

THIRD DAY

Thursday 14 November 2013

DRAFT HANSARD

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THIRD DAY

Thursday 14 November 2013

The Speaker (**Mr Theo Zurenuoc**) took the Chair at 10 a.m..

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

Sitting suspended.

Mr Speaker again took the Chair at 10.15 a.m., and invited the Member for Western Province, **Honourable Ati Wobiro** to say Prayers:

‘Gracious heavenly Father, we thank you for this lovely day and the opportunity to live this day. God, I pray that we will live it for your glory and honour. Thank you, for giving us the opportunity to serve you and your people in this honourable House. Father God, we thank you that when you call, you also equip and Father, we pray that you also bless us abundantly with your wisdom and direction. We continue to thank you and pray for our Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, and all our good ministers. We also pray for all the Members of the Government and our Opposition Leader and his Deputy and Members. Father God, may we all feel that we are part of the same team trying to develop this country. And, I pray God, that you will give us your own heart, your own mind so that Lord, we might feel the way you feel about your people in Papua New Guinea. Thank you, Father God, for our Speaker and his leadership and continue to bless him as he leads this Parliament. Father, as we come to this time of the year where we have important legislations in front of us including the Budget, we pray, God, that you will lead us through. We know, Father God, that everything happens for your glory and honour. Thank you, God, for the opportunity we have taught us to pray and as we all join together we want to continue to glorify your name. Amen.’

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS –
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, the Chair wishes to recognise the presence of students from our schools in Port Moresby, especially the Kings Academy.

QUESTIONS

Mr RONNY KNIGHT – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognising the people of Manus.

My questions are directed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration, but since he is not here, I would like to direct them to the Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, Manus has embraced the regional processing center in the asylum issue with open arms. We look forward to the economic opportunities and the spin off businesses we can expect.

Mr Speaker, there are a lot good things happening in Manus but as with all things there are also the negative implications.

Mr Speaker, until recently, our hotel industry and guest houses benefitted tremendously from the demand that was created. That was until a Singapore based UK owned accommodation barge arrived and docked at Lombrum. This accommodation barge is also charging K1500 to K3000 per night, resulting in the depletion of the local industry overnight.

Mr Speaker, further to that, some local companies have invested in machinery and transport only to find that an Australian contractor has brought in several dump trucks and machinery to be utilised for extra benefit.

My Speaker, what about the locals who have taken out bank loans to provide this service?

Mr Speaker, the same contractor organizing accommodation both for DeckMill and the prices are vastly inflated and I have the details with me. A local accommodation vessel was a third of the price but was rejected.

It seems that we are not the only ones who practice *wantok system*. Finally, I was informed yesterday by a protest of local women, teachers, Defense Force personnel wives and daughters of another issue that may become nasty and have repercussions. This issue

involves drunk off-duty G4S personnel harassing females on PMVs operating to-and –from the Base. The report that I have also implicates Australians being involved.

02/03

Mr Speaker, the people of Manus have had enough of boomerang aid and of other people taking advantage of their good nature.

Mr Speaker, my questions are;

(1) Can our officers on the ground investigate and rectify these issues immediately?

(2) Can DeckMill live up to its commitment to local businesses and hire local machines and return the imported machines to Australia?

(3) Can the huge UK- owned barge be used for asylum seekers as it is crowded now in Longbrum and a tariff be put on the vessel that is decimating our accommodation industry?

(4) Can those responsible immediately impose a complete liquor ban at the base and refuse drunkards entering the base?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the honourable Member for Manus for these questions regarding the asylum centre in Manus.

Mr Speaker, it is alarming to note that our Papua New Guinean small business men and women are not given an opportunity to participate as that was the whole intention of setting up this centre in the first place. The agreements are very clear and it's a blatant abuse of trust and this kind of arrangement is unacceptable. I certainly take note of the facts that have been provided by the honourable Member. I will write to both the Minister and the Australian High Commissioner today and put in the concerns raised by the Member that that they rectify these issues immediately.

That asylum centre is a permanent centre and sooner the operators of the centre realise that they have to become part of the community the easier it is going to become. They can't pretend that this will be a one-off thing that is why they are building permanent centres on the ground in Manus. I think all our visitors and all the expatriate workforce that are working there must work closely with the community so the community can benefit from some of the spin-off businesses that are available in this industry.

Mr TITUS PHILEMON – Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Before I ask my series of questions to the Minister for Civil Aviation and Member for Esa'ala, I would like to

thank the Prime Minister and the Minister for Culture and Tourism on behalf of the Government and the people of Milne Bay Province for spending two days in Alotau and a couple of days in Kiriwina to receive the first cruise ship to come to Milne Bay, the *Pacific Dawn*. During his visit to the province, the honourable Prime Minister announced that the Government would introduce new initiatives to boost economic activities for development of tourism corridors and economic growth centres, and we received that very gladly. Milne Bay Province has been chosen as one of the provinces to trial this new initiatives. Central to the Tourism corridor development the attraction of more tourists to visit and apart from the crew ship tourism project that we have put in place with the first and very successful visit by the crew ship *Pacific Dawn* and their 200 plus passengers during the Canoe Festival.

My questions are,

(1) If we need to have a direct flight between Cairns and Alotau, can the Minister inform this Parliament and the people of Milne Bay Province when this direct flight will be introduced?

03/03

(2) As part and partial of this plan, there were moves to extend the runway at Gurney Airport, but why has the fencing not extended to cater for larger aircrafts to land?

Mr DAVIS STEVEN – I thank the Honourable Governor of Milne Bay for his questions.

I will answer the questions in accordance with our responsibilities particularly with regards to the airport facilities.

Mr Speaker, the Governor's questions have raised an important priority in terms of tourism and the impacts on our economy. This will involve a lot of collaboration and joint effort with my colleague Ministers.

I want to assure the Governor and the people of Milne Bay that this Government has a plan to extend the Gurney Airport. The cost of upgrading the airport and extending the runway is included in the plan. This is in batch four of the Cadet Program which has been rolled out by my department.

Mr Speaker, the fencing discussion is currently underway for the acquisition of the required land. This will also be costly but concerns must be sought from the parties involved, especially New Britain Oil Palm who control the plantations surrounding Gurney Airport.

Mr Speaker, the discussion has advanced and is likely to be concluded soon. I cannot give a definite answer as to when we are likely to welcome the first tourists into Milne Bay. We also have a plan in the Aviation Sector to enable that particular dream to be realized. Thank you.

Mr KELLY NARU – My questions are directed to the Minister for Trade and Industry. Before I ask my question, I want to take this opportunity to thank Prime Minister and his delegation for visiting Morobe Province, especially Finschhafen District last Wednesday. The Prime Minister during this visit has greatly assisted our Province. He has assisted Dregerhaffen Technical Secondary School and the Brown Health Centre declaring status from a rural health centre to a district hospital.

I also want to thank him for making a commitment to seal off the Gagidi township road and for visiting the historical Lutheran site at Simban. The Prime Minister being a Lutheran Church follower, we are just proud that he made that visit.

Mr Speaker, my questions are part of a series of questions that I previously raised to the Prime Minister during his visit to Finschhafen. However, the Prime Minister did not answer those questions, therefore, I would like to now ask the question to the Minister for Trade and Industry instead.

04/03

That was part of a series of questions I raised with the Prime Minister during his visit to Finschhafen, so I direct my questions to the Minister for Trade and Industry.

Mr Speaker, the poultry industry in this country is badly affected from the stiff competition in pricing it is receiving from cheaper Australian chicken imports.

As you know in my province there are two big suppliers of poultry products, the Highlands poultry company, Zenag, and of course the Nuigini Table Birds. There are hundreds of small-holder chicken farmers who are tied up with these two companies in terms of breeding and supplying chicken.

What is the Government's plans in assisting our local industry to compete against cheaper Australian chicken imports?

Mr RICHARD MARU – Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor of Morobe for this very good question.

Mr Speaker, the primary reason why chicken in this country will always be very expensive is because we don't grow wheat in this country. Fifty percent of the cost of chicken covers the cost of stock feed. We tried growing wheat in Kandep and it never worked.

Mr Speaker, we have the most highest freight charges in the world we will never compete with the Australians because they grow wheat down there.

I have written to Niugini Table Birds and the Industry that it is time for NARI and the Industry to come up with a local feed formular, which include kaukau and other locally grown products instead of importing wheat from Australia.

I think it is our own lack of action that has resulted in the industry facing these stiff challenges.

Mr Speaker, the poultry industry and NARI with the assistance of rich agricultural resource provinces like the Western Highlands should produce a feed using kaukau to replace wheat as stock feed in this country. That will enable us to completely cut the excessive import of wheat and we can be able to produce stock feed locally and eventually provide local chicken at more affordable price.

Mr Speaker, over the last 38 years we haven't been able to deliver a local based feed out of kaukau or from homegrown local food. That should be the number one priority for the Agriculture Minister, NARI, and the Industry to take on. That is the long term solution to solve this problem of not being able to compete with Australian Chicken imports.

Mr Speaker, secondly, we are Members of the World Trade Organization and APEC and I have announced already in the media that by the year 2020 we will be doing away with tariff in this country. The whole world is opening up its economies.

Mr Speaker, for the information of Parliament we now have a Free Trade Agreement with four other countries known as the MSG Trading Block. We are opening the economy so we cannot go back and introduce tariff again.

05/03

Mr Speaker, it is an absolute priority of the Government to come up with a local feed and create a new kaukau industry specifically to produce feed so that we won't import from other countries. We have to allow all the market forces to compete amongst themselves for the benefit of the consumers. The only way to make it happen is that NARI, Agriculture Department and other Industries must work together to produce this local feed with the

assistance from our scientist so that we can compete with Australia and other countries by exporting our stock feed.

Mr SAM BASIL – Mr Speaker, I direct my question to the Prime Minister. The first one is in relation to the refurbishment of the Pineapple Building.

Mr Speaker, the Government spends at least K200 million every year on rentals. It's good to see that the Government is starting to invest by refurbishing our old buildings.

Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister was then the Public Service Minister when the tender was called for K39 million.

In 2012, the same contract was given to a company called LNA Construction for K75 million. This year, the variation of the same contract went up by K100 million, totaling K175 million.

Mr Speaker, spending of public funds is very important and PNG must know how their money is being spent. I want the Prime Minister to answer the question.

