churches, NGOs, civil societies, State and cultural societies must work together. We must start discussing these problems.

In our culture, we sit together and discuss the problem by coming up with all sorts of suggestions and we find solutions to address these issues. So we can find some solutions to these problems and it all comes down to education. We have to start teaching all these values in our schools. We have to start introducing religious instructions in schools again, encourage children to go to Sunday schools and be involved. We have to teach respect, honour and discipline.

Anyway, I have made my presentation and I hope that it has been taken note of.

28/06

Many of us make important presentations, statements, suggestions and recommendations and I think that there must be a way by which, we can capture these. There should be some sort of Secretariat established so that these important recommendations or suggestions and so forth can be translated into something meaningful and that there must be some positive action or reaction where we could monitor and track them so that it bears fruit. Otherwise, our input will become like some of those inquiries that we have conducted and nothing eventuated. This will happen again in everything else we do.

Debate (on motion by **Mr James Marape**) adjourned

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH – IMPLEMENTATION OF 2013 HEALTH SECTOR PRIORITIES – MINISTERIAL STATEMENT – PAPER NOTED

Mr MICHAEL MALABAG (Moresby North-West – Minister for Health) – Mr Speaker, let me say from the outset that this Government under Prime Minister Peter

O'Neill is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our people. On the same token, we as Ministers, it is also our responsibility to work with our departmental heads because most times we complain about them the Public Service but the onus is also on us to be held responsible and accountable for our actions in the delivery of quality services.

Mr Speaker, health service delivery, infrastructures and basic equipment have been overlooked for many years and as a result have deteriorated to a level where fixing them will take some time. However, I do not wish to dwell on such negative aspects.

Mr Speaker, therefore, while I have this opportunity, let me provide to the people of Papua New Guinea through this Parliament a Progress Report on the Implementation Status of the Health Sector Priorities under the *2012 Alotau Accord Action Plan.*

Mr Speaker, the O'Neill-Dion Government since assuming Office, drew up the Action Plan also known as the *'2012 Alotau Plan'*. This Plan was immediately communicated to the Chief Secretary, Prime Minister and to all heads of agencies in February 2013 when we first gathered at the Gateway Hotel in Port Moresby.

Mr Speaker, we have been given three major priorities but Health being a technical department and with the many issues involved, we have identified seven priority areas and they are as follows:

(1) Pre-Primary Healthcare and Subsidised Specialist Healthcare;

(2) Health Workforce Planning;

(3) Medical Supplies Distribution;

(4) Provincial Health Authorities Implementation and Rollout;

(5) Health Infrastructure Development;

(6) Improved Governance; and

(7) Support to Church Health Services.

Mr Speaker, soon after the announcement, we went to work and are ready to inform this Parliament on what my Ministry has done in implementing these priorities. These are priority policy areas for this Government.

In implementing this policy announcement, the Department has undertaken the following actions:

The pre-primary healthcare and subsidised healthcare policy was developed and it is being finalised by the Department. A draft has been submitted to Cabinet in late March

for deliberations and eventual approval. The policy is designed to be implemented in a phased manner. The Department is currently waiting and I am meeting with the Social Sector Committee which, is headed by Honourable Sir PukaTemu for final consultation.

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In order for the policy to be effective the *Public Hospital Charges Regulations (1978)* and the *Dental Charges Regulations* have to be reviewed. A Cabinet Statutory Business Paper has been prepared and submitted to Cabinet in March for deliberation.

Mr Speaker, in effecting this moot implementation of the policy an amount of K20 million has been allocated by the Government for disbursements to the provinces and hospitals to rollout the Government's free health care and subsidised specialist service policy. The fund is currently parked at the Department of Finance awaiting release to facilities throughout the country.

Mr Speaker, our second priority is on Health Workforce Planning. The Health Department commissioned a study on Health Human Resources in 2009 by the World Bank. The findings of the Report alleged that the Department of Health and its stakeholders are on a major workforce crisis affecting the Health Sector. The report stated that, of the 8,844 frontline health workers that serve the 7 million people of this country 54 per cent are aging and will be retiring in the next 10 years, and if Parliament can recall, this was what the Minister for Public Service outlined in his ministerial statement. Our training institutions are not producing enough health workers to adequately serve the ever growing population.

Mr Speaker, that is the major problem setback that we have and it is already affecting service delivery to our people. Therefore, the government is committed and has taken immediate steps to address the issues of staff shortages.

Mr Speaker, to set the foundations to address this situation my Ministry has taken the following actions.

The Department has formulated a comprehensive Human Resource Management Policy. This was approved by Cabinet in October, 2012. This policy will guide Health Human Resources Management as well as the Health Workforce Planning. This was

brought to Cabinet and it was approved in October 2012 to establish a Government Steering Committee to develop an immediate arrest plan by June, 2013.

The arrest plan is to put in place immediate short term interventions to address the crucial shortage of manpower. This includes the recruitment of retired nurses, doctors and other health workers for our hospitals around the country. Our next option is then to recruit from abroad. The Department is currently developing a Health Workforce Plan, and it is expected before the end of the year. For supporting future and current workforce demands, the Department is funding ongoing support to both government and church-run training institutions. In 2012, K6 million was distributed to training schools to improve classrooms and take in more students.

The Department with the support of AusAid has recruited seven midwives as training facilitators to teach at the nursing colleges.

More than 600 nursing scholarships have been offered to AusAid assistance to train more midwives to address the high maternal mortality rate in the country.

Mr Speaker, our third priority is the Medical Supplies Distribution Reform. Medical supplies procurement, efficiency distribution and high level accountability is highlighted as priority in the National Health Plan.

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Mr Speaker, the first one is, Area Medical Stores system has been streamlined from six to three and they are Port Moresby, Lae and Mount Hagen. All three Area Medical Stores are been assessed for rehabilitation work to commence immediately by Global Fund.

Secondly, the constructions of Provincial Transit Stores are currently being rolled out and funded under the Government's Development Budget. This is aimed at improving medical supplies storage, and distribution in a timely manner. A number of provincial transit stores are at the initial scoping and documentation stage, whilst the others are out for tender.

