

SEVENTH DAY

Thursday 15 May 2014

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

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Sarufa M. Haro

Principal Parliamentary Reporter

SEVENTH DAY

Thursday 15 May 2014

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

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

Sitting suspended.

Mr Speaker, again took the Chair at 10.30 a.m., and invited the Member for Kundiawa, **Honourable Tobias Kulang** to say Prayers.

'Papa bilon mipela mipela tok tenkyu. Yu yet yu makim mipela na mipela kam bifo lo Sia Kin bilon yu lon dispela dei.

Papa God, mipela laik tok tenk yu gen lon hau mas yu blesim dispel kantri wantaim, planti gutpela samtin ananit lon graun antap lon graun antap lo solwara na ananit lon solwara tu. Lo dispel dei tu, Papa God, mipela tingim wanem samtim kamap aste.

Makim maus blo pipol lo dispel kantri, mipela ol lidas tok tenkyu lon dispel fest LNG Gas sipmen.

Mipela tok tenkyu lon dispel tu makim wanpela dei we sampla impoten legislesin bai kam tru lon dispela Floa. Papa God, I luk olsem wanem samtin istap hait nau yu wok lon rausim dispel ketin emi pasim ai na tingting na sampla gutpela tingting iwok lon kamap ples kilia we bai ken stretim wokabaut na progress lo dispel kantri I go lon wanpela ples na mak we mipela bilip yu yet I predestainim lo em. Mipela komitim Gavman, Praim Minista bilon mipela, olgeta Cabinet Ministas olgeta Membas wantaim Oposisen Lida na olgeta dipatmen hed na mipela komitim olgeta bureaucratic structure na structure blo gavman insait lon han blo yu.

Lo nem blo pikini blo yu Jisas krais. Amen'

QUESTION

Mr SASINDRA MUTHUVEL – Mr Speaker, since the Minister is not in the Chamber, I would like to reserve my rights until the Minister is present.

Mr SPEAKER – The Chair will recognise you when the Minister is available.

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Mr Speaker, I direct my questions to the Minister for State Owned Enterprises in regards to the Oil Palm shares for the Northern Province, Milne Bay and New Ireland Provinces under the IPBC on behalf of these three provinces.

I understand that every year a dividend is paid by the Higaturu Oil Palm Company. This year close to K4 million was paid.

Can the Minister tell my people there are any plans afoot for those shares and the dividends to be remitted back to the provinces?

Mr Speaker, these provinces can be able to use these monies to fix their roads and help their farmers. We have waited for so many years for an explanation on this issue.

Mr Speaker, I understand the 1 percent of the share that IPBC is holding, the value is different from each province and now it has freed up because we have resolved the IPIC situation.

Can the Minister inform our people when will the State transfer these shares back to the provinces so that the provinces can develop this industry?

Mr BEN MICAH – Mr Speaker, I thank the Northern Province Governor for his questions regarding the shares of the New Britain Palm Oil.

Mr Speaker, those shares are owned by the State since the Commonwealth Development Corporation initiated the those three oil palm projects in Milne Bay Estate in Milne Bay Province, Higaturu in Oro Province and Poliamba in New Ireland during the late 1980s.

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Not long after that, some three or four years ago Commonwealth Development Corporation sold those shares to a company called CTP that is Carghill and American Company and Themasack, a Singaporean Company. I think they operated for only two years and then they sold those three estates to New Britain Palm Oil.

In the case of New Ireland, they were given 11 or 12 percent of the shares in CDC project carried onto CTP and then now to New Britain Palm Oil. The State is still holding onto the shares of Milne Bay Estate and the Higaturu Oil Palm Estate.

The two Governors of these provinces have requested me personally in writing that the State should transfer these shares which is about 6 percent and is worth over K70 million in the New Britain Palm Oil.

Mr Speaker, I have sought clarification from the Prime Minister and he has given his approval to prepare a Cabinet submission. Since we have released the debt obligation of our country in the IPIC loan and they have got our shares in Oil shares the general business thrust of the IPBC is now relieved from all the mortgages that was tied to that loan and we can now be able to deal with the transfer of those shares.