Mr Speaker, there were contradicting statements made by two Ministers regarding a road in Lae which cost K800 million for 45 kilometres which equates to K20 million per kilometre.

Mr Francis Awesa – Point of Order! Is he talking about roads or accommodation? I have never made any statements regarding roads in Lae.

Mr SAM BASIL – I never called your name.

Mr FRANCIS AWESA – Yes, but you are talking about roads in Lae.

Mr SPEAKER – Stop entering into a debate amongst yourselves. Both of you should address the Chair.

Mr SAM BASIL – There were two contradicting statements that's why I am asking the Prime Minister to clarify who is correct.

The Treasury Minister went in the media saying that previous Minister's statement was incorrect.

Therefore, I want the Prime Minister to tell me which statement is correct. Is it K800 million or less than K800 million for the Lae roads?

Some time ago, there was a failed Housing Scheme Project that happened and Prime Minister took charge of the matter and announced to the people of PNG that the company will repay the millions back to the consolidated revenue.

(1) Can the Prime Minister let us know if that money has been paid?

(2) If paid, is there proof of payment so that people will know that the money has been paid.

(3) Can the company be referred for clearance by the police fraud squad since he's the Police Minister now?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Speaker. It's good that the Deputy Opposition Leader is asking this question because, repeatedly, he has tried to find something wrong about all these contracts being put forward in public tender process.

Mr Speaker, they have been bided out publicly and advertised. And every company that's operating legally have every right to apply for these contracts. But I will answer accordingly. Obviously, the Deputy Opposition Leader's question is designed to try and confuse the issue and hide the facts.

The Pineapple Building contract is done under a Tax Credit Scheme and Oil Search is funding that project. The contract went out to Supply and Tenders Board and a shortlist of contractors were put forward to Cabinet. But the price is not K175 million. That's exactly what he propagates and puts out in social media to justify this kind of nonsense.

06/03

Mr Speaker, the Pineapple Building has been vacant for 17 years. We have been spending K200 million a year to rent private owned offices to accommodate public servants. In order for us to save that K200 million, we have to rebuild Waigani. The Government has only spent K51 million for rebuilding the Pineapple Building and not K175 million, as the Deputy Opposition Leader has stated.

Mr Speaker, the contractors were appointed according to the normal processes and, of course, if the Deputy Opposition Leader has issues with it, he can put it to the Ombudsmen, the Fraud Squad or anybody he likes but I ask him to get the facts right.

On the second issue, yes, the Cabinet has put aside an additional K20 million for fit-out and that Tender will go out soon and the companies can bid for it. Of course, we need to furnish the building with walls, furniture and partition it. I think it is only fair that we equip the building and we should not give an empty block to the future occupants. In addition, the supervision of the construction is done independently by Oil Search. It is one of the leading companies in the world and they do not get involved in funny business.

Mr Speaker, if the Deputy Opposition Leader wishes to verify that, I welcome him to go and approach Oil Search so that, they will verify to him whom they are paying and what they are paying for.

In regard to the issues of the Lae city roads, I think both Ministers were right that there is no disagreement except that the funds are parked in Treasury and not at Works. Those funds are held in the Trust Accounts to fix the Lae city roads. We allocated K100 million last year and the contractors are already starting to work. We can now see that the roads are improving in Lae city where you will enjoy driving around the city.

Mr Speaker, the Deputy Opposition Leader is confused. The issues of the K800 million that he purports to have signed is a contracted section from Lae city to Nazab Airport. I have referred this contract to be reviewed because our own engineers, which we independently appointed to design the roads for us to the highest standards, have proposed high rates and we cannot afford it. Therefore, we have asked them to relook at the design and costing.

I wish to inform this Parliament that I was informed that the told redesigning has been done and the entire cost of the new four lane highway all the way to Nazab will be less than K500 million. This is what we have planned and budgeted for and I will get the Minister for Works to make a detailed statement to Parliament for that contract and the design of the road. Thus, it is not K800 million as claimed by the Deputy Opposition Leader.

Mr Speaker, concerning the issue of the public service housing, I do not need to refer the contractor to police or anybody because the money has been reimbursed. There was a disagreement between our Government, the officials and the contractor on pricing because of the prices increasing. The contractor wanted a variation but we said no. We wanted the full K31.5 million to be reimbursed and that money now is in the trust account with the Treasury. It has now been reallocated to fund the reconstruction of 150 houses for police officers in Port Moresby at Bomana.

07/03

The contract is in the tendering process and we are waiting for the Central Supply and Tenders Board to come back to Cabinet so that we can appoint a contractor to go out there and rebuild 150 houses.

Mr Speaker, there is no need for us to take out paid advertisements. There is money available and we are happy so there is no need for the Deputy Opposition Leader to get excited.

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Mr Speaker, there is a series of questions that I would like to ask the Minister for Mining. In October, 2012, we met with some people who were gravely concerned about seabed mining and they presented a petition with 20 thousand signatures. The Minister made a promise that he would respond to them in two weeks; it is almost a year now.

(1) Can the Minister advise us when he is able to respond to these petitioners?

Mr Speaker, this country receives the lowest royalty payments from the extractive industries. In 2000, the Bougainville Review that undertook a study to look at providing incentives for companies that were going to come into Papua New Guinea and carry out this businesses, came up with some measures and one of them was the two per cent royalty.

(2) Can we look into ways to increase the royalty percentage?

It is the lowest in the world. The closest nation that receives the lowest is five per cent but everywhere else ranges from 10 to 25 per cent. Along with the royalty reduction we have also allowed the Fly –in, Fly –out of staff, therefore, we create a loss of huge amounts of revenue. We also have allowed foreign companies to bring in their own workers foreign workers and we continue to see the marginalisation of our local companies while preference is made to foreign companies.

These foreign companies are swooping to take advantage of the extractive industries in the country. I also understand that there is a review to be undertaken on the *Mining Act*.

(3) Can the Minister organise a session in Parliament so that we can have contributions and discussions from Members of parliament on this matter and come up with a formula that Papua New Guinea and its people can benefit from.

Mr BYRON CHAN – Thank you, Mr Speaker, firstly, I want to respond on the petition that was raised about a year ago. As mentioned earlier, in the presence of the

Department Secretary and the MRA Managing Director, we received the petition and it is with them at the moment. The book had various issues to be such as department policies, and MRA regulations and environmental issues.

At this stage, I wish to advise the Governor and the petitioners that the Department is still addressing those issues and we will get back to them as soon as those issues are addressed.

With the concern relating to the two per cent royalty; the department has taken that into consideration and we also looked at trying to increase the benefit equity from the current 2.5 per cent for the landowners and the provincial governments. That is an issue that we are seriously looking into and we would like to have your input as well.

And hopefully if we have time next week, I will get the people from the Department to be here to share ideas. And apart from all the amendments that we have proposed

08/03

I have the amendments ready to be addressed on the Floor of Parliament. However, I have to seek your advice before they are tabled in Parliament next week, if time is available, so we can debate on those issues.

On the issue of fly-in and fly-out, the Prime Minister has announced that there will be no more fly-in and fly-out, and that is part of the amendment taking into consideration all foreign workers, businesses and everything that it encompasses. So the ministerial statement will address the issue.

I also want to inform the Governor that I will make sure that the officers of the Department will be here. The Department has gone to several provinces already to gauge the people's views concerning the proposed amendments and I would like to thank the governors and Members of Parliament who participated in those consultations. So the process of tabling those amendments to Parliament is almost complete. I think I will have to address the parliamentarians before I do that.

So hopefully next week, I will do that and I would appreciate everyone's views on those amendments. But those amendments have been discussed with the people, private sector and various institutions and we have sought everyone's consent already and they support it. However, there are some areas that need to be amended and it will be brought before you for your approval before it is tabled in Parliament.

Mr ATI WOBIRI – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister for Environment and Conservation but, firstly, I want to thank the Prime Minister on behalf of the people of Western Province for his continuous support in the Ok Tedi negotiations. We have complete trust and confidence in his leadership that the negotiations will be completed quickly and the new 10th Supplemental Agreement will be signed so that we can move forward. I thank the Prime Minister for his personal commitment and leadership.

My question is in relation to the pollution in Western Province from the Porgera Mine through the Strickland River. Western Province has an extensive river systems and honourable Members would know the difficulties we face with Fly River from the Ok Tedi Mine. Now we are increasingly concerned about a similar kind of pollution which is already affecting the Province from the Porgera Mine through the Strickland River.

Can the Minister to assure the people of Western Province whether his department is sufficiently and adequately monitoring the flows of tailings and waste from Porgera and whether the river system will not be polluted thus affecting the livelihood of the people who depend on fish, especially in the Lake Murray area?

Mr JOHN PUNDARI – Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor for his question.

Mr Speaker, from the information that I have, the purported pollution and tailings in the Strickland River is a result of the Porgera operations.

09/03

Mr Speaker, insofar as the livelihood of the people is concerned, from the information and the briefs I have, I want to assure the Governor that it is safe and there is nothing to be concerned about, especially for the people who live along the Fly River System.

The impact that the Pogera Gold Mine would have on the river system would be very minimal and there wouldn't be any cause for the people to be concerned insofar as the Porgera operations are concerned.

Mr Speaker, I've recently ordered the Department of Environment and Conservation to conduct some audits and I am waiting for the audit report to be presented to me. I have heard that they are at their final stages and I will share those reports with the Governor.

Mr WERA MORI – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for once again recognizing the 45 000 people of Chuave.

Mr Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the Minister for Works, and I want the Minister for Climate Change to take notes.

Before I ask these questions, I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the people of Chuave, to pass our condolences to the families and relatives of eight people who lost their lives in a landslide in Kenangi in Daulo Electorate.

Mr Speaker, although that occurred in the Daulo Electorate where my brother Ron Ganarafo comes from, actually the people living there are from my Keto Tribe in Chuave. I also take this opportunity to thank those who visited the people and also those who offered assistance.

Mr Speaker, this brings me to the series of questions I'd like to raise but I must state here that we have a serious engineering problem ahead of us.

Mr Speaker, my questions to the Minister for Works are as follows:

(1) When are we going to seriously redesign the Daulo Section of the Okuk Highway because the present designs were based on the weather patterns that were recorded in the past?