Thirdly, a logistics information management system is been implemented using the M-supply system, which replaces the old FoxPro-system. The system will provide a wide range of functions, covering procurement, warehouse and inventory managements,

logistics and distribution for medical supplies. This is one of the fundamental reform elements of the new program.

Fourthly, the reinstatement of the Pharmaceutical Supply and Tenders Board has been requested by the Department of Health in February this year, which is pivotal in strengthening the health system and underscores the Government's position to improve and strengthen the capacity within the Department. The governance and operation of the PSTB would be established to ensure probity and efficiency of tender and contract activities.

Fifth, the Department has reviewed, printed and distributed the PNG Dental and Medical catalogue. This is to ensure the Department's focus on procuring and distributing essential drugs and vital medicines, thereby improving accessibility to this medicine by the majority when needed. In complimenting the above document the Department has formulated, printed and distributed the first National Medicine Formulary last year. This document provides accurate and practical references on the medicine selection, user's dosages, adverse effects and contradictions to guide health workers in their clinical decisions.

Sixth, the *National Drug Policy 1998* is currently under review. Two consultation meetings have been held so far and the Department intends to complete the policy by the end of this year.

Seventh, the Department is currently developing a Medical Supplies Procurement Plan to ensure it is completed before the end of the year.

Eight, support in resources to the School of Medicine and Health Sciences is ongoing for training and developing of pharmacists and technical staff.

Ninth, the Department has signed an MOU with Customs and Police to enforce the medicine laws and policies to avoid fake drugs coming into the country. The Pharmaceutical Board of Papua New Guinea has been appointed in 2013 and is meeting regularly.

Mr Speaker, our fourth priority is Provincial Health Authorities Implementation and roll out. The Provincial Health Authority reform is one of the major reforms the health sector is undertaking to improve management and coordination of health services at the provincial level. The fragmented health system at the provincial level has proven to

be a liability, therefore the *Provincial Health Authority Act* is the single health reform initiative providing a solution to improve health services management and delivery at the provincial level.

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It is a single health reform initiative that will provide a solution to improve health service management and delivery at the provincial level.

Mr Speaker, Eastern Highlands, Western Highlands and Milne Bay are the three provinces implementing this major reform initiative. I want to inform Parliament that tomorrow, the Member for Daulo, Governor for Eastern Highlands and I will be travelling up there in the morning.

In 2013, four more provinces are now in process of the rollout of PHA, and there are Enga, Sandaun, West New Britain and Manus.

Mr Speaker, I will be signing a partnership agreement within the next few weeks with the respective Governors to implement this Health Reform in their provinces.

Secondly, there is strong political will and support from the Governors to rollout this reform in these provinces. The Department of Health is working closely with these provinces to ensure that the reform plans are achieved this year.

In facilitating the process of the rollout, a project unit has been established in the Department to facilitate the rollout.

Mr Speaker, I call upon all the Governors, Members of Parliament, central agencies and stakeholders to support this reform because it is important to improve the health management to enable service delivery.

Our third priority is Health Infrastructure Improvement.

Mr Speaker, Health Infrastructure Improvement is an ongoing priority for this Government. The upgrading and rehabilitation of health infrastructures is heavily financed under the Government's Development Budget. The various components of the infrastructure are as follows.

The Health Department is working with provinces in identifying and developing the establishment of the Community Health Post. This is similar to what we had in the

past called 'Aid Posts'. This component is funded by the Government's Development Budget and currently two are being built. Others are out on tender amid design stages.

Mr Speaker, the second component is supported through an Asian Development Bank loan by the Government and it is being rolled out in eight provinces. The eight provinces are doing scoping and design work for construction and should begin by mid-year. The Department has developed a Community Health Post Policy, and an implementation guideline to guide the rollout of the community health post should the Government wish to construct their own community health post.

Mr Speaker, a number of health centers are currently undergoing rehabilitation and upgrading. Again, my Department is providing ongoing technical support and oversight to provinces and districts to ensure standards are met.

Mr Speaker, fourthly, a number of Provincial and Referral Hospitals are now undergoing refurbishment and upgrading. Most of them are funded by the Government's Development Budget. This includes the Port Moresby General Hospital, Angau, Mendi, Vanimo, Madang, Popondetta and Kavieng. The Government is also embarking on building a new regional and provincial hospital for Angau. An MOU was recently signed when the Australian Prime Minister visited our country. As for Nonga Base Hospital it was decided that it would be relocated to Puput, and a similar course is as intended for Enga Province. The funding for these re-developments of these hospitals have been transferred to the respective hospitals already.

Mr Speaker, the fifth is the purchase for essential medical equipments and medical supplies.

Purchase of these medical equipments is funded under the development budget and it is progressing well. The first portion of the K48 million allocations under the 2011 and 2012 Development Budget have been expended. Equipments for hospitals have been procured and the distribution to health facilities around the country is progressing. It takes time to bring all these things but eventually all the hospitals will be fully equipped.

Mr Speaker, the sixth; the Department has paid K6 million in 2012 to training schools to renovate classrooms and improve nursing facilities to increase student intakes. A further K6 million was also allocated in 2013 and will be distributed shortly.

Mr Speaker, all the infrastructure development programmes that I mentioned in this report have been included in the Health Sector Medium Term Development Plan 2011-2015.

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They are now being implemented through the various Development Programmes. However, from 2013, most funds for Rural Health Infrastructure have been sent to the Provinces and Districts through DSIPS and PSIPS.

I, therefore call on each Members and Governors to allocate 20 per cent or even more to help me implement the MTDP and see to it that our Health Infrastructures are rehabilitated and improved.

Mr Speaker, copies of the Health MTDP will be delivered to each Member this week for all their support and implementation.

Mr Speaker, our sixth priority is to improve governance within the Health Sector. There are many governance issues affecting the Public Services and regardless of the broader governance issues in the Public Sector, the Department is seriously reforming its internal governance systems to support the health sector progress. Below is what is already been undertaken:

(1) The Department has commenced work in reviewing its 2009-2013 Corporate Plan. The final draft is being approved for implementation.