Mr WILLIAM TONGAMP – Mr Speaker, before I ask my questions I take this opportunity to congratulate the Prime Minister and all the leaders of this country for an historical event which signaled the first shipment of PNG Gas to overseas.

We take our hats off to all the parties that are involved from exploration to construction all the way to the first shipment of the gas yesterday. To all the past Governments, Ministers, Government Departments, Landowners and all that have been involved.

I direct my questions to the Minister for Sports and South Pacific Games. Mr Speaker, the 2015 SP Games is only a year away and I would like the Minister to give an update to the people of this country on the current status of the preparations in construction, preparation whether we are on time?

Can the Minister also give an update on the progress of the first PNG Team in the Queensland Cup Rugby Competition?

Mr JUSTIN TKACHENKO – Mr Speaker, I thank the vibrant Governor of Jiwaka for this very important question.

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to report to Parliament that the South Pacific Games for July 4 2015 is progressing very well and it is on target and it is on time.

Mr Speaker, currently 90 percent of all infrastructure is around 50 percent complete. By December, they will be 90 percent complete and by March, it will be 100 percent complete.

Some minor delays from shipping and other things from international sources have delayed the project by two or three weeks but once those procurements processes are in order those particular projects will come back on track.

Mr Speaker, the Games village is working two shifts -

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The Games Village has two shifts working seven days a week, to ensure that the 12 infrastructure buildings at the University are built on time. By the end of July we will have the first building from the Games Village completed and it will be a lasting legacy for the students of University of Papua New Guinea. These buildings will hold over 4000 people comfortably in nice dormitory-style sleeping arrangements. It will serve many purposes into the future.

Mr Speaker, for the Aquatic Centre and the Indoor Stadium at Taurama, Fletcher Morobe are doing a fantastic job and they are fully on time with the two swimming pools.

For the indoor and outdoor stadium at the Sir John Guise stadium all is on target with Fletcher Morobe and Phinix Construction doing a fabulous job and you can physically see that as you drive past the Sir John Guise Drive.

Mr Speaker, the Lloyd Robson Oval and the Hubert Murray Stadium are not part of the actual Pacific Games Construction Program but they are one of the private public partnership with Curtain Brothers Hubert Murray. Stadium is well on target and they will finish by the end of February.

I have had a meeting with Oil Search's, Mr Peter Botten and his team and they will have their Stadium completed at Lloyd Robson Oval by April and May next year.

Mr Speaker, we are all on track with these fantastic facilities. There was a comment in the Paper about the Rita Flynn Courts and the Bisini Parade. Most of those contracts have

already been awarded and work will start in the next three or four weeks for Softball, Rugby Union, Cricket and Lawn Bowls and off course beach volleyball will be all put at these locations.

Mr Speaker, the Central Supply and Tenders Board just met last night to approve the three recommended contractors for the Rita Flynn Netball Courts. That will be going to NEC by next week so we can get that awarded. They have a 12-month period to build that. From the Architects and the Engineers they can achieve that as long as we get the right companies in and they dedicate themselves on the ground to complete the job.

Mr Speaker, as Minister in charge for the Pacific Games in 2015, I would like to extend our Governments thanks and appreciation to the Chairman of the Games Mr Costas Constantinou and all his team for dedicating their lives in the last two years, tirelessly and unpaid but making sure that these Games are a success to our Government. Mr Speaker, I am a very happy and satisfied Minister at this point in time.

The Government and all our people can be very proud of the achievements we have achieved so far.

Mr Speaker, the SP Hunters National Rugby Team is an absolute success for Rugby League in the country. Sp Hunters is on the lips of everybody. I would like to thank the Government and especially our Prime Minister for backing my ministry to ensure that Rugby League gets back on track as our nations national sport.