The next question also supports a matter that I raised six months ago on the re-routing of the Okuk Highway linking up Unggai in the Eastern Highlands as a bypass to the Daulo Section.

(2) Now that eight lives have been lost and that the highway will not be trafficable for at least a few days, can the Minister assure this Parliament that there will be funding available to actually have the re-routing through Unggai?

(3) Mr Speaker, I am sure the Minister for Climate Change is taking of this question I am about to raise.

When are we going to have the present weather patterns monitored due to climate changes so that when future roads are designed, these new challenges presented will be incorporated into them?

There is no point of basing them on the present practices because we will not find solutions after spending millions of kina.

(4) Can the Government seriously consider opening up a 100-metre corridor through the Simbu Segment so that the present problems we are now facing in Chimbu, which is more to do with hydrology, can be addressed so that we, the small people of Chimbu, can be able to save our land because every time it is confined to the 40-metre corridor, we are not getting any solution.

10/03

Mr Speaker, as a result, every day we are losing valuable land along the Chimbu segment of the Okuk Highway.

(5) When are we going to have the weighing station in Lae re-installed so that we can be able to control the amount of load that is passing through the Okuk Highway?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr FRANCIS AWESA – I would like to thank the Member for Chuave for raising these important questions.

Before I answer the questions I would like to on behalf of the Government pass its condolences to the families and friends of the 10 people who lost their lives in the Kenangi area of the Daulo Electorate, even though I went there to the site to pay my respects. I wanted to formally make mention of this in Parliament.

Mr Speaker, my answers will be short and brief. Firstly, the Government is addressing the problem of land slips along the Okuk Highway. We have already allocated K30 million to carry out geotech studies on the entire 700 km of the entire highway. Nevertheless, we have yet to receive the report, which will determine the corrective measures that the Government can take. This includes the re-routing of the Highway from Kamalingi to Chuave and to Namabiufa and around that area. The other section is from Kundiawa to Megende.

Some of the critical areas have already been identified in this study. Therefore, we are addressing the problem as it is going to be with us for a very long time because Papua New Guinea is relatively a young country and much of our terrain is unstable. These are some of the problems that we face when we are building bridges and roads around Papua New Guinea.

Therefore, in relation to the series of questions the short answer is, the Government has already allocated K30 million to address these problems and in time, I will be making a statement as to what actions the Government will propose to take.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – I direct my questions to the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister, in your recent visit to the Holy Land, you had made some unholy decisions.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – My questions are:

(1) Is it true that in your recent visit to Israel, you had discussions with an Israeli company called LR Group to take over the management of funds invested by PNG Sustainable, which your Government is trying to get a hold of right now?

(2) Is it also true that you want the same company to take control of the Ok Tedi Development Foundation in order to spend that money owned by PNG Sustainable and any future money from the Ok Tedi Mine?

(3) Is it true that the LR Group has signed contracts with a number of provinces, including Western Province to advice on the control of provincial expenditures?

The company is already constructing roads in Western Province.

11/03

The company is already constructing the road in Western Province.

(4) Is it also true that the same company which is managing Papua New Guinea by a Ilan Weiss the son of Dr Jacob Weiss who led your team in raiding Ok Tedi and PNG Sustainable Development Program?

(5) Is it also true that the same company that obtained grants and loans from PNGSD while Dr Jacob Weiss was on the Board and Chairman of the Investment Committee?

(6) Do you not agree that Dr Jacob Weiss has a major conflict of interest?

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Leader, I must remind you of the rules of Questions. It is contained in the *Standing Orders*. You are to refrain from naming persons; you seem to continuously naming persons in all your questions. It is in violation of the *Standing Orders*. I request that you take some time to study your *Standing Orders*, in fact if I may make reference to *Standing Order 141*, you are not to make imputations or allegations, these are quite serious. So please I will allow you this time to ask your questions, but you need to terminate your questions quickly so that the Prime Minister can respond.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – Mr Speaker, if I can reword my questions. I will put it this way. A member for the Board of PNG Sustainable then has his son who manages a company

called LR Group obtained loan from PNG Sustainable who is a very close friend of the Prime Minister. Does the Prime Minister think that it is funny for this person?

Mr SPEAKER – I will have to rule your question out of order. I will not allow the Prime Minister to answer the questions.

Mr PETER O'NEILL - Thankyou Mr Speaker, I think he deserves an answer and I will answer it because I'm not afraid as it is public knowledge that I have visited Israel.

Mr Speaker, the gentleman that the Opposition Leader has mentioned has served this country for well over 30 years stabilizing the economy of this many years and building up his reputation.

Mr Speaker, he was sent by World Bank and IMF to even assist the former Leader of your party. He is a man of high integrity and for you to come and make a political mileage out of nonsense. This is a merely a speculation, there is no agreement.

Mr Speaker, tell him to provide me the copy of the agreement that we signed as Government with LR Group.

Mr Belden Namah – There is no speculation. I will provide to you. I have always provided evidence

Mr SPEAKER – Order!

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Speaker, I want to make a motion-

Mr Belden Namah – I will fix him fast. He said to fix me slowly.

Mr SPEAKER – Order! There should be some kind of sense of order in this Parliament.

Mr PETER O'NEILL - Mr Speaker, I just want him to enjoy it slowly

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Speaker these are people of integrity and standing in their own rights deserve respect from this country.

Mr Speaker, Dr Jacob Weiss has been a Chief Advisor to the Economy of our country through the Central Bank and because of him our economy has been able to stabilize for quite some time. Credit needs to be given to people who are doing the hard work for Papua New Guinea. He probably contributed more than me, the opposition Leader and many others put together will contribute to this nation.

Mr Speaker, I want to inform this Parliament that there is absolutely no agreement between LR Group with the Government

(Mr Belden Namah interjecting)

Mr SPEAKER – Stop interjecting, Opposition Leader.

Mr PETER O'NEILL –Mr Speaker, I think he should just shut up and listen for a change.

12/03

Mr Camillus Dangima – Point of Order! We are all elected by our people and when a question is asked, we expect an answer, so courtesy must be given to that.

Mr Speaker, too many interjections also makes us want to leave this Chamber. Thank you.

Mr SPEAKER – Your point of Order is in order.

Opposition Leader please refrain from making any further interjections and allow the Prime Minister to continue.

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Speaker, there is no agreement between Hela group or anybody else. However, this type of nonsense and speculation indicates that we are trying to mortgage Ok Tedi to repay IPIC loan for the LNG project. That is not true, absolutely nothing there are neither discussions nor agreements.

Mr Speaker, in terms of PNG Sustainable Development Program we all know the issues before us. The eminent Groups headed by Sir Rabbie Namaliu and of course Sir Puka

Temu, Bart Philemon are now discussing with all the stakeholders on how we structured PNG Sustainable Development Program. Nobody is controlling the funds. It is kept there frozen.

Mr Speaker, regarding Dr. Jacob Weiss's involvement with the PNG Sustainable Development Program, he is an advisor to the Central Bank. He advises on all the economic issues for our country. He represents the Central Bank Governor, on the PNG Sustainable Development Board.

Mr Speaker, when I approached and told him, that we were trying to take control of the shares of Ok Tedi, I asked him to act on behalf of our Government because he is paid by our Government as an Advisor. So he immediately resigned from PNG Sustainable Development Program. He did the honourable thing because he knew there was conflict of interest. I am comfortable with him and with the way he is advising the Government in this very complicated process.

Mr Speaker, the projects undertaken by the Hallah Group in this country with the Hela and the Western Provinces, the Agriculture Hydroponics that is currently on-going at Nine Mile is done with their own funding. And the funds invested by the respective provincial governments.

Let us get the facts correct Mr Speaker, because the Opposition Leader has a tendency for speculating, demeaning and defaming the people on the Floor of Parliament. Mr Speaker, it is unbecoming of a leader. Calling of people's names on the Floor of Parliament and interrupting Court proceedings is unbecoming of a leader.

Mr Belden Namah – He should be arrested soon.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr PETER O'NEILL (Ialibu – Pangia – Prime Minister) – Mr Speaker, I do not need protection from you or anyone else for that matter. However, I want to refer the Opposition Leader to the Privileges Committee and I request the Privilege Committee to engage two psychiatrists to do an analysis of him.

Mr Speaker, he needs help and I am doing it for his own good. Thank you.

Mr SPEAKER - In response to your request for referral to the Privileges Committee, you will allow the Chair to consider it and report to the Parliament tomorrow morning.

Honourable Members, Question Time has lapsed

ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Public Service) – Mr Speaker, I seek leave of the Parliament to respond to questions raised by the Honourable Member for Anglimp-South Waghi on Tuesday.

Leave is granted.

Thank you Mr Speaker, on Tuesday the Honourable Member for Anglimp-South Waghi raised the issue of whether the Government is only appointing few private sector companies to provide office allocation to the government departments in NCD and throughout the country.

Mr Speaker, I promised to give detail answers and thank you for giving me this opportunity to do so.

13/03

Mr Speaker, we have 64 different office complexes where we are paying rentals provided by 64 different companies in the country. So the allegations of very few private companies chosen to provide office allocations for government agencies, is not true.

Mr Speaker, at the moment, rental rates range from as low as K300 per cubic meter – K3000 per cubic meter an average of K1100 per cubic meter per year.

In that regard, in NCD alone we ran 39 different private office providers or complexes. In the provinces we ran 25 different private office complexes. In total with those rental rates we are paying K158 52 393.52 per year on rental alone. In the provinces where the National Government rents offices for our officers that are in the provinces we pay a total of K7 488 776 23 to 25 private providers of office complexes. So in total as I said close to K200 million every year, not the report of one of the *Dailies* as quoted by the Deputy Opposition Leader at K500 million.

Mr Speaker, every year we pay K165 541 169 75. So the details are here and I can assure the Honourable Parliament that we choose equally to all the providers.

Mr Speaker, as I said on Tuesday, under the leadership of the Prime Minister we are now refurbishing the Pineapple Building, the Central Government Office and a brand new Office Complex so that everybody is housed here in the long term so we don't have to spend K200 million every year.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance) – Mr Speaker, I ask leave of the Parliament to move a Motion Without Notice.

Leave granted.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

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

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent Notices No. 89, 93 and Order of the Day 99 being called on forthwith.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT (CITIZENSHIP ACT) LAW 2013

First Reading

The Proposed Law presented by **Mr Kerenga Kua** and read a first time.