(2) The Department has finalized its 2012 Annual Management Report and is being submitted this week. Based on this Report, I will make a report to the Parliament on the Nation's Health Situation.

(3) The Department has now established its own Audit Committee and chaired by Department of Finance and is regularly meeting.

(4) The Department has commenced reviewing its outdated legislation and regulations. *The Public Health Act 1973, The Medicine and Cosmetic Act, Health Practitioners Bill and the Food and Sanitation Act.*

(5) The Department is facilitating and providing technical oversight to provinces and hospitals in the appointment of Boards under the *Public Hospital Act 1994 and Provincial Health Authorities Act 2007.*

Mr Speaker, our seventh priority is to Improve Support to Church Health Services. Finally, but not the least, you agreed with me that Church Health Services are very important partners to Government in delivering services in this country. Churches deliver almost 47 per cent of Health Services in rural PNG. In strengthening and providing continuous support to churches, the Department has undertaken the following actions:

(1) The 2002 National Health Partnership Policy is now reviewed. The new policy aims to effectively coordinate partnerships to implement the National Health Plan.

(2) The Department has developed a Cabinet submission to address issues of Church Health Workers salary disparities. This submission was deferred to the Social Sector Committee. In the meantime, consultations held between DPM and Health Department have been agreed to proceed.

(3) The Department continues to provide funding for both salaries and goods and services for the churches.

(4) The Department is supported through AusAID and the Government funds to rehabilitate all Church run training schools to take in more students to address workforce shortages.

Mr Speaker, this is the peoples' House. I am reporting on what my Ministry is doing to implementing the priorities of the Government. I believe through increases in funding bit-by-bit, block-by-block and if we can do that right, over time we will be able to get there and be compatible with to other nations.

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This is just the beginning of our Reforms and Rehabilitation of our health systems and infrastructure development.

I therefore, call on each of the Members, Governors and Ministers to support my efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of our people.

Mr BIRE KIMISOPA (Goroka) – Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for an excellent paper that he has presented. I think he covered extensively the issues affecting the Health Sector in the country. I also want to thank him for his timely

intervention into the Goroka Base Hospital saga. The hospital as we know is an institution that restores life and it is a humanitarian institution and deserves careful attention.

Mr Speaker, I have a few comments I would like to make in regards to this Ministerial Statement. My issues about hospitals across the country and perhaps I am a little bit more biased because I have been involved with the Goroka Base Hospital for so many years because I grew up in the hospital, my father was an orderly and my mother was a nurse.

They both are not here but they have made a considerable contribution to the Department of Health and collectively they both served for over 60 years. I have seen the hospital from a small boy right up to where I am today. These issues affecting the Goroka Base Hospital is the same nationwide.

And these are administrative or managerial issues of the hospital. I am of the view that not all good doctors are good managers of hospitals and over the years, as we have witnessed and with respect to the Goroka Base Hospital, we have a CEO coming into manage hospitals having expertise on the field of medicine but have very poor management qualities and literally wrecked the hospital.

Mr Speaker, this is a problem and it is timely that the good Minister has been upfront and he should cast the vision ahead and more or less bring in outside expertise.

Advertise outside and bring confident people to come and run the hospital, they may not necessarily be doctors but those can be able to manage the hospital's equipment and its staff.

One of the failings of the Goroka Base Hospital is that, in terms of their procurement they bought equipment that had no spare parts in this country. And the only person who was supposed to fix the X –ray machine or the diagnostic equipment happens to be in Sydney and they don't have K6 000 to fly him to Goroka.

They have been waiting for more than 6 or 7 years now and if this problem is experienced in Goroka, I suspect there maybe similar ones throughout the country. What is the point of investing money into purchasing medical equipment which is very expensive when the people in our hospitals in the country do not know how to maintain them or source spare parts from outside the country.

It all goes down to management and if I may say medical standards are very important. The Goroka Hospital over the years, in my experience has seen a number or unwanted deaths and the most recent one was that we had someone from Obura-Wonenara trying to access emergency care at the hospital and they did not have the right equipment and this happened last week, so what they had to do was put him on a PMV and send him to Kundiawa. And it is quite a distance to travel between Goroka and Kundiawa and he died before reaching Kundiawa.

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It's a bit strange to say that Doctors don't have the right surgical equipment to cut bones and they resort to using tools that you would find in a hardware store. Now you cannot accept that in a hospital. So the standard is very important and as much as you can make all these investment into our Public Hospitals and so forth, we need to be very clear in terms of the operational capacity and the expertise that is required to run a hospital. And running a hospital is a serious business because it involves lives and it's important that we consider that.

The other comment that I would like to make is that, whilst the good Minister is reviewing all the Acts and Regulations that is under his Ministry; I would also propose that he reviews the food importation in this country especially, rice. There is a certain law in Department of Health that says; all the imported rice must be vitamin enriched and perpetrated by a well-established company in this country. That is why they are shutting the market completely.

I think it's high time that when you are reviewing all your legislation under your Ministry, then perhaps you should abolish that one completely and allow any country in the world to bring rice into our country. And it's happening in Australia and they are not strict rules because these are high standards. Some of the companies in our country are using this clause exclusively to keep this market to themselves. That's something that we need to look at and abolish it and open our markets and allow other countries to bring in food. But only if they meet the health standards and it has to be vitamin enrich. I tell you Papua New Guineans, won't die from not eating vitamin enriched food. For the last 100 years, they have been eating kaukau, taro, yam and sago and they still continue to do so.

Mr Speaker, to conclude, I commend the Minister for doing a fantastic job on his presentation. I thank him for accepting my call to come up to Goroka. I thought you were never going to come and lost interest in the people of Goroka but now that you have done so you have restored my faith in you.

Mr AMKAT MAI (West-Sepik) – Thank you Mr Speaker, for recognizing me. Firstly, I would like to thank the Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS for this very excellent report on the health status throughout the country.

As the Governor representing the most disadvantaged and probably the last in all the Health Indicators when it comes to the Human Development Index. This report really motivates me because the O'Neill-Dion Government is putting a lot of effort in my province.