Mr Speaker, the SP Hunters rugby matches are viewed live throughout the country on TV either in Queensland or in Kokopo. It is also encouraging Tourism in our country and the relationship we have with Queensland.

If you go to a game in Queensland, you will find that there are not many white people there but they are all Papua New Guineans. They have absolutely dominated the crowd in all these games. It displays this wonderful thing about national pride.

The Team is doing very well as first timers in the Intrust Super Cup and we should be all proud of them as Papua New Guineans. The Boys are doing a fantastic job.

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Mr Speaker, we have a Code of Conduct that has been put in place because these boys are role models for our children and for the junior rugby league champions coming up the line. And

we have had some instances where some of the players have either become drunk or abused their wives, or misused their position. With that, those people have been suspended immediately.

We want to show not only Australia but the Papua New Guinean Rugby League that we are on a total different level now, when it comes to professionalism and taking rugby league forward. This is so that the Government can be very proud that it has produced with the help of the PNG Rugby League. This is a fantastic result for getting not only our country promoted overseas through sport in a huge way, but also taking rugby league to a level where it has never been before as our national sport.

I thank everybody that was involved and let us see where the 'Hunters' can take themselves in the lead up to the finals over the next ten games. Even if we get up to the top five, that is an amazing achievement for first timers in the Intra Super Cup. And to all the sponsors and everybody involved, I thank you all very much for getting behind our national sport and our unofficial national team.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Mr SAM BASIL – Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I was about to ask the same question but most of the question has been answered. I would also like to congratulate the Minister for doing a fine job in regard to the SP Games.

Mr Speaker, I understand that during the last appropriation we have passed a Supplementary Budget of more than K300 million that was put towards the Games.

Mr Speaker, I know that the Minister will table a report from his Ministry like many other Ministers are doing.

Mr Speaker, my questions are:

(1) Can the Minister shed some light on how much he has used so far in expanding those projects?

(2) In the coming next Budget session, are we anticipating more funding for the SP Games?

Mr JUSTIN TKACHENKO – I thank the Deputy Leader of Opposition for his questions.

Yes, I will be tabling a report and I have requested that in NEC for it to table a full report on the financial situation and the funding that is needed to ensure that this SP Games is a success. I will be doing that very shortly to give you the full detailed figures of exactly of what we have spent and what will be needed.

The budget for the South Pacific Games for 2015 is K1.1 billion and we have spent half of that already. Last year we made a savings of over K380 million that came across from last year 2013. We are now using that money very fast because all the construction stages are at full steam. This is the infrastructure year and everything needs to be completed on time.

Therefore, I will furnish a full report to Parliament so you can see exactly the figures that is spent and where the money is going and for what cause. It has been done properly and I have acquitted all the accounts to Finance at the beginning of the year for 2013. I will do the same for 2014 as well so that everybody can see where public money is going for the benefit of these long term infrastructure developments.

We must understand as well that all these infrastructures that we are doing are for the South Pacific Games and not for only for the Games for those two weeks. But it is leaving a lasting legacy for us to use those facilities to enhance the sporting abilities of all our Papua New Guineans to have proper facilities to utilise for the long term.

We have also introduced a Legacy Program where we will have professionals maintain all these facilities to ensure the longevity and maintenance, and operations of these facilities as well. So that they never turn into white elephants and rot away like the current facilities that we are now renovating.

Therefore, thank you, Deputy Leader of Opposition, I will have that report to you shortly.

Mr FRANCIS POTAPE – My questions are directed to the Minister for Education.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the honourable Nick Kuman for being appointed as the Minister for Education.

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My questions are basically a follow-up on discussions we had this morning in the Government Caucus.

Mr Speaker, in my view, the quality of education in this country is dropping because of lack of nationalisation of teachers. When I was a small child growing up in the village, I was taught by a teacher from Bougainville and another one from Milne Bay. In that school, we had teachers from other parts of Papua New Guinea. Now in the same school, the teachers are all from the same place and the quality of education has dropped dramatically.

(1) Can the Department of Education look into this issue and perhaps nationalise the schools throughout Papua New Guinea where teachers from other provinces come in and teach?