Ordered – That in accordance with Standing Order 222 A and the practices of the Parliament, the Proposed Law stands referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Constitutional Laws and Acts and Subordinate Legislation.

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**CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT (APPOINTMENT
OF CERTAIN OFFICES) LAW 2013**

First Reading

The Proposed Law presented by **Dr Puka Temu** and read a first time.

Ordered – That in accordance with Standing Orders No.222 (A) and the practice of the Parliament, the Proposed Law stands referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on *Constitutional Laws and Acts* and Subordinate Legislation.

**COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY –
COMMUNICATION SECTOR – MINISTERIAL STATEMENT –
PAPER NOTED**

Resumption of debate from 13 November 2013 (See Page...)

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari – Minister for Finance) – Thank you Mr Speaker, I rise to make a statement in support of the report presented by Minister for Communication and Information Technology yesterday.

I congratulate the hard working Minister for coming up with a timely statement in this time to inform us on how work is progressing in this sector.

Mr Speaker, we live in the information technology era. Information and communication is an important tool and so proper dissemination of information will help ensure that our country progresses in the right path. And so, I stand to offer my support especially on some of the key policy drives that he has embarked upon.

Before, I go into other discussion, I would like to comment on one issue that he raised yesterday on the registration of SIM Cards.

I remember some time back last year I was a strong advocate of ensuring that every SIM Card holder in this country must register.

Now, the Minister has brought this to Parliament his intention to ensure that mobile providers are able to register all the SIM Cards.

Today, we experience this habit of receiving many calls from people and sometimes texts and calls are good and sometimes they are bad. You don't know who is sending all this bad messages.

Information can build and destroy society as well and we have seen the power of uncontrolled information destroying societies around the world especially in the Middle-East where using of face book created all sorts of problems.

Therefore, I commend the Minister for presenting a good report at this time and once the Law is brought we can pass it to ensure that all SIM Cards in this country are registered.

So that people know who is calling who and callers must be responsible insofar as usage of Mobile phones are concern.

15/03

So that, people know who is calling who and for the callers to be responsible in as far as the usage of mobile phones are concern.

Currently, the frauds can take place through voice banking system and people can fraudulently use that system. With this I wish to inform this Parliament and the people of Papua New Guinea that there are conmen who are using the mobile services to fraud people. I was one of the victims of a conman. This person can change his voice within one minute to be like James Marape, the next minute he speaks like Don Polye and next minute speaks like the Prime Minister. In fact, we tracked him and locked him in the cell at Boroko and he is awaiting his trial at the National Court. This person goes around and impersonates people and he sends texts to people.

Mr Speaker, this conman was caught by sending a text to a Pastor saying that the Finance Ministers has approved K50 000 for you for the Church programme. Before he would release the money, he asked for K3 000.00 for his commission. This is irritating, you know, using texts and false voices is fraudulent. I commend the Minister for bringing this law to Parliament for everybody to register the SIM cards and communication must come with some form of responsibility.

Mr Speaker, on the element of responsibility, let me move on to the other modes and mediums of communication. Today, there is a huge proliferation of the use of Internet and Web facilities, use of communication medium like, Face Book, and Twitter and all these

tools that are good for fast communication and real time communicating. However, the down-side of it, is they can also be used for destruction of society.

Mr Speaker, today some of us are facing allegations of corruption, and because we are holding public office, we are liable and subjected for public scrutiny and that comes with the territory and the jurisdiction of public office holder. Whilst, men and women who sit behind pen names and computer names have the cover of the freedom of speech to make and throw out allegations.

Let me propose and point out that the freedom of speech come is a qualified right. Your qualification of speech must be substantive and must be based on facts. The type of statements that you make, and if it is contested, must be able to hold solid grounds of truth, if it is brought before dispute.

Mr Speaker, let me also introduce this idea into this Parliament regarding the communication medium. Every communication medium in this country must have names behind to identify the providers of those communication mediums. For instance, PNG Bloc, Mr Minister, through Mr Speaker, the PNG Bloc must have the ownership attached to it just like *Post-Courier* and *The National* newspapers who are subject to deformation charges. Every communication medium in this country must have ownership attached to them.

The Face Book users must use their names and not pen names just like some of our honourable Members have used their names. You do not hide behind pen names and run allegations.

Mr Speaker, I know certain officers in this Parliament fulltime job is nothing but to got to Face Book and PNG Bloc site but because they hide behind pen names, we cannot sue them for lies that they pose on the Face Book and PNG Bloc all the time.

We are not stopping the freedom of expression and speech, yet, they are deeply embedded in the foundation rock of our *Constitution* and it is one of the fundamental pillars of our *Constitution*. It will remain for as long as we remain a country but your speech must be a qualified speech. You must have a name attached to your speech, whether it is a newspaper statement, statement through internet, website or whatever it is, there must be a name and address attached it so that, when your statement is brought into questioning, we would know the owner.

16/03

It must be a qualified speech with your name attached to it. Whether it is a newspaper statement or a statement from the internet or website, there must be a name and address attached so that when your statement is brought under scrutiny, you must be able to stand up and be accountable for it.

For instance; if you said Mr James Marape stole K71 million from Finance, you must be able to stand up and say; yes, I did say that. If you are found wrong, you must pay for defamation. We must now make people responsible for the statements that they make. And let me encourage the Minister to go another step and regulate all internet providers in the country.

This is because no-one can walk into a foreign country, sit in front of a computer and write up whatever you want. Your writing must be substantial and contain facts. If you have these and when you are called upon to present these facts, you will be able to provide facts and walk away freely.

On many occasions there are many people who hide behind pen names and continue to rattle on about how corrupt this country is. I ask the Minister to look into how the ICT Sector can be regulated so that whilst we allow freedom of speech, we also take responsibility in what is being expressed. There must be names and addresses included so that we allow for responsible writing.

I would also like to ask the Minister to work together with other Ministries that deal with the issue at hand so that we continue to run both the terrestrial lines as well as the digital cyber lines so that we get communication coverage across the country. I see a good potential of communication coverage in the country to accommodate for e-learning, e-commerce and others that are currently available.

We must go with the flow of the rest of the world and embrace the digital and technological opportunity.

Mr BEN MICAH (Kavieng-Minister for Public Enterprise) –Thank you Mr Speaker, I want to contribute towards the debate. I agree with the comments shared by the Leader of Government Business. Since the days of the Morse code, using light signals for communication but in less than 100 years communications around the world has changed.

17/03

Advanced Information Technology changed the lives of people over the last 20 to 30 years which is also called intranet. All of these things have to do with communication between people where you do not have to go through the switchboard or complicated communication apparatus in order to communicate with each other. Also words like data and information superhighway are on the lips of very young children to engineers and everybody.

The richest top five people in the world are communication businessmen. So, this is an industry that is driving all the other industries in the world over the last 30 years, and it is an industry that whether you like it or not will bring good and evil into this country. We know that the good and the evil are already here and maybe we are all involved in it, I don't know. But you know what you can watch and what you are not supposed to watch on your mobile phones or computers.

So, this is an industry that one way or another influences every one of us. I thank the Minister for presenting his policy statement which lays out the areas that we must now look at. It will guide us as well as the Government. I am a Minister responsible for two State companies involved in the telecommunication industry, especially *Telikom PNG* and *B-Mobile* while you are responsible for *NBC* and *Kundu TV* and the private sector players in the communication industry like *Digicel* in telephones and *EMTV* in television. We also have private radio stations who are involved in this sector. I don't want to talk about the press but I want to concentrate more on telecommunication industry like internet, telephone and data.

I am very happy to be in this Parliament and be responsible for this Ministry which deals with telecommunication industry especially *Telikom PNG* and *beMobile* because I was very much involved in the Government of Chan-Haiveta in 1994, when we broke up PTC and before that, it was known as P&T.

So, between 1994 and 1997 when Mr Chris Haiveta was the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, we abolished PTC and in its place set up *Telikom PNG*, *Post PNG* and *PANGTEL* as the regulatory body to regulate the telecommunication industry. When the Government changed in 1997 and the Late Bill Skate became the Prime Minister, he appointed me when I lost the Kavieng Open Seat as Chairman of *Telikom PNG*.

I am proud to announce here that as a Chairman of *Telikom PNG* at that time, I coordinated the transition from analogue telephones to digital through Novotel of Canada and a company from Israel called Terra. Previous analogue telephones were much bigger and

heavier than what we have now. When I was the Chairman, only a few people owned this phone and they were expensive.

Since the transition to digital and eventually through further deregulation that the Somare Government had initiated in the reforms to establish NICTA and the awarding of private license to a private company called *Digicel* to enter the market. All those changes have now led to a significant increase and improvement in the telecommunication industry. In those times, only four per cent of the population had access to telephones.

18/03

All those changes have now led to a significant increase and improvement in the telecommunication industry.

In those times only four per cent of the population had access to telephones, mostly in the towns. Only one per cent had access to mobile phones, which were analogue large telephones. Today every child, every man, woman, educated or uneducated person, every body has got a telephone.

I went to my Electorate, even right in my village, on an outer islands, somebody has a phone and have phone numbers. Many of them are sending me texts messages for assistance.

When I talk about one of the evils of this industry, maybe this is one of them, especially for us Members, they are calling us and disturbing us all the time for everything from A to Z. I want the Parliament to acknowledge the importance of this industry because this is the industry that is going to drive change.

I also commend the Government of Sir Michael for really moving and taking some bold steps in the changes that have been done over the last 10 years. They have changed it from PANGTEL to NICTA and setting up a much more rigorous regulatory framework within NICTA and breaking up the licencing structure. This has resulted in the separation of licencing structure from network to content and one other one. There are three main licencing structures now. Previously there was only one licence issued and that was network licence and there was only one company that gets this licence, *Telikom*.

Today, the regulatory framework is now open. Previously, if you wanted to apply for spectrum licence through NICTA, *Section 50 of Telikom Act* prevents you from doing so. It stipulates that you have to go back to *Telikom* and seek approval because only *Telikom* has access to the spectrum. Spectrum is a pipe that leads us out of the country through satellites and all the other cable networks.

It was only *Telikom*. Now, I think for nationalistic purposes, we would prefer to have *Telikom* as a big telecommunication service provider for the country. But I believe that, and as much as in my heart, I would really like to protect the State-owned companies, the most important thing is accessibility of telecommunication services to all the spectrum of the population throughout the country.