I want to report to this Floor of Parliament that right now we have 12 doctors in Vanimo General Hospital. The administration of the hospital is properly managed and so I want the Provincial Health Authority to recognise the Vanimo General Hospital as the top five hospitals in the country. We are also looking at extending our health services to the remote clinics such as Teleformin and Oksapmin as well.

Under the DSIP fund I have allocated K4 million to health sector, K2 million to build more houses for the health workers in Vanimo, K2 million to the Rural Health Electrification Program. The contract was awarded to a local company to install and connect electricity to delivery rooms and maternity wards.

I fully support the Minister's report and I urged all Members to do so. If we have good heath services provided in the provinces and country as a whole then we will have productive citizens and our economy will grow.

Just three weeks ago my provinces was declared a disaster zone because of the neucastle diseases. But the responses from the current Government to the border areas especially, my province was of high regard.

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So I am very proud with the way the current Government is looking at improving the Vanimo Hospital and I would support you all the way.

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Public Service) – Mr Speaker, I wish to say a few words in support of the excellent presentation by the Minister for Health. I support the naming of the Minister as doctor because he has done an excellent job in a very short period of time and he is one of the Ministers that I think is really performing his duties and I fully support his initiatives.

Mr Speaker, as only a health professional in this Floor of Parliament and once upon a time being the Secretary of Health for a long time, I wish to just enlighten the Parliament on one or two things and make some recommendations on top of what the Minister has provided. It cannot be argued either way that the two key issues that have been affecting the health system in our country are firstly shortage of workforce. We don't have enough doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians and community health workers and in my presentation, it came up very clear that over the last 20 years, we have shorten our ratio of population to health worker by 62 per cent .

So the efforts to increase training to support the nursing colleges and medical faculties is moving in the right direction and I am glad that the manpower plan that the Minister for Health has pronounced is already being implemented because that plan will determine how many doctors we should be producing every year. But at the moment, with regards to the UPNG Medical Faculty, we don't have enough doctors passing out through there so we have a capacity problem in only one medical school. Therefore, I strongly recommend that we must now look at the second medical faculty in the country.

I suggest that a school of medicine in the Highlands would provide a very good training ground for the health professionals in the country. In here, we have only one hospital which is the Port Moresby General Hospital.

So I support the Prime Minister's initiative in the new university. Otherwise in Goroka, we have an Institute of Medical Research which, is also a very good learning environment in the Eastern Highlands Province and also very central to all the provinces in the Highlands Region. Therefore, I will strongly recommend this idea because we don't have the capacity. Our people are demanding high standard of health care and they are no longer looking for nurses or Aid Post workers; they are now looking for specialist doctors in the country and we don't have that.

The Minister's effort to recruit specialist doctors is in the right direction but for our national pride, I want to inform Parliament that under the localisation policy, it was the localisation of the medical officer post that was first in the country so it was the doctors trained in the faculty that was the sure case in terms of the localisation program in the country. As a result, we replaced many of the foreign doctors but because of the population growth, it has now outpaced us.

I strongly recommend that the country now deserves a second medical school so that we can now train more doctors in the country and some of them need to be specialised as rural medical officers where we can post them to the rural areas under our rural drive service policy. There are doctors that can be trained in multiple skills so that they can do a whole lot of things.

The second most important issue is that we do not have enough medical equipment in the country.

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I was trained in Australia and when my training was over I returned to Papua New Guinea to find that there was no equipment to work with. We would then ask for funding through the budget process but in almost all the cases we would be told that there was no money available for the purchase of equipment.

Nevertheless, things have changed now. This Government, under the leadership of the Prime Minster has given the Health Sector the second top priority. Therefore, the availability of equipment is an important issue and I am glad the Minister has disclosed that they are re-equipping the hospitals. Static plants for power generation and anesthetic machines are very important. This is because these machines breakdown every day and you need money to replace them and trained people to maintain them as well. These machines are highly used and require other supplementary items to keep them going.

Since hospitals used these types of machines everyday they tend to burn out and their replacement is so important. This is why over the years with the lack of budget support most of the medical equipments have broken down.

There is a specific World Health standard in terms of the right amount of supply of medicine to a population. The World Health standard is that every Government must

spend a minimum of US$10 dollars per capita for medical drugs. That is about K30 per head of a population. For the 7 million people of Papua New Guinea we must therefore budget for K200 million for medical drug supplies.

When I was the Health Secretary we only allocated K19 million per annum when we initially asked for K40 million. Thus, we could not supply all the Aid-posts and hospitals with chloroquin, chlorofenical, penicillin, amoxicillin and et cetera for everyday requirements. We could not supply these medical drugs to address the country's common illnesses like malaria, diahorea and pneumonia that commonly affects our people.

Therefore, we would always run out of drugs because we have never reached the minimum World Health Organisation's (WHO) standard of $US10 dollar or K30 per capita to on medical supplies. If we were to solve those issues by providing K200 million for medical drug supplies for next year we would do a proper 6 month stock take.

Therefore, the system is that you have to order 6 months in advance and that is within the pharmaceutical industry. With that, you will be able to re-stock medical drug supplies 6 months ahead. If we do not allocate this K200 million then we will fall short and the country will face disasters where a little baby will die of malaria in the corner of its home somewhere in a remote part of the country. That is basically what is happening at the moment.

Mr Speaker, the message is very clear in the Health Sector. We need enough nurses and doctors, proper amount of budget for medical supplies and make sure trained people can use the medical equipments.

Mr Speaker, we in this country through our training institutions whether it is laboratory, x-ray, doctor or nurse training, we have some of the best trained as far as the world is concerned. Our health worker training is one of the best in the world. If you compare Papua New Guinean to an Australian doctor, our doctor will always be 100 per cent correct. And when it comes to operating, our doctors are more dedicated in their work and standards.

Therefore, we have some of the best trained health workers but over the years because of the lack of medical drug supplies, equipment and manpower our health sector is faced with issues.

I was there on last week Wednesday night at the Port Moresby General Hospital (PMGH) Emergency Room, and I can tell you, there were too many patients. You could see patients sleeping on beds and even on the floor because there was no space to put them. When I enquired if the medical officer on duty did the ward rounds to discharge patients, I was told that regardless of all the discharges there were too many patients to cater for.