Now that the DSIP funds going into schools, Members of Parliament have no excuse. We can build classrooms. We want the Education Department to seriously look into this issue and nationalise teachers both male and female throughout the country because this is one country.

With regards to the District Education Survey, my district was one of the first to submit the survey but now, we are still waiting to get the feedback from the Department. Some school headmasters need to be disciplined because they did not want to cooperate with us.

(2) Can the Department now work with our district administrators in relation to the issues we raised because we want the feedback?

(3) The Parliament has recently passed the *District Authority Act* so how would that Authority collaborate with the Department of Education to improve quality of education in this country?

Mr NICK KUMAN – Thank you, Mr Speaker and I thank the honourable Member for Komo-Magarima for his questions.

Firstly, on the question of teachers, we can all agree that back in the 60s, 70s and 80s, we had cross section of teachers all over the country provided education and gave a lot of services to the school children at that time. We experienced good quality education during that time and I came out from a school where we had a lot of teachers from Central, Western and Gulf Provinces. Those teachers were the ones who actually provided quality education.

I do agree with the Member that we have problems now because of the over-decentralisation of the Department of Education service to the provinces, and that is one of the biggest problem we have now. We need to re-look at the posting of teachers particularly at the management level. With the deputy principals or deputy headmasters and headmasters and principals of the schools from primary to secondary, we should now agree and make it compulsory that if they should not be posted to their own provinces and districts. All the top level of teachers in each school should come from the outside of the province.

I totally agree and we are going to review the *Education Act*. We are going through that process now so by September or October of this year, we should complete. I am going to look at that issue very seriously so that we bring about discipline and the only way to do is to ensure that this reform is within the system; not only at the national level but also at the provincial level that are accountable for all these.

The main reason why teachers remain in their provinces and districts is on the cost factor. We just simply can't afford the cost. For instance, it is impossible to fly teachers from Milne to go and teach in Vanimo because it is costly.

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The cost factors are the main factors. That's why the system was designed to ensure that a teacher remains in the province and the district.

But we have these management issues and I totally agree with the Member that with a lot of TSF going to schools it now becomes so critical. Those money that is given to the schools should be used to educate our children in the country. By doing so we've got to discipline and instill discipline in the management of schools.

On the question of surveys, obviously we had only 53 districts and I thank the Member for submitting his on time, I also thank the Governor of Southern Highlands, he provided a very comprehensive detailed study. And I know that it costs a lot of money to put such information together but we should make it our responsibility as leaders of this nation to have those data at our fingertips. At any one time you should know exactly how many elementary schools, primary schools high schools and colleges are in your district.

These will help us to plan for a good education system right throughout the country. We are not going to close our eyes and think that because Chimbu and Enga has put in a lot of resources into education so we must pump in a lot of money into those two provinces but, how about the other provinces?

The basic or fundamental things that each of us has to do in order to ensure that you furnish that information to allow us to account for your district. Out of the 53 submitted those districts that have not submitted their reports should have a letter by now. We have until the end of next month to have these information because the budget cycle starts in June. You can't wait until November.

With regard to the district authorities, of course, the enabling legislation will give us the detailed processes and structures of how we can manage not only the Education Department but all the other sub-national functions at the provincial and district levels.

Supplementary Question

Mr ROBERT GANIM – My supplementary question is related to the second question on survey.

Mr Speaker, I am one of the MPs who has not submitted my survey. Now basically because I think that the way we are doing that survey is incorrect. How can the 89 Members of this Parliament carry out those surveys? Who is conducting those surveys in each district? Is it the district officer, the first secretary or the second secretary? The kind of information would be very unreliable.

Mr Speaker, I wish to ask the Minister if he can use the inspectors we have in each provinces and districts to carry out those surveys. Can the K100 000 be diverted to the element school inspectors, primary school inspectors and secondary school inspectors to enable them to properly carry out those surveys by visiting each classroom and provide reliable information because at the moment I know –

Mr Wera Mori – Point of Order! This is not necessary because when the former Member for Kairuku-Hiri, Paru Ahi who was instrumental in this gave explicit instructions as to who should conduct that survey. So that question is necessary.