If the Government companies cannot do it faster then private companies have to come in and take these services further. The only issue that we need to closely regulate, Minister, and I think this is your responsibility, is the pricing structure.

I think there are many areas where you are really missing it. With regard to *Digicel*, we really don't want *Digicel* to become too powerful so that it becomes a bully so that instead of public monopoly you now have a private sector monopoly.

So this is where I am saying, the regulatory framework of NICTA is already in place to ensure that there is a level playing field. This ensures that prices are maintained at competitive rates so that the consumers do not suffer from unnecessary high prices by the service providers.

Some other issues which I believe are a bit sticky between *bemobile* and *Telikom* and *Digicel*, is the co-location of towers. Why do these companies have to spend more money duplicating towers when they can co-locate the towers?

Where there is a *bemobile* tower, *Digicel* goes and puts its receiver there also. If there is *Digicel* tower you must allow *bemobile* to be there. At the moment, the people are a bit territorial. And who is suffering, the customers are suffering.

So that's an issue, Minister, because regulations allow for co-location of towers. This brings me to the issue of inter-connectivity. When a call comes from *Digicel*, on to *bemobile* and then to *Telikom*, whether it's a fix call or a mobile call and then goes out and connects to *Telstra* or *Singapore Telecom* or other global carriers, these are very high cost calls. We are paying through the charge rates of the inter-connectivity rates. We really need to look seriously into the domestic calls and also the connectivity charges for external calls.

19/03

Mr Speaker, finally, I would like to announce to Parliament some major re-structuring that we are looking at in the Telecommunication Sector. Somebody has already asked me previously in relation to this matter and I had alluded to it. And that is, it is about time that we stop leasing transponders, which are costing *Telekom*, *bemobile* and all our

telecommunication service providers' high rates for leasing the transponders for the satellites that we are accessing in outer space.

We are at the moment negotiating and I have a got a paper before Cabinet to look at the possibility of launching our own satellite. A Papua New Guinean owned satellite that can hopefully reduce the cost of satellite access by 25 or 30 per cent, which will be a big reduction for satellite. Also, our remote communities can be able to set up satellite dishes to access the internet and telephone calls through what they call Voice Over IPs telecommunication called modems. This means that we can use just one line to access both the internet and telephone calls and even send faxes.

The world has gone through those kinds of technologies which are transforming the telecommunication networks of many countries in Africa and South America. Therefore, we must get into the cutting edge of these technologies and I believe that by having access to our own satellite will enable this to happen.

The other is a negotiation that we are finalising between *PNG Telekom* and *Indonesia Telekom* so that it will allow us to access Asia and Europe. At the moment one line is taken from Madang down to Australia then to America then to all over the place.

There is a cable that the Indonesians are moving into Biak by the end of this year, and hopefully next year they will take it to Jayapura. We then intend to take that line all the way and connect Vanimo, Aitape, Wewak and all the way to Madang. Then Papua New Guinea through undersea cables will be connected worldwide.

We did not want to run a separate cable because there is now technology to run data through the infrastructures of electricity companies. Therefore, we will run all these on the lines of PNG Power. Therefore, our people in Vanimo, Aitape and other provinces like them will not only have access to power but also high speed internet and communication services as well.

Once all these are connected to Madang we will then connect to the existing Madang line that comes into Lae then Port Moresby so that the whole of Papua New Guinea can be connected. So that is a major project that we are looking at with regards to the undersea cables and the launching of our own satellite.

Also, with the assistance of the Minister responsible, I am also looking at the possibility of the co location of towers and interconnectivity negotiations that must be structured between *Digicel*, *bemobile*, *PNG Power*, *NBC* and *Telekom*. This is because all these towers must be fully utilised so that we can be able to negotiate with them and NICTA

can set rates that hopefully can reduce the cost of telecommunication in our country. And through the support of the rural telecommunication programs in the DSIP each Member can then roll it out to your districts all the way down to your villages. Because I believe many of you do not have telephones in your houses.

Therefore, we will create the core infrastructure for this telecommunication network and through your DSIP each Member can help us to bring it further. Therefore, I believe that within the next four years, we can bring the level of accessibility to communication because at the moment it only about 30 or 40 per cent. Nevertheless, before we go for the next Elections we can proudly tell our people that we have brought it to about 60 or 70 per cent. With that, hopefully, in the next years we can bring telecommunication services in this country to 100 per cent for the people of the country.

Therefore, I would like to congratulate the Minister and his Department for bringing this paper. I would also like to conclude by supporting what the Minister for Finance and Education had alluded to in terms of the abuse of the internet.

It is not wrong to raise issues but if it is a lie and like anything you have to turn up in court and defend it.

20/03

Therefore, I would like to congratulate the Minister and his Department for bringing this paper. I would also like to conclude by supporting what the Minister for Finance and Education had alluded to in terms of the abuse of the internet.

It is not wrong to raise issues but if it is a lie and like anything you have to turn up in Court and justify it but no one has any right to crucify another human being by hiding behind a small screen of lies through a so-called social media or Internet so I support this. I will recommit to the Minister that we can work together so that every SIM card from now on has to be registered. We will ensure that sellers register the customers who purchase SIM cards will do so using their ID card and their passport numbers will be recorded so that if a person abuses other people through use of mobile phones that person can be traced down. For those who have set up blogs and are character assassinating people, if we are unable to catch up with them we still cancel the license of those responsible for hosting that site. I think that is responsible regulation by the Government. So I am glad the Minister for Finance raised that issue and I support it. It's a governance issue and it has to do with responsibility in our reporting.

The other issue I would like to mention is in regard to media publishing false reports especially newspapers, for instance recently in one of its publications, *Post-Courier* published some wrong information on its front page report but when it apologised for that report it was a small and brief and not on the front page. I'm sure only a few of us read that apology while the rest of the public are now convinced that the report is true and have formed a wrong opinion on that matter. We don't mind being exposed but if I am exposed for something I am accountable for then expose me and do it correctly and ethically. I think it is about time the Minister considers these things. No one has the license to print anything they want because the Court is there to make them accountable for the truths character assassinations and lies that they aim to destroy the credibility and integrity of other people.

I want everyone's support so please contribute the K1 million and don't spend it on unnecessary things. If you want telephone and electricity to be connected to your home then give your share of K1 million to Telecommunications. Thankyou Mr Speaker.

Parliament suspended from 12.05 p.m. to 2p.m..

21/03

Mr BIRE KIMISOPA (Goroka) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I want to convey my appreciation to the Minister for Communication and Information Technology for making this statement that canvases issues we have in this country.

The issues are broad in nature and I think are well explained but more appropriate today just prior to adjournment, the honourable Member for Kavieng and Minister for IPBC did an exceptional job by giving this Parliament a clear picture of where we are in terms of competition and the way forward. He has canvassed the regulatory issues and ensured that communication is accessible to large number of people in the community and the rates are cheaper for our people.

Mr Speaker, for the purpose of this debate, I will politely depart from the main crust of this paper and dwell on freedom of information.

Mr Speaker I suggest that the good Minister should embark on a program and legislate on Freedom of Information so that a citizen can be allowed to access government records and information. Most important they should have access to some of the critical information that we have.

This is because a country that is isolated from information will build up resentment in the community. Sensitive information of public nature are not disseminated timely to the public and all of a sudden we will have blocker and people writing to *face book* making all kinds of allegations and 90 per cent are likely to be incorrect.

Mr Speaker, in order to mitigate some of this issues we have in this country, it is my view that as soon as we arch a legislation on Freedom of Information Act on this Floor of Parliament, then that will allow the citizens at large to have access to critical information. For instance, the DSIP or contracts negotiated between the State and a company.

Mr Speaker, as this country matures, demand for information will rise. In the next 20 to 30 years, demography of this country will change in terms of population. Perhaps the bulk of our people will constitute education citizens of this country and certainly their demand for information will increase.

The more we isolate our people from critical information, you are sowing the seeds of dissent in the community and soon you will experience civil rights, unrest and all kinds of protests. Why? Because we were not able to provide the kind of information our people require.

Mr Speaker, I think it is timely to legislate on Freedom of Information. We have a one-Chamber Parliament and we can have that law in place unless there is another Chamber scrutinizing legislation that comes before this House. So I think, sensitive information should be made available to the public. We have not done that for a long time but as our country matures it is only appropriate that we consider putting in place a law that gives our freedom, so that our people can have access to critical information.

22/03

Mr Speaker, I am also quite passionate about the media in this country. Freedom of information must be available to our people. Any attempts to gag the media, we have to be very careful. We may be politicians sitting in this Chamber but one of these days you will find yourselves outside of this Chamber and you will value some of this things that our people value.

A Free Press is an integral component of democracy in this country and that is well documented around the civilized world. If you don't have Free Press, you run the risk of instilling dissent in the communities and you may even sow the seeds of anarchy in this country.

Mr Speaker, these are perhaps some of the issues concerning this Paper and I find it completely comprehensive. I think the Minister has paved the way forward but on a minor note, there are few observations I make insofar as *Digicel* is concerned and I thought it is appropriate to raise them on this Floor.

Mr Speaker, only recently I have noticed that *Digicel* is encouraging gambling on mobile phones. That is something that is a bit scary. They have these messages that are going out for people to select certain numbers and it is popping up in their phones. I am not sure whether *Digicel* has any license to enter into gambling on the mobile phones. That is something that we need to be very careful about. I hope the Minister can perhaps have a look into that,

Mr Speaker, finally the Paper itself does cover a little bit of monopoly we have in this country and I think the honourable Member for Kavieng has stated very quite clearly that *Digicel* has a private monopoly in this country, Minister, any efforts to limit that kind of power they seem to assume right across this country would be wholly welcomed.

Mr JOSEPH LELANG (Kandrian-Gloucester) – Mr Speaker I rise to join this debate to acknowledge and congratulate the Minister for Communication and Information in presenting a detailed Paper on this Floor of this Parliament.

I am grateful to note a lot of good initiatives by the O'Neill-Dion Government through that Ministry.

Mr Speaker, not long ago there was this issue on some other countries spying on big countries and their leadership. This poses to be a grave concern and in discussing and making our policies on progressing telecommunication and ICT programs we have to be mindful of this issue.