Our population is growing too large and we are chasing our tail in terms of health services and we do not have sufficient health facilities. For example, on that Wednesday night I was at the hospital there were only two doctors with the entire ward and emergency room packed and overflowing with patients.

Mr Speaker, with that, I commend the Minister for we really have to strive for the training of more health workers. If there is a Budget support in 2014 and onwards, we should have more training for manpower capacity, K200 million for medical drug supplies and replace all the medical equipment. Mr Speaker, during my time, I was posted to Mambisanda Hospital where I would go to Laiagam and used lamps for lights and successfully delivered the baby. We have done all these and we can still do it today.

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We have got the capacity, skill and training but now, the call by the health system is that we must provide budget support. This is one sector where capacity is there but we do not have the right number of people.

Mr Speaker, the second point that I would like to raise is that, we need to look at a policy to support the growth of the private sector in health care provisions because we cannot do it alone. It has become very expensive and at one time, the late Member for Angoram went to a private hospital where he did not pay the medical fee which, resulted in him not receiving medical attention. We must bring in incentives to increase the growth of the private sector regarding health.

In Australia more than 50 per cent of health provisions are taken by the private sector. In PNG, it is below 2 per cent. Therefore, we need to lure the private sector to provide health care and I guess that the policy that is missing is the Health Insurance Policy. This is because with private health care it is very expensive and we need a safety

net, which is a health insurance policy. We can do that so our people do not have to pay from their own pockets. I know that many leaders and people can afford private health care therefore; public hospitals can cater for the general public.

Mr Speaker, the third point that I would like to raise is the issue of population growth. The population growth must now become a development issue in the country. This is very important and I am glad that the Minister for Planning will bring in a new population policy.

While I was in medical school my professor in epidemiology told me a story of a smart doctor who started a hospital to resuscitate people who were drowned in the river in his home town. The doctor's hospital was well equipped but he wondered why people kept getting drowned in the river, and so he went to investigate. He spent a lot of money in order to prevent what was happening.

This is where the population issue debate comes in. Under the strong leadership of the Prime Minister, the Government we must address the issue of population growth. We cannot continue to deny the population better health services. We must be ahead of the population and only then can we look after our people properly.

Our current policy is a non-cohesive population policy which, means parents can have as many children they want unlike China where they have the One-Child Policy. There will come a time when we may need to move in that way. We need to look at such types of policy; otherwise there will come a time when things can go bad. Therefore, we must be prepared or else we will be in trouble.

I would like to bring to this Floor of Parliament a population debate issue because population and development is a big issue and I strongly recommend establishment of a Parliamentary Committee on Population. I think that Committee is already in place and Mr Speaker, you should support that committee. Only then we can bring experts from around the world so that we can develop the population policy.

Mr Speaker, finally, I would like to raise an issue regarding oxygen.

In this day and age, there are equipment available in the world to extract oxygen from the atmosphere. The cost of oxygen is very expensive in our hospitals as there is only one supplier. Many times, in intensive care units in many hospitals we run out of oxygen due to the cost and its supply.

Mr Speaker, therefore, I would like to recommend to the Minister if he could look at the cost of an oxygen extractor machine. Some years back in Kundiawa Hospital there was an extracting oxygen machine but it was now stopped. We need to move in this direction as the technology is available.

I would like to make a reference to the Member for Goroka who raised the issue of supplementary vitamins in rice. The Act is called '*Pure Food Act*' and the Member for Goroka is absolutely right. We need to bring that amendment to the '*Pure Food Act*' and I believe all of us here know how to eat a good meal and vitamins are supplemented through a good diet.

I do not know we check the vitamins in the so-called 'vitamin enriched rice' but if we did, it is good.

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Mr Speaker, so I think the *Pure Food Act* needs to be brought to the Minister and let the Parliament deal with it.

Sir MICHAEL SOMARE (East Sepik) – I also want to contribute to the Report presented by the Health Minister. Before that, I would like to thank the Health Minister for a very good presentation covering all aspects of health system. There's only a few concerns I'll like to raise here.

Firstly, is the administration of the hospitals. In the colonial times, we only had hospital administrators with no doctors, secretaries to the hospital; this enabled the doctors to perform their health duties effectively.

Today we are appointing doctors to perform the functions of an administrator. I have seen in my electorate that this results in the doctor being preoccupied by administrative matters causing downfall in his health duties for example, not attending to patients.

Minister, I would like you to take this matter into careful consideration, engage professionals with administrative abilities to run the hospitals and not necessarily doctors to manage the hospitals. Take a good doctor and make him an administrator and then you won't have enough doctors to do work. That administrator may be a specialist and his time must be made available for any emergencies.

Secondly, in the Ministers report, I see that all the Provincial Hospitals have been included in the major developments accept Wewak hospital. The Wewak Hospital was opened in February 2, 1962. Today that same hospital stands with no new plans or changes. I made a plan for the hospital in 2010 but the Health Minister didn't consider it.

The Wewak Hospital is the referral hospital of Vanimo, Manus and even Madang and it serves a population of almost 500,000. I don't agree with the way the hospital is managed. I have secured some funding from international finances but my plan was not implemented.

Mr Speaker, I would like to find time to discuss my plans with the minister. I have limited funding to relocate the hospital because of climate change.

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We cannot change the geography of East Sepik, only God can. So now we are facing a huge problem where the sea is flowing under the hospital from one end to the other. We have a plan in place where we allocated K10 million and I want to ask the Minister for Health to include this hospital as one of his priorities. I have already engaged experts from outside who helped us with the planning but I want to ask the National Government to include it in their plans because we have already allocated some money for this hospital which, also serves as a referral hospital for the other two provinces before.

I noticed that the Minister has programs for other centres and East Sepik Hospital was not included so I want to bring this to his attention. I have served all the provinces fairly before so my province should not be neglected.

My third issue that I wanted to talk about regarding this hospital is that we have much training available and the intention of the Minister to establish a second medical school in this country is very good. I think it is very important because our population has increased to seven million and it is about time we look at establishing another medical school.