Mr SPEAKER – Your point of order is in order, just allow the Minister of Education to clarify that.

Mr MICK KUMAN – Thank you, Member for Wabag. There was a template given out to all the Members of Parliament and I think you should be able to understand. Those are simple database that you need to know.

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You should be able to understand it. Those are simple data and you need to know that. You should give us the name of the school, total number of enrollment, and total number of teachers and tell us exactly how many classrooms you have including the teachers houses so that we can account for those things.

Mr Speaker, those are the basic information each school should provide to the Education Office. I am pretty sure that every district in the country has a District Education Officer including a school inspector. That is their responsibility and I think it is the primary responsibility of the Headmaster or the Principal of the school. They should tell us how many of students are in the school.

With the Government's recently approved ICT policy that will be announced soon, as part of my Ministerial Statement, I am going to announce to the nation that basic baseline data base will be captured in this program. So that you do not have to go to Lae or Karamui, Telefomin or in Kaintiba to know the total number of students enrolled or total number of teachers physically there beginning and at the end of the term.

We should have all these things in the ICT Program and on the Internet as well. We should be able to press the button and Waigani can be connected with Kaintiba Primary School.

Mr SPEAKER – Thank you, you have answered the question.

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – Thank you Mr Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister for Agriculture. I urge the Ministers for Finance and Treasury to take note.

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform this Parliament of the importance of the Oil Palm Industry that is worth K1.2 billion. That is how much it contributes towards our economy. About 20 thousand small growers are involved in this industry and they are directly benefiting from it. The milling companies mill over 30 per cent contributed by the small growers which is then processed and exported overseas.

The growers are now being burdened on the levy which is imposed by legislation and the milling companies because OPIC is currently operating under the growers levy. There are no significant funds allocated by the Government to support this industry.

My questions are:

(1) Can the Government consider giving direct support to the Oil Palm Industry just like what its doing to the Coffee and the Cocoa industries?

(2) For the last 12 to 13 years the growers have been waiting for the review of price formula. For the purpose of information Mr Speaker, the Oil Palm was introduced in the 60's and 70's by the World Bank to develop large scale agriculture industry in the country in order to boost our economy.

(3) However, since than no review for the price formula was put in place. This was suppose to be a price sharing benefit with the milling company. This is causing a lot of burden for the growers. Because of this finance burden can Agriculture bring this to the notice of the Cabinet so that approval can be sought to give one of support. This will write off all the outstanding land rents and allow the small growers to get titles for their portion as well as obtaining bank loans.

(4) In terms of the price formula review, when will the World Bank appointed accounting firm finalize the Price Review for submission to the Commodity Group for its endorsement?

In 2013, OPIC brought in a submission through an international recognized company namely: the SMEC and requested for K70 million through the 2014 Budget. This is to build the much needed Oil Palm road. But the Government did not commit any funding towards this purpose.

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(4) Can the Minister tell us why the Government is not considering that K70 million in spite of this company being involved through OPIC (Oil Palm Industry Corporation) to carry out this survey?

Oil palm is the lifeline for the oil palm growers where this will significantly reduce the operating cost and increase production.

Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL –Thank you Mr Speaker. The Governor for West New Britain has raised four important questions relating to the oil palm industry.

The Governor is correct in saying that oil palm is the biggest revenue earner among the other cash crops in the agricultural sector. Oil palm fetches for this industry K1.2 billion revenue and its future looks good and we are expecting this revenue to increase.

Mr Speaker, the oil palm industry is not a regulated industry and it is a trade free market driven by the private sector. This industry began in the 1960's and was created by the Commonwealth banks and the Government at that time and began their first crops in West New Britain. The industry in WNB is the biggest and we are aware that this industry pays out approximately K6-8 million to business houses in WNB.