Mr Speaker, one of the initiatives that the Minister pointed out in his Statement is the inclusion of our personal data including both the leaders of this country and its ordinary citizens. When we do not have any laws to protect this kind of information we will have a lot of problems arising, where anybody can access our individual information and that can lead to identity theft.

23/03

That's a very serious problem and I want us to look at bringing in a new Legislation or Privacy Act concerning this issue. I know the *Constitution* allows for it but we must have this enabling legislation to protect all the information of individuals.

We leaders are elected to serve the public but we must not forget that we are human beings and should have privacy as well and it must be protected. That's why I want us to consider some of these initiatives seriously to ourselves protect and our families.

I want to elaborate a bit on this issue of people spying on certain individuals, especially leaders in this country. And we have heard our Prime Minister airing his dissatisfaction in the social media just recently. That's why I want us, it to introduce new legislation that will protect leaders. And if other countries try to spy on us must be brought to the International court to be heard.

Cyber Crime is a very serious issue also. I am glad that the report presented by the Minister covers all the angles of Telecommunication and ICT Infrastructure.

With that, I want to emphasise that our law enforcing agencies such as police, customs and other relevant authorities must improve their capacity building and train personnel to detect new crimes committed in the advancement of information technology in our country.

Mr Speaker, about this new initiative RICS, one example is in Buin. A VSAT has been installed and it has helped the local people there in terms of data connectivity.

I am passionate about it so I have consulted the officers from Telikom for an Advance VSAT to do with Voice Communication because 95 per cent of my electorate and too other rural districts don't have signal coverage. That's why I am trying my very best to consider some of this good initiatives introduced in the report on how to approach telecommunication issues through some of this important initiatives.

The other issue is on pricing structure which the Minister for State Enterprise has alluded to.

Mr Speaker, our industrial rate on Advance VSAT offered by Telikom is very high and it's around K735 000 per unit. And I want to install more than 10 units in my electorate to increase coverage of signal in voice telecommunication. But, I can't afford it because it's too expensive that's why we have to reconsider our pricing structure. To install RICS and its Tele center would cost around K150 000 to K200 000. I want to install this in each of my district administration, health centers and schools, especially secondary and high school so

that they can have access to the Internet and other information needed by schools in science and other subjects. I had discussions with the Telecommunication officers and its agencies to come up with a reasonable rate which will assist us so that we can install voice and data connectivity in my electorate.

24/03

Mr Speaker, I would like to support the Minister for State Enterprise regarding the 'call locating towers'. The call locating towers as I see are very important in receiving satellite services either in towns or in the rural areas. Many people are cut off from receiving important communication services through television or FM radio. Maybe because there are no towers or there are towers but are owned by different communication companies which do not allow other communication system to use them. When this happens, it is very difficult to negotiate with different providers of the communication system to use the same towers to just install other communication receivers.

Mr Speaker, we try to negotiate but in most cases, it is very difficult. I think if, we erect two towers at the same spot or location, it is not feasible. So, one key area that I want to suggest to the Minister is to try and negotiate with the various communication providers to come to a compromise to use only one tower, which will allow us to communicate important services to the people as well as to the government agencies.

I congratulate the Minister his for presentation.

Mr DAVIS STEVEN (Esa'ala – Minister for Civil Aviation) – Mr Speaker, this is a very important debate, which raises a topic that concerns all the Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I believe this topic raises all the issues affecting our nation, as well as present and current challenges because they relate to communication and technology in this country.

When I say all the issues, the ministerial presentation by the Minister raises the whole issue of the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). I must commend the Minister for that very important revelation that the NBC requires support. It needs constant support but more so now than ever before. I am particularly interested in the point he highlights, that the NBC is at the mercy of the provinces today.

We are talking about the IT industries that are present in this country and for us as the Members and leaders responsible for the legislation of this country, more importantly, when we talk about rural communities, the issue of NBC must not be forgotten or neglected.

In regard to that, the Minister needs our total support and cooperation. I am particularly, pleased, that in Milne Bay, the Provincial Government has provided state of the art facilities through the partnership that we have had with the people coming into our province. It is an area that we are basically blessed with and we are able to continue to provide services to our people.

But, Mr Speaker throughout the country, we need to hear the plea of the Minister and the effort of his department in respect to that issue.

Mr Speaker, not only the challenges we are faced with modern technology as described in this ministerial statement reaches our rural people, even some urban areas. It poses challenges in terms of our legal responsibility. It highlights the right that everyone speaks of today, the freedom of speech. In fact it is a freedom of expression under our *Constitution*. The freedom and the responsibility under the same Constitutional Provision bestowed on Parliament to ensure that that freedom is regulated so that it is beneficial for PNG.

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This issue also raises a challenge in relation to the social implications of advanced technology.

As the other Members have already mentioned on the negative effects of technology, particularly on cyber-crime in social networks such as *Facebook* and *Twitter* the need therefore, arises for us as leaders to be responsible and that is to enact a law that will regulate, protect and set the limits in which freedom of speech can be exercised.

Mr Speaker, I want to draw your attention to the very specific words of this particular constitutional guarantee. And that is in *section 46* of the *Constitution*, which is the Freedom of Expression, particularly subsection 2. This provision clearly states that the freedom of the press and mass communication is only part of the freedom of expression.

It is not an absolute guarantee but that same provision also states that the *Constitution* also makes it an obligation for Parliament to pass a law when the time is right. The time has come for us to regulate this particular freedom and we must rise to the task and take the obligation and begin to set the foundation in which this freedom should be exercised.

Mr Speaker, I am supporting the debate, while highlighting the urgency for Parliament to enact the legislation because many of us here today are not familiar on IT. It maybe ignorance but our children are more advanced when it comes to accessing and using advanced technologies such as computers and mobile phones. Our obligation is therefore, to ensure the necessary perimeters are set so that the future generation is not allowed to abuse useful advancement in technology.

And for that reason, I commend the Minister for his efforts in the last 18 months to consult relevant agencies; particularly the Department of Justice and Attorney General so that the next legislation that should be passed in Parliament must relate to this. And as a nation we should embrace these freedoms with responsibilities and ensure that these freedoms are constructive and meaningful to our purposes.

Mr Speaker, I support the efforts of the Minister to ensure that the rural parts of the country will receive the Department's support and I note that he intends to install 60 Internet points of access to rural districts throughout the country.

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Mr Speaker, just because we did not have access to Internet and the benefits of Information Technology during our time does not mean that we should deny our school children from accessing Internet. Whether we like it or not, we are quickly drawn into the world outside that is evolving very quickly in terms of technology and the move towards getting Internet service to our schools in rural areas is one that must be encouraged. In so doing, I also commend the efforts of the Minister in ensuring that the cost issue is controlled as the previous speaker has highlighted.

Mr Speaker, all in all, the Minister ought to be commended and I thank him for his effort.

Ms LOUJAYA TONI (Lae – Minister for Community Development, Religion and Family Affairs) – Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity this afternoon to be able to participate in this debate and I also commend my colleague Minister for a comprehensive presentation. Even though in its broadness, I would like to contribute my bit to the debate.

Mr Speaker, to begin with, while listening to the question of freedom of information and speech, one question that came to my mind is and I will use it as a lead up to the points that I am trying to raise here is, who curved the measuring stick of freedom? Is there a

uniformity in its length and how do we handle this stick? We can wield it like a club or we can use it to tap our way in the direction we would go. There are a number of ways that we can use the stick and again, sometimes in our diversity and different economies and cultures and countries, the lengths of freedom; some may be short, medium or quite long.

As for Papua New Guinea, the ICT agenda is one that is new. We, as the representatives of the 900 different language groups and cultures want to assert ourselves as a member of the Commonwealth and the United Nations, and it is like the race is on to catch up with the economies that have been established 100 to 200 years ago and we are just 35 years old.

So, when we talk about the freedom of information and a possibility of a bill, I would like to suggest that the government's initiatives needs to be told and articulated to our people and the best place to start is to have that hub here in the National Parliament where we can upload what has been discussed and agreed to and decisions that have been made in Parliament. They can be uploaded in the name of freedom of information bill from this Parliament. Information that needs to be held back and disseminated in whichever way, that decision can be made in Parliament.

The freedom of information could also be interpreted to those who take it upon themselves in *Facebook* and *Twitter*. They have that freedom of information to assume that they are authorities on the lives of individuals, be they politicians or the man on the street. Our people assume they know everything and anything from the colour of the underwear you wear to where you sleep at night.

(Members interjecting)

Ms LOUJAYA TONI – Mr Speaker, seriously, I am coming to a point because there are lot of cyber bullying and defamation of character through the Internet on *Facebook* by authorities that remain faceless and nameless. So, we really need to also look at the nature of this freedom of information we are talking about because there are two sides to the coin so we should and legislate on Internet bullying and defamation.

Mr Speaker, I am a first-time Minister in Parliament and when I got into Parliament, a few months later, Facebook was onto me, describing my hairstyle and my dressing, and nothing about the content of the intellectual debate.

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They cannot face me and have a debate about the issues that are relevant to this country but they remain faceless, nameless and gutless in a system that is on Internet and that the whole world has used, and our people choose to think that this is their chance.

Anybody that can get into internet in this country and abuse it in this way really needs to be legislated against and contained. The balance that is needed here is that we need guided legislation that will guide our people to look at positive outcomes from the information that we are giving them and have a positive thinking and mindset.

What can we do using this very useful technologies by way of building our culture, building our society so that we are able to perform at an international platform providing development aspirations for the world which we are a part of and also our country.

Also we have people picking up information in other parts of the world that we ourselves lend to them and then we wonder why people see us in a negative light and the tourism industry suffers and everything else. We then look for a scapegoat and place the blame on the international media refuse them entry into the country etcetera.

But we have very capable faceless, mindless people who operate as journalists and that think they are in the know in this country who are quite happily leaking out information that will make big time news on you tube and whatever pictures they can take.

That again is undermining our national drive and determination to build this country and bring it forward.

And so once again, my colleague minister and other ministers will have my support as Member for Lae and the only female in Cabinet for Privacy Act, legislation on internet bullying and defamation of character and a selective approach with regard to the Freedom of Information Bill.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr SASSINDRAN MUTHUVEL – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I also would like to join my colleague MPs in this debate.