Our population has exceeded our training programs so I support the statement made by Sir Puka Temu who talked about birth control. From the church pulpit, many of us say that babies are created by God but God also wants us to control ourselves. There has to be

a limit to having babies. Now I see that we want to have one baby after other and there is no control over our births and as a result we have blowouts in our population. We should not have a population of seven million today because we are still a developing country but what are we developing? We are developing only in terms of population but what about the other things that we as a country should develop in life?

This is not a matter to laugh about. In all our major centres, we have increased number of children who don't have access to basic social services such as good schools and health facilities. Our hospitals are filled with children who want treatment for various ailments but there are inadequate medicines and doctors.

So this Parliament must seriously look at controlling the growth of our population. Otherwise we become like other countries where they have huge population with inadequate vital services. Therefore, I think this is a good report.

Mr Speaker, you will find that the health facilities in Wewak were built 40 years ago and today we have no improvements on them. So the Minister should also not forget us because I am willing to raise some money. We have plenty of contacts who are willing to help us but there must be a program in the National Health Plan to cater for this.

These are the three points that I wanted to talk about but I support this report and I think it is the responsibilities each of us as Members because now we have a lot of money available in the districts so let us do something about our rural health programs. The Government now has a good policy in place where the money is going down to the districts and today, we have implemented a good program, which will serve the rural areas. We must upgrade our rural health centres in line with this program.

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Mr Speaker, I think we can engage doctors from other countries to deliver those services in our country. I have discussed this issue with Dr Puka Temu and he has given approval to bring in doctors from abroad to work in our health centers and hospitals because we do not have enough local doctors.

When Honorable John Hickey was the Minister for Health, we went to Cuba to negotiate for their doctors but nothing eventuated. In Cuba, you they have no problem with treating patients. Today, their patients coming out of the hospital in Cuba with a

smile on their faces because they have best doctors with best medical equipment as well as they know how to look after their people or population in health care.

I made an earlier suggestion to Dr Temu to recruit doctors from outside who can patrol the communities. During the time of Dr Puka Temu as a doctor, the doctors and health workers made patrols to visit villages or Aid-post or even health centers. They do it almost everyday from place to place educating people about hygiene and how to keep themselves healthy. We have done away with this and replace it with funding to the districts.

I would like the Minister to take into account the idea of teaching community health workers to address this issue of health problems. Today, most of our Aid-posts are closed because there is no funding. However, now there is funding and it is the second year of funding the Government is giving to the districts. I think, with the improved funding, we must improve our health facilities in the districts and the province.

Mr Speaker, the Minister has presented a very good report and all of us must critically analyse and work together because there are a lot of medical problems, which we have not solve them.

Another point I wish to highlight is in regard to heart problems, which I was one of the patients and I have gone through it. If we do not have better heart treatment facilities and drugs, we will definitely lose our lives. Mr Speaker, I am at the age of your father and we are almost at the same age group. I would have lost my life to sickness and diseases by now but because of our good doctors I still survive to this day.

We should raise funds to support our health sector. We do not have proper facilities in this country in both our public and private hospitals.

Mr Speaker, our major hospital is Port Moresby General Hospital but we should spend little bit more money on helping incentives health clinics and hospitals in the provinces. I can pronounce and say this in front of Mr Peter O'Neill that I was lucky because I had money to pay my hospital bills or medical expense. I paid K1 million for my hospital bills through my Nambawan Superanuation.

I did it because I had money but how many Papua New Guineans would have such a mount to get such services. They have no money like some of us so we must try to

improve the facilities in the major hospitals and health clinics or health centers in this country.

We have to assist established health foundation like Professor Kevau's health services so that we do have to send our patients to Australia or Singapore for medical treatment. A classical example is, I went with the three doctors to Philippines medical treatment and when we came back, the doctors lost their lives.

Mr Speaker, I strongly say that our intensive health care unit should be fully equipped with medical facilities, especially to treat heart diseases. In addition, in this country young people at the age of 45 and 46 are dying because we enjoy too much of luxuries in our diet and body system. We prepare good and greasy food. I am one of who like such food but I can tell you through experience that I almost lost my life. We are not good at looking after our own body system so let's put more money into helping heart foundation.

I want to suggest that the Government should spend little or spend more money on our major hospitals like Port Moresby General Hospital, Goroka Hospital, Hagen Hospital, Lae Hospital and Rabaul Hospital as well as other major hospitals. These hospitals should be equipped with special medical facilities and units for heart problems and other diseases.

41/06

We are suffering a lot from heart problems because doctors do not properly explain to us the causes of heart diseases. One main factor is the way we eat. There is so much consumption of fatty and processed food. We have lost so many people to diabetes and diabetes affects the heart as well. The heart suffers more if there is too much fat in the body.

We have to provide more funding for our hospitals, especially for the special units. And there must be proper facilities to conduct thorough checks to make sure treatments are available once a patient is diagnosed. We have been independent for over thirty years and it is about time we start thinking about our own health and also what we can do to protect our people.

Mr ROY BIYAMA (Middle Fly) – Mr Speaker, I would like contribute to the debate on the Health Minister's paper. I would like to begin with the health facilities and infrastructure improvement. We come from districts or electorates and I noted that the Minister only referred to community aid posts. I thought that he should at least include district hospitals if he is talking about public and referral hospitals at the provincial level.

We have put in a lot of effort to put up a district hospital and we know that the positions are being occupied by public servants out there in our provinces at the district level. And at the district level, the hospital manager and the secretary's positions are being advertised and I know that it is not a doctor's position. They are being occupied by those who were engaged in the church-run hospital.

They applied for the positions and won them and I'd like to work with them, I do respect the church and in my own headquarter of Balimo town. I have two big hospitals and I built the district hospital under the Ok Tedi Tax Credit Scheme. The company built the infrastructure for the church hospital. I did not want to dispute it because I wanted that to at least give credit to those church hospitals that were operating to serve me when I was growing up.

Only when I came to Parliament then I realized there were government positions which the church occupied because the Government is paying hospitals in our own provinces.

The positions are created even for doctors but there are no doctors out there and hospital management is paying themselves doctor's salary. I spent almost 15 years and there is no doctor at my district hospital. I would like to thank these medical officers and nursing officers who have acted as doctors to serve the people.