About 20 000 families depend on this industry and employs close to 70 000 workers. When you compare the oil palm industry to other gas and mining industries; the oil palm industry is very important. This is the industry that sustains the livelihood of our people on a daily basis.

Mr Speaker, coming back to the issue on OPIC, was created by the Government under the *Oil Palm Industry Corporation Act* to support the growers. It is not a government institution to regulate. The government supports it under the law so that the growers are able to be given training and extension services through this organisation. Therefore this organisation is owned by the growers and not the government.

The growers' subsidise the cost of operation for OPIC and as we move forward the government is looking into repealing the OPIC act and replacing it with the oil palm board. When it is replaced with a board, the board will take over the functions of OPIC as well as regulating the industry.

Mr Speaker, the draft bill has gone through to the State Solicitor and he has issued a certificate and we are now finalising the bill before it goes to Cabinet to come to Parliament. When OPIC becomes a fully pledged board the government will begin to directly support the industry with a budget.

On the review of the SSB price, our growers sell fresh fruit bunches but when this fruits are harvest, there are two things that affect pricing. The price is determined by the formula. In that formula there are many constant elements. The only one that is not constant is

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The element that is not constant and varies from time to time is the variation component. Under the new law, when the Oil Palm industry has a fully-fledged board, the Minister must declare which items are considered and classified as variations.

Mr Speaker, the company operates under free trade and because of the variation; the company is able to input subsidies such as provision of fertiliser. The fertiliser is a variation therefore, the company can add up its own cost on that variation on that fertilizer bag by 30 per cent. The company can also do the same if it provides transport variation or labour variation. The company takes back that variation when the farmer sells the oil palm fruit, but when we finalise that Act, only the Minister will declare what items come under variation and must remain constant. It is not subject to companies to dictate the variations and the cost. Last year, when we commissioned that review, I stated that the Government would look at the formula. We want that formula to be constant, consistent and compatible to the formula used in Indonesia and Malaysia. This is so that our growers sell and earn the same price because everyone, whether they are in Indonesia, Vietnam or Thailand, are selling to the same market so they should be earning the same benefits.

As for the review, I approved the terms of reference last year. After that the terms of reference and conditions went for public tender. After the public tender was closed the tender board selected two consultants. The first consultant was KE PNG. KE PNG was selected to carry out the investigation and provide an appropriate SFB pricing dictated by a new formula. The second consultant we appointed was Paul Baker from the Institute of National Affairs. He was appointed as an independent assessor and he represents OPIC and the *World Bank*. Within the

next three weeks. I expect KEPNG to submit the investigations to the Government Commodity Committee which is chaired by the Secretary for Treasury. The Secretary will then refer those findings from the investigation to Paul Baker for him to carry out an independent assessment, and he will advise the Government on the way forward and the appropriate formula for our country. The Cabinet will then decide on which formula we will accept.

As for the K17 million allocated for the roads, World Bank provided a total of 14 loans, two of which were given to the agriculture sector. The first loan was awarded to cocoa under PPAP program and for the next tranche cocoa was awarded K72 million. The second loan was for coffee and the next tranche, K82 million was appropriated and the draw down starts next year. The third was for the oil palm industry to build roads for small block holders. Unfortunately, those funds were used by companies who operated the nucleus plantations. These companies had estates so they used those funds to clean up their roads within the estates before cleaning up the roads for the small holders.

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The assessment that the review team from the World Bank did last year regarding the funding that they gave did not achieve what it was meant for. Therefore, that loan was cancelled and we did not proceed onto the next stage. Nevertheless, going forward, when we regulate all these the government may be the government can consider those roads as well under the new board.

Mr Speaker, I believe I have answered most of the questions. As for the last question, most of prices are determined by the type of fruit, I believe that I have four more minutes to finish answering the questions, Mr Speaker.

Most of the prices that our fresh produce farmers get are determined by the quality of the fruit. Normally, big fresh produce companies who have big farms send their trucks to pick up their fruit produces first during harvesting season. Most of the growers' farm sites are outside of the estates and when fruits are left for more than 24 hours their quality declines.