I would like to thank and appreciate the Minister for Communication and Information for his wonderful statement.

Of course it is a very pressing issue right now. When we talk about regulation, may be it is not only about internet and *Facebook*, but also the messages that comes out of radios, newspapers, telephone, and other media.

In PNG when the social media and even newspapers when they report, they are aloud to chose all those negative news and put them on the front page and make it big.,

Recently they reported about a five-year old girl who was raped by 10 men and somebody who was chopped to death and butchered into so many pieces. They exaggerate in such a way that they make to enjoy reading about it.

Of course it is human mind or nature to look for this kind of negative news so we are always allowed to read those one but by doing that we are not really encouraging any positive things to happen in this country.

I agree with the Minister for Community Development. The way we give all those information is telling the world that this is Papua New Guinea. But you see a country like Israel. They have killing everyday. The Palestinians coming in and killing so many people with suicide bombs but if you look in their newspapers you will not see any such things in the front page.

Normally in the front page they will write stories about things like a farmer in a remote village harvesting a pumpkin weighing 50 kilograms. They write something positive to promote their countries whereas here, for the sake of making money and promoting their marketing strategy put all those rape issues.

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If you look at their newspapers you will not see any bad news on the front pages. They will instead write news about a farmer in a remote village who ha d grown a pumpkin weighing 50kg. They put positive news to promote their country, whereas in PNG our newspapers for the sake of making money and promoting their marketing strategy by printing stories of crimes, controversy, corruption and et cetera to purely increase sales and boost the negative mindsets of people. That is because people tend to be more susceptible to negative news.

For instance, if a person were to dump rubbish in front of your house you would obviously be angry at that person. Yet, people are not troubled about the rubbish that is portrayed by the media. Therefore, I agree with the all the Ministers and Members who made remarks concerning this issue. I also duly agree with the Minister for Civil Aviation that when the time is right there are some legislations that are necessary to control the media to protect the integrity of our country and tell the world that our country is not always about crime, controversy, corruption and et cetera. These issues are also faced by many of the

developed countries, for example; in America may be 10 women are raped but the actual number would be more than that. Nevertheless, such news never comes out because that industry is really protected in their country to promote such countries. In PNG this is the opposite for we allow the media to rubbish our country and put ourselves into shame in the international arena.

Then we are talking about improving our tourism industry but who will come when people will feel terrified to come to PNG? Even other countries media portray our country as a no go zone for travelers. An incident may have occurred up in a remote area in the Southern Highlands then the international community would be advised not to travel to Port Moresby. But what has Port Moresby got to do with that isolated incident or any other province in the country for that matter.

Therefore, it is about time that the Government must really look into regulating all these industries, not just *Facebook* but all other social media as well. This is the modern age so in many countries the internet is freely available, cheap and easily accessible, but in PNG, the rates are too high. Even if I put K2000 worth of credits in my mobile phone it would still not be enough if I continuously receive emails and things like that.

The industry here is unregulated but we would like to promote telecommunication throughout the country. And I want the IPBC and the Telecommunications Minister to make all the domestic calls, for example, 10t across the board throughout the country. If you call from Port Moresby to Kimbe or Moresby to Mt Hagen it should be 10t. Also, all mobile phone calls, for example, make it 20t so that the people can have access at a cheaper rate. As for the internet speed, it is slow to an extent that you cannot really do any business.

For example, if you want to do some foreign trade, it is an online business and therefore you have to have a certain speed so that you can monitor the fluctuations of various currencies. Therefore, in order to do that, you have to have a certain internet speed and without that you cannot do that kind of business. Apart from that, it is also another income generating opportunity for Papua New Guineans as it is easily available from online marketing but you have to have high speed internet in order to engage in those type of activities.

Now, recently we have seen how the Government was rubbished in social media without having any proof or evidence where pictures of Ministers and the Prime Minister were portrayed together with certain allegations. Such allegations only serve for defamatory purposes and like the Minister for Youth, Religion and Community Development said that it

is just a faceless man sitting behind the screen and uploading these messages. Such persons have no sense of responsibility.

Some comments that get posted on *Facebook* are very terrifying. Sometimes things get over exaggerated. For instance, someone can comment like, ‘someone will have to die and I want to see the blood’. These kinds of messages can have the power to incite others even to the point of creating civil war. This can possibly happen if we continue to allow such people to continue what they are doing. There have been such incidents occurring in the Middle East and other countries and this can also happen to PNG.

Such information holds no truth but their purpose is to incite ideas into people and prompt them into carrying out certain actions. Therefore, if a mentally unstable person were to receive such messages and ideas, imagine what he or she might do.

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It is general nature of our people; they don’t hold confidentiality matters even it happens. If I do a PEC meeting, before I come out of the meeting the people outside already know about the decisions made. Our people just like to spread out information and they don’t differentiate between confidentiality and privileged information. I agree with the point raised by one of the Member of Parliament this morning. He said there are people using the social media and impersonating others.

When I was newly elected into Parliament, I received a call from a person who sounded exactly like the Deputy Prime Minister. He said he was coming to my province and I had to arrange some funds for him and I was really confused because I was in Opposition and I did not understand why the Deputy Prime Minister was asking for K50 000. He said three government officials will be visiting you and time is really an essence and you have to act. So I said, send someone so I can know who is coming to receive the funds and they refused to send a person instead they asked for the funds to be deposited in a bank account which they provided. I called the Bank and to check where the account was from and I was told the account was opened in Enga just a week ago.

In India, if a thief is calling from a certain place, the police can trace him within five minutes to locate where the call originated from. Whether it is *Digicel* or *Telikom* they have to be supportive to our Police especially to build up the Police information technology to trace and identify these calls. In every country that is how it works so I really support the idea of the Minister to insist everyone to register their SIM cards. If they have no identification

card then they don't deserve to have a mobile phone. So either you use your driving licence or passport there must be a form of identity.

It is good the Government is introducing this system so that we can monitor who is doing what and other criminal activities like communications between the thieves. It will greatly help to reduce law and order issues in our country. A person also impersonated the Member for Kavieng and asked me for money and because I had business in Kavieng I thought he was asking for help. People are impersonating senior ministers to call for help and what would you do if your colleague asks for help? I am not ashamed to say I lost K5000. I was not in Kavieng but I instructed my Managers to assist him. But these things could be avoided if we have the tracking system to register those SIM cards.

In Singapore you cannot buy a SIM card without showing your passport and it is an identity. It shows where you move. It is really necessary to have some form of identification. Telikom had made some initiative in creating the clean Internet where it blocks adult sites so children won't have access. We are promoting that arrangement with Telikom and it cost K60 000 per school to set up that small VSat dish where you can have that Internet.

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We are making that arrangement with Telikom to set up a small Disc to access internet library but it will cost around K60 000 per school.

Mr Speaker, I really support Telikom Foundation and I urge it to continue with it's program. However, in regards to the community obligation, our State Owned Enterprises must be proactive. I am worried about the Minister as well as the Member for Goroka's comments. If it is going to be a private monopoly, than *Digicel* is really leading. I have no choice but to deal with them in order to bring communication services to the most remote parts of my electorate. This is because Telikom did not take any initiative to ask the MPs to counter-part fund the constructing of towers in our Electorates.

Mr Speaker, *Digicel* came in with a contract proposal, asked me to counter-part fund the tower projects especially in the less profited areas. I had no choice because I made a commitment and promised my people that by 2015, 90 per cent of my Electorate will be connected by phone. So when we are talking about connecting and accessing phones we are talking about other activities associated with that. For instance, accessing the internet for study purposes and accessing EQ TV which is an Education Department run program. Such program gives an opportunity to a child living in a remote area to observe a professional

teaching as well as educate our doctors on certain medical techniques used in certain circumstances. So this technology is really good to promote.

When we talk about free press, we want them report fairly. They should not report for the sake of feeding human brains with nuisance instead be responsible for their reporting. Likewise, the newspaper agencies should not focus on marketing their papers only but be responsible of the type of articles disseminated.

Mr Speaker, I support the Minister's initiatives to regulate this industry. We are not sure how this technology works. As stated by the Minister for Civil Aviation that we are not familiar with the Face Book but our children are. They learn fast and so we are worried about the kind of information they may be exposed to or are accessing. So, it is time, we regulate and control this industry. Thank you.

Mr POWES PARKOP (National Capital District) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to contribute to this very important debate. Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Minister for Communication for presenting this Policy Paper that has enabled us to understand its intention.

Mr Speaker, I have asked a number of questions in regards to communication recently in our country so, I am happy for the Minister because he is moving forward by addressing these issues of relevancy as technology and engineering is advancing forward.

I share all the sentiments expressed by my colleague Members and the Ministers. I want to look at it from a different perspective. The Minister has looked at the policies and the strategies clearly. He has pronounced that to us and importantly to our people. We have only five year term and it is our second year now so I urge the Ministers to start performing now.

Mr Speaker, when we are asking questions, some of the questions are not of relevance so we don't need to ask them. But if the Ministers' are proactive, they will be presenting their policies in the Cabinet prior to presenting them on the Floor of Parliament. If they want to promote and pursue what's important for our nation and their portfolio, they must come up with the strategies so that we can all understand them.

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Mr Speaker, we don't need to ask them if the Ministers are proactive and presenting the policies that they want to promote and pursue that are important for our nation and

important for their portfolios and coming up with the strategies so that we can all understand. So some of the questions that we have can be reserved because we know what is happening.

Mr Speaker, this is the second in year in our Term in Parliament and with the reality of politics, we only have three years seriously to do business and by the time we are in the third or fourth year we start thinking of the coming Elections.

Mr Speaker I think the Leader of Government Business should start cracking the whip on some of our Ministers who have to come out and present their policies like our Minister for Communication and Information who did that yesterday. I wasn't in here but listening to the debates that are going on it seems like clearly worked out strategy on how we are going to do deal not just with the media and internet but communication in general to take us to the next level and to harness the progress that is taking place internationally in communication so that it can help us in developing all the other aspects of development in PNG from health to education and agriculture and so on.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Minister and at the same time call on all the other Ministers. We are just seeing them making decisions left right and center but how does that fit into a policy framework that can improve the lives of our people. These are reasons why some of us in the backbench keep asking questions.

Let me commend some of you Ministers who are first timers and have done well but some are still sleeping and there is no time. We need to start presenting all the various policies.