That is the reason I put up the district hospital to recognize them, and I call the doctors to visit whenever I need them and most times, I do not ask them, they volunteer to help.

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One volunteered to come with me to all districts. I went to all the LLG centers especially, Lake Murray, Normad, Emeti at Bamu.

I seriously want us to accommodate all the District Hospitals in the Report so that we elected leaders will consider these hospitals as the Government run hospitals.

Back in my district headquarters I build a district hospital and it's almost one year now and it's not in operation because it's not being recognized as a hospital and does not have the code number to operate as a hospital. I kindly urged the Minister to release the code number so that the hospital can be in operation.

One of the church run hospital have informed me that this hospital does not have the registration number to operate as one. And so once the hospital is recognized or registered the staff at the hospital can work. They can report back to us on how many patients they have treated and what new sickness have been discovered at one time. Under the DSIP funds I want to allocate K2 million so that they can purchase the necessary equipment that they deserve for the new hospital.

With that, I commend the Minister for a good report; it's well understood and I know that you have a major construction going on. But you have only talked about Kiunga and Daru and I am the only one left behind. Which my electorate was not even recognized at the first place but you only mentioned North Fly and South Fly. And ignoring my electorate out; may be I'm from Gulf or Southern Highlands.

It's my electorate that's always being left out all the time, in terms of providing basic services such as deployment of police personnel. In times of trouble, I do not have the Police personnel but left with only three policemen.

When the treasury roll-out program was first introduced, Kiunga was under North Fly administration and my electorate came under South Fly administration. But when I got elected I introduced the program at my electorate in 2003.

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We would really want to help our people in our district headquarters rather than being sent to other electorates to receive those services. I have a lot of problems but I would like to at least state here that I support the statement by the Minister but please support our district hospitals as much as possible.

Mr PETER O'NEILL (Ialibu-Pangia – Prime Minister) – Mr Speaker, I want to thank the Minister for Health for this very good paper highlighting many issues confronting our country in terms of providing decent healthcare to our people. I also take note of many of the debates and sentiments expressed by many of our Members of Parliament. These are the sentiments experienced all throughout the country so it is a big challenge for the Government. Likewise we debated on the law and order paper that the Minister for Police presented and of course on the paper presented by the Minister for Works.

Mr Speaker, across every sector of our delivery of public services to our people, the challenges are enormous. It is only fair that we all need to work together to try and overcome all these challenges through a very coordinated and properly planned approach because for many years, we have had a very piecemeal approach where everybody were doing their own thing and as a result, we are seriously lacking behind and trying to have a catch-up approach in some of the deliveries of services that we are trying to implement.

So in terms of the hospitals, our Government has since 2011 when I was Treasurer, have funded some of them. All our funds were going directly to the Health Department and they then distributed to all the various hospitals throughout the country for equipments, infrastructure maintenance and supply of drugs but unfortunately, the fact is that many of these funds did not reach the destination that we as a Government and this Parliament approved. Somewhere along the line, the bureaucracy highjacked the whole process and as a result of that highjacking, you will see that those services are not there.

You and I can physically see it when we are talking about emergencies and hospital beds being full. Port Moresby General Hospital is one of biggest hospitals with 900 beds and yet we are not able to find beds for our people and with only two doctors overlooking 900 beds each night. That is very much criminal in nature. You are talking about people who are able to be saved but are not being saved. I think our mindset is not in the right place. This is not only for Port Moresby General Hospital but it also includes the whole country.

I will give you a good example of my own hospital in lalibu where two doctors have been fighting over the CEO's position for almost 10 years, and I cannot even get my

Health Advisor to sack those two doctors because he is under threat and he fears for his life so he is sitting on that decision. This is no laughing matter but because of this the population of Ialibu-Pagia, Imbonggu and Kagua-Erave, almost 400 000 people miss out of healthcare because of two idiots who are fighting over a position they don't even work for.

Mr Speaker, excuse my language but you know that frustration are creeping in but when you are in the expense of 400 000 people, that is the type of frustration that we have. I have been buying ambulances for many years now for this hospital but every year, after four or five months, they run them off the road or get into accidents. I think the hospital doctor is on drugs himself; drugs that he is supposed to be giving his patients.

So these kinds of drunken behaviours are just the approach of our people. There are doctors out there but they are not willing to work. They are not even committed to their jobs and it does not matter how much money you pay them. If you look at Cuba, their people benefit from 100 per cent medical care insurance.

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They have 100 per cent literacy rate and they have education system all the way to the university degree. They do not have the kind of funds that we have in this country, but people are committed in doing what they have to do and that is to care by providing services to the people. Even with the little money they have they provide services to the people.

Mr Speaker, I am amazed but I will give you an example about Law and Order situation which we were talking about yesterday. When we were sending our magistrates and judges to remote areas like Enga; we know that Judge Don Graham Ellis was based in Enga. He was able to sentence people to life imprisonment or 20 to 30 years imprisonment and all the people there feared him. He walked down the streets of Wabag town without the bodyguards but people or everybody feared him.

However, when our own Judges were making decision to sentence someone for life imprisonment, the people were threatening them. This is the similar thing that is happening with the doctors. The people are not respecting each other. If they are not there to help us, we will all suffer.

The Government is doing its best and as I said when I was a Treasurer in 2007, we started putting money directly to the hospitals. We by-passed the Health Department so that the money went straight there, thus, if it was for Port Moresby General Hospital, we gave directly to them. If it was for Mendi Hospital, we gave directly to them. In fact, many of the hospitals were getting funds directly to the hospital and this was for maintenance and for buying equipment.

Mr Speaker, I know for a fact now that many of that money has been misused. I believed many hospitals have received those monies but there are many claims such as back-pay, different over-times, different allowances, different sitting board fees and et cetera. This is from the Board level to the Management and to every person who is out there that we trust to manage this.

It is okay that we can change the entire Board but the next one will do the same. When does this end and when will we start providing servicers that we are supposed to provide? Therefore, I agree with the District Authority and I agree with the Member for Kikori for introducing it. I believe that someone must be in-charge and someone must be held accountable. If that service is not provided, the people, they will blame him for not delivering the services.