By the time the fruits are brought after 24 hours to the farm gates, they will be bought at a lower price. This is because their quality has now been reduced. Therefore, it is not only the issue of pricing formula but also how long will it take the farmers to go and bring in the fruit

produces. Once we address these issues our growers will obviously and clearly start to reap some good benefits the industry when they sell their fruits.

Mr Speaker, thank you.

Supplementary Question

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Does the Minister have any plans to build mills in the provinces where oil palm grows, so that, we may pay better prices and discourage a monopoly from occurring in these provinces?

Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL – I thank the Governor of Oro for his question.

At the moment, the Government has no plans in place regarding this issue. Nevertheless, we are working on a document to see how best our farmers and growers can sell oil palm instead of selling the oil palm fruits. Therefore, we are considering whether we should start building through a partnership with the government and the private sector as to whether we should start to build new mills that can cater to produce 20 tonnes of oil per hour. Or we follow the idea of the Governor of West New Britain where he wants to build a mill that produces one tonne of oil per hour.

Mr Speaker, that is under study and hopefully towards the end of the year I will be able to make a statement as to the way forward into the New Year regarding these mills.

Mr MALAKAI TABAR – This question is directed to the Minister for Inter-Governmental Relations, but since he is not present, I would like to direct this question to the Prime Minister.

Firstly, I would like to thank and congratulate the Government for the event yesterday for the first shipment of LNG.

Mr Speaker, there was a question in one of our daily newspapers dated Monday, 12 May, 2014. This question was asked by a ward member from my district and that question obviously needed a proper answer and it is only fair that I raise this question in Parliament. And that a proper explanation can be given so that the people out can know the issue.

As a bit of background information, last year 2013 there were some strong statements from the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General on the responsibility of government to adequately remunerate the government workers at the ward level. Like the ward councilor who is now known as the ward member, the village court magistrate, LLG lands mediator and the ward recorder.

Also, on Wednesday, 28 August, *The National* carried a front page article of 30 000 workers. These questions have been raised on this Floor of Parliament a few times and I think that it is only fair that the Prime Minister or people in the know to be able to give us a definite answer.

Mr Speaker, my questions are:

- (1) Do we have budget re-appropriation this year 2014 to remunerate the government workers at the ward level?
- (2) If there are allocations, then well then will they be paid, and what are the amount breakup for those different workers at the ward level?

Thank you.

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Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I also thank the honourable Member for Gazelle for these very important questions.

Mr Speaker, I will get the details from the Deputy Prime Minister and directly write to the honourable Member and give him details on the precise numbers and how much is being paid to the village court officials, land mediators, ward councilors and the like.

Mr Speaker, it is important that this Government recognises those government workers who are working at the ward level and the village level because they are the front line of delivery of government services to our people.

Mr Speaker, since independence, no remuneration has been paid to these people and I think it is only fair that those who maintain good law and order and provide good leadership in village settings are being remunerated well.

So I want to assure the honourable Member that there is an increased funding to the LLGs. For 2014, we have gave direct allocation for the service improvement program of K500

000 if I can recall, and there are also some funds allocated for the pay structures for all the village court officials and ward levels.

I understand that there are some difficulties about the registration process but I will get the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister to respond to him accordingly.

ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Public Service) – Mr Speaker, when the honourable Governor of West New Britain asked a question on retrenchment followed by a Supplementary Question from the Governor of Oro. I made a commitment to give some details on the retrenchment exercise last year and this year.

Mr Speaker, I the Governor of West New Britain stated that there are 33 identified retrench officers in his province and asked when we would retrench them and I am sure there are other Governors who also have the same issues. I wish to advise that in the 2013 retrenchment exercise, we retrenched a total of 258 public servants at a cost of about K10.3 million. We requested for K30 million in the budget and I did say that we did receive K20 million but we only received K10 million and therefore only 258 public servants were retrenched.