Mr Speaker, there are basic policy frameworks that are already in place like the Millennium Development Goals that is an international goal that we are all asked to pursue as an international community which the United Nations have taken the forefront of it ensuring all the Nations subscribe to it.

If our Ministers don't know what they are doing they can go and check the Millennium Development Goal or we have the Medium Term Development Strategy which we all know.

Mr Speaker, otherwise we have the *2050 Vision* and I don't really need to say this. The *2050 Vision* addresses all the sectors and it is very thorough. Ministers should take cue from that and work out what their priorities are and what they need to pursue during this time they hold and this precious privilege to be in Parliament as Ministers of State and drive it. There are some key Ministerial Port folios that are important and critical in our nation.

I keep mentioning in the Government Caucus that Agriculture and Livestock is one of the most critical Ministries because most of our people depend entirely on agriculture.

I don't want to dwell too much on communication because everybody has talked on it. I want to take it from this angle.

Mr SPEAKER – Governor for NCD we are debating on communication so you have to be careful not to divert from it.

Mr POWES PARKOP – Mr Speaker, I know that and I will come to that. This is what we need to do and I commend the Minister for rising to this occasion and I have been critical on what is happening in Communication Sector.

Like what the Minister for State Enterprises said that we can put up a satellite and as the Governor said that a doctor can be here and perform an operation in Kiriwina. All these can be done, by improving our communication, network and system.

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If the communication improves like the Minister for Public Enterprise has mentioned install Satellite up there and we can solve a lot of basic problems. Even the Governor for West New Britain has mentioned, a doctor can be here and do an operation in Kiriwina. Even though the doctor is not physically present there but through improve communication he can do an operation.

The charge rate of Internet here is very expensive and it contributes to the high cost of doing business in this country. That's why some of the investors hesitate to come here and do business. Comparing with other countries you can access Internet for free or at a lower rate and use it for long hours but here in PNG less than an hour or so.

Just recently, I accompanied the Prime Minister to China and found out that you can watch movie on Internet for just 5 Yen for long hours. This is a modern advanced world where everything has progress but in PNG the Internet Service Providers are punishing us so that we have to submit to their high cost. And that problem can be solved if we consider it seriously. I agree with everything that has been said.

In my profession as a lawyer, people have all the right to say whatever they want to say and it's called qualified right. When you have rights and freedom it comes with responsibilities. There is a provision in the preamble of the *Constitution* which talk about responsibility. How people have been propagated that they have rights and freedom is good

but they have taken it to the extent where there is no responsibility and it cannot be. Rights and freedom must be balanced with responsibilities, social responsibility and all the other responsibility.

Now a days, we abuse these responsibilities and take it far by not respecting other people. So we don't want to control the media and stop people going into the Internet but at least try to regulate it so that they don't abuse it.

Mr Speaker, before I normally use social media, but now I don't because I know that I am doing the right thing and people are satisfied with it. Some people use social media to attack other people.

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We all know that some crimes have been committed and that's where we need to control or regulate and bring these people to account.

Mr Speaker, I have given up the page called Sharp Talk but some you want to visit it and discuss about it its good. I am out of it and I will never visit it but whoever wants to complain and do whatever, it is up to you. If we do not respond, they will keep up and they will stop it.

But there are some issues that are serious and I am glad that the Minister has raised it and hopefully, we will see the registration coming.

Mr Speaker, I am raising the issue concerning the Sim card and we must be aware that there are some tendency in other parts of the world. Hopefully, it will not come here or affect us in PNG. They are using the remote control to trigger off something like remote control bomb, which is an explosive and it happened in other countries already.

This is one of the security reasons that we need to try and regulate the issue of Sim card. People can use the Sim card to send you threats, abusive text et cetera but they can also trigger off an explosive device and that is why it needs to be register so that, we can track it to find out who is responsible for triggering off, thus, the perpetrators can be arrested.

Mr Speaker, we need to take this type of treat seriously because now, however, I do not want to put the effort of the Government down because there are good things developing, but we are living in a real world. The real world is this, United States and Israel are dangerous people of the world.

In PNG, through the ExxonMobil, the United States is coming in big numbers at the same time, the Prime Minister has opened the door for Israel to come in big times. I think, we

must be careful and be cautious because we might invite the problems of the Middle East to come into PNG. The people who have grievances against these two States might come relax in casual country like PNG and perpetrate their crime.

We are next to Indonesia and we have already open up flights to Bali and there are bad people who could get on the flight and come to Port Moresby. We must think seriously about this although, we think it might not happen but it might happen in the future. Therefore, we must control the issue of SIM card.

Mr Speaker, I bought a SIM card in England where it demands everybody to be registered but there is a system where you can beat the system. So, we cannot absolutely control it. However, we must find some ways in which we can reduce the possibility of that type of bad things happening. But, there are some bad things already happening like abusive texts and threatening, allegations and defamation et cetera. Yet, our law is way, way behind this development and progress in both the privacy law and deformation law.

I am glad that the Minister is taking the initiative and he is announcing the intention very clearly and I am happy to support him. We all support him and let us make some laws and it might not be perfect. There will be some people complaining but that is the reality of life, yet, we have to think about the majority of our people, the security and the welfare of our people and make the best decision that needs to be made.

Mr Speaker, I do not want to talk about internet, website and social media et cetera but I want to encourage our Ministers because our time is getting towards the end. This is a second year and you should drive the policy that we can legislate so that, we cooperate and support each so that we cannot ask you question that we shouldn't be asking because we know already from the policies that you have pronounced and the strategies that you have announced.

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And I have a few points to make because there is a lot of passion and emotion in this matter. I can understand that because at one time or other we have been accused of things that we have not done and to have accusations publicised is not a good way.

In the past we could only hear it through the radio but right now it is going worldwide in just a few seconds. And to try and regulate this is going to be very costly and have a lot negative criticisms but I propose that we make an effort to confine our regulations to situations that are criminal in nature or when there are real threats. To be able to do that we

have to build up our capacity, laws and logistics so that we are equipped to get out and do the job.

Papua New Guinea has suffered over the years because we have allowed the deterioration of our intelligence services to become non-existent. These services which are our eyes and ears; which can identify risks but it is now reduced to nothing. And in fact, state secrets are discussed openly because we have failed to develop an Intelligence Service whose responsibility would be to inform the Government in a timely manner on risks and threats to the country and its people.

We need to focus on building that as well as the fact that people are partly ignorant to determine what is true and what is not. As long as it is being published, the information is fact. So we have to focus on how we can carry out a substantial effort in educating our people so that they are able to understand and differentiate between facts, fiction, lies and rumours.

Mr Speaker, if we are going to address these matters as criminal in nature then we have to look at the law enforcers such as the Police. Do they have the capacity in terms of training and logistics to investigate allegations? I am regular user of the internet and I have had my share of criticism but we must always remember that we have three types of people that we must confront as a leader.

There will be those that will love you all the time and then there are those that will hate you even when you do good things and there are those that confine their decisions between those two extremities. And they will base their decisions on information, regardless, of whether it is true or not. You cannot control these people but the best thing to do is to focus on what you are doing as a leader and continue to keep your people informed.

And I propose to those who are on the internet to create a webpage for yourself and post what you are doing on those web pages so that people can have access to that information and support you. Give the people the opportunity to access and know what you are doing for them.

You cannot control the negative criticisms but at least make an effort to control the positive criticisms. These are just some of my suggestions but when we look at the transmission of information, we can't control those who are posting whatever they want outside the country.

We may be able to control what is being done here in the country but we cannot control what people are doing in other countries. Our powers will not extend to them so we have to be mindful of that. And perhaps the experts in this area would be the Chinese. You need to talk to them if you want to regulate the flow of information over the internet because they are the ones who know how best to do that.

Secondly, on sim card registration, it can still be circumvented. Even in Australia and New Zealand where stringent regulations are in place or even in Singapore, you can use someone else's phone and it does not really mean anything. It is also make it more difficult for the people in very remote areas; the illiterate people for instance. They don't have passports or licenses and how can they get sim cards if we confine them to such criteria.

So, those are some situations that we must consider as well if we are going to register sim cards. Let us make sure that we do not marginalise our little people. They have also have opportunity to own a phone and communicate like my uncle in the village who sends texts messages to me all the time for assistance; Mathew 7:7 'Ask and you shall receive'. At least, he has that opportunity to ask me. Before, he would catch a PMV and travel two hours to a station, wait for another hour to make a phone call or send a message.

Those are some considerations that we need to have in mind when going to enact laws. If we enact laws, who is going to administer and enforce these laws? Are we going adequately train them and resource them. These are other considerations that we must meet.

You will certainly have the NGOs and all the civil libertarians from not only Papua New Guinea but the rest of the world who will be jumping up and down and screaming and shouting denouncing that this is very undemocratic, suppression and oppression of human rights and so forth. So maybe we could should sit down and workshop these ideas as leaders and come up with something that can benefit all of us.

I really think we can't do much about those people posting lies, rumours and rhetoric in the internet out there. Even the President of USA, the most power man cannot stop it. People are constantly attacking and accusing all the great leaders in the world. After a while, you have to go pass being angry with these people as the Governor for Central has stated. Just focus on what you are doing and give your supporters the opportunity to promote what you are doing by telling them and giving them the information about what is going on.

Lastly, I would like to talk about the responsibility of our media. Over the years, I feel that our media has become a very powerful entity on its own and it can do whatever it wants.

As we said, when they retracted the newspaper article that they published about someone that has done something and it was a completely blunted lie, the retraction is so small that no one really reads it, only few people notice it.

I feel that we need to have some form of regulatory authority to at least hold the media responsible and accountable so that if they are going to be reporting information, it must be a fact. It can be a rumour or fiction and merely be an assertion but it must be based on facts. They must have the facts first before they report it and if they do that then it is well and good and we should allow them to do that but we should not allow them to promote what are lies because as I have stated earlier, lies can perpetrate negative actions or reactions from our people, many of whom will just see something and believe it immediately not because it is true but because it was published.

So in conclusion, I would like to commend the Minister and he has my full support and I think all of us should make a concerted effort to assist him and look at how we can develop a communication strategy that can benefit all of us but at the same time not allow our small people to be marginalised.

Thank you.

Motion (by **Mr Bob Dadae**) 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 3.30 p.m..