Mr Speaker, our aim now is for all the referral hospitals have substantial amount of money this year, 2013. The Port Moresby General Hospital, I think because of the good Board now is starting to see some changes happening. They are now advertising and trying to recruit. We thank the Minister for Public Services and the Department of Personnel Management for engaging the first foreign Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to manage the hospital.

We want to do this because we want to put Papua New Guineans out of the job, but they are not taking their job seriously. As a result, we are bringing in people who are going to do the job and this is demanded by the staff. It is not anyone else but the staff are demanding that they need good leaders in the hospital to manage.

Mr Speaker, we have given about K25 million directly to Angau as well as other referral hospitals and at the end of the year we will take stock. What have they done with that money? It is not that the Treasury is not realizing the warrant and the money is not going down. The money is going down to all these hospitals in the country. The K25

million is more that what they got last year. We cannot continue to say that money is a problem.

We are starting with the referral hospitals and we are going down as far as the 89 or 22 so provincial hospitals, rather, 20 them apart from Hela and Jiwaka. So, we are now going to look at the next budgets over the next few years to provide funds directly beside salaries and wages, which means that the Hospital Boards are now taking charge of these hospitals.

I believe we should go further down to the district level. Our aim now is to give funds directly to the hospitals and then they make sure that they have doctors there. So, we must make sure that we provide three or four doctors to each of the hospitals and force them to get there.

Mr Speaker, I agree with the Minister for Public Services that we need another medical school. It is timely even while, waiting for a new medical school to be built, we must expand on this one. We must get more teachers, lecturers and students to get into the medical schools so that they can produce more doctors. It took five years to train a decent doctor but they must go through an intense field experience for six or seven years before they become real doctors.

Therefore, I think it is important that we start now with the doctors then nurses and the health workers throughout the country.

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We are re-opening nursing facilities and working with churches that have got nursing colleges where we assist with funding, infrastructure and capacity development. Therefore, I believe that we are heading in the right direction. I am happy that we are focusing on training of our health workers in the country.

A good suggestion that came out of this debate was in relation to private health care. I think that it is important that we introduce compulsory health insurance for all employees throughout the country. Thus, before the November session for the 2014 Budget, we must make sure that we develop legislation like NASFUND and Nambawan Supa, and make it compulsory for every employer to provide for that contribution.

Therefore, most of the employed people can use that insurance card to go and get services in the private health care to relieve pressure from public hospitals.

The public hospitals can, therefore, concentrate on those who cannot get health care in the country. When we have an improvement and increase in numbers in employees and employment opportunities in the country, you will see that most of the employed population will go into the health care system through the private health care policy.

Mr Speaker, I therefore think that, that is one area that we need to develop. There is a small provision in law that we have not invoked for some time. I do believe that the *Public Hospital Act* has a provision in there where we can create one or two hospitals as an authority. I think that it is important that we start with some of the referral hospitals that are working like Port Moresby General Hospital, Mt Hagen General Hospital, Madang and Nonga, and et cetera.

That means that when we convert them into an authority then, they can hire and fire people and manage their own staffing rather than the Health Department doing it for them. This will then allow them to go out into the market and employ doctors, nurses and health workers in a competitive manner. The government will just give them a one-line funding; for example, Port Moresby General Hospital can be given K100 or K200 million per year and they can manage everything for themselves. Then we will make sure that the only condition that they have is to provide free medical care to our people.

Therefore, I think that we need to try and test this because Mt Hagen General Hospital is operating very well because it is run by very competent people with a good Board and management. I also believe that Port Moresby General Hospital is also heading into that direction as well. If we can have all the other hospitals in the country in a similar fashion, I think we will see a very good improvement in the quality of health care that we provide for our people. Therefore, I believe that is the way to go.

Mr Speaker, for the first time, we have put funds into the districts and provinces, for health, education, infrastructure, transport and so forth.

Therefore, Members of Parliament when you are doing your budgets in the districts and provinces make sure we support the hospitals. Do not just go and buy a vehicle for your doctors, cars consume money and do not serve much purpose to the

districts or to the province at all. In fact, do not buy vehicles but buy equipments that will serve the people. Buy more beds or create a new ward rather than cars and or computers, as these things will not serve our people.

I think that we need to prioritise well because when each district gets K2 million or is K180 million for the 89 of us. Likewise, another K1 million has been allocated to the 22 provinces which is another K22 million on top. Therefore, we are getting an extra K200 million from the Government every year, so let us prioritise things and work together to do our part in providing better health care for our people.

My last comment is in regards to the Grand Chief, Sir Michael Somare's, comment on Boram Hospital. It is true that Boram Hospital is one of the hospitals that is struggling to maintain its services and we understand that. In fact, when I was the Treasurer we signed a MoU with the Exim bank of China and I am also told that the Bank is ready. The Minister did not put that in his statement because the loan was done through the Treasury Department.

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He is not aware but once it is ready we will engage the Health Department to work with the contractor to construct a new hospital in Wewak but at a different place.

The work has progressed and I want to assure the people of East and West Sepik who use Boram Hospital as their Referral Hospital that the new hospital is forth coming. We have also allocated K10 million for Enga Hospital in this year's budget. Enga is the only province apart from Hela and Jiwaka that does not have a provincial hospital. We are now helping them to design a new hospital whose part funding will be catered for in the 2014 and 2015 Budgets.

I think we are heading in the right direction. We need to work together but there are many challenges ahead and we have to accept the responsibility. There has to be clarity on how we try to manage the public servants on the ground.

Members of the Parliament and the Government get all blame because the public servants are not managing the funds that are allocated for the purposes that we set out for in the Budget in this Parliament. Our people think we are service providers but we are legislators and our job is to make and pass laws on the Floor of Parliament.

Now that we have been told to provide service, we must have a structure behind us to help us provide service. District Authority and Provincial Government system is the way to do that and I think it will create an avenue for us to manage delivery of service better in the districts, so I look forward for the Parliament to support the Bill when we debate it in the next few months.

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

That the question be now put.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.55 p.m..