I also wish to inform Parliament that the Parliament appropriated a total of K50 million in this year's budget for the retrenchment exercise. So for those Governors who are keen to do this, we can work together to follow up the processes. At this stage, there is a carryover of 418 public servants to be retrenched. The Governor of West New Britain said he has 33 public servants to be retrenched but on my record, it is 34 public servants. The letters have been sent out so we request that the honourable Governor to get the Provincial Administrator to make sure that he responds to these letters from the Department of Personnel Management. The letter is basically an invitation to confirm and identify the positions, salary scales and age so that they then put into motion the process for determining the calculations.

I am very happy that Madang and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville visited my Department last week and submitted their list of names for those public servants who needs to be retrenched.

The other provinces are Kundiawa Hospital who listed three, Western Highlands Hospital listed 20, Modilon Hospital listed 12, Vanimo Hospital listed seven. The first payment to be made early this month was for the Vanimo Hospital staff. So, the Vanimo Hospital CEO and the staff have done a good job.

Milne Bay Province has nine staff to be retrenched, Western Highlands has 18, Milne Provincial Health Authority has nine, Madang Provincial Administration has 83. They have responded, so all the 83 provincial administration staff of Madang should be retrenched and paid out this year.

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All those include, 83 in Madang, 83 at Laloki, 3 in Eastern Highlands, 12 from Manus, 30 from Simbu, 14 in Morobe should be retrenched and paid out this year because all the validation has been completed, and 30 from Simbu. For those, letters have been sent out and there is a bit of time so if I can work together with the Governor and Provincial Administrator of Simbu to get those paid out this year because funds are there. In Bougainville, there is another 90 waiting. So there is a total of 418 are on the list to be processed but believe before August we should pay out 317 of those listed retrenched officers because they have been processed.

We have a total of 318 new public servants on the list for retrenchment, Popondetta Hospital, for the honourable Governor of Oro has 17, West Sepik has 42, West New Britain 15, Western Province 24, Madang another 94, Simbu 45 and a new list of 84 from ABG so that is a total of 380 to be done. So all in all, from 2013 and this year, we should have retrenched 1056 civil servants.

**PRESENCE OF CHILDREN IN THE GALLERY –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I wish to interrupt proceedings to announce the presence of children from two of our schools in Port Moresby.

On behalf of the Members of Parliament we'd like to acknowledge their presence in Parliament this morning.

We have the St. Joseph's International School and the Korobosea International School.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr CHARLES ABEL (Alotau – Minister for National Planning) – I ask leave of the Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

Motion (by **Mr Charles Abel**) agreed to –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent notice numbers 139, 136 and 140 Government Business being called on forthwith.

HIGHER EDUCATION (GENERAL PROVISIONS) BILL 2014

First Reading

Bill presented by Mrs **Delilah Gore** and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mrs DELILAH GORE (Sohe – Minister for Higher Education, Research and Technology) – I move –

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address this honourable Parliament of the State of Papua New Guinea.

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Mr Speaker, I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address this honourable House of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.

I am grateful to the Prime Minister, the Honourable Peter O'Neill CMG MP, for appointing me as Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology.

I want to assure this Parliament of my commitment and that, during my term, this country will see a revolution in higher education.

Today, I make my maiden speech to the Parliament, and in doing so, it is my greatest pleasure to present the Higher Education (General Provisions) Bill 2014.

This Bill is a significant milestone in the history of tertiary education in Papua New Guinea, to carry our country forward. It replaces the *Higher Education Act 1983*, which has not been substantially amended since it was introduced over 30 years ago.

This new Bill will create a legal and regulatory environment that: encourages innovations and achievement; promotes quality; improves institutional and organizational accountability to Government; and assists policy coordination between tertiary education and research, science and technology.

Mr Speaker, the new Bill provides for the establishment of the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology. The new Department will replace the Commission for Higher Education and the Office of Higher Education.

The new Department will be directly answerable to Parliament for its performance, through me as the responsible Minister. There are many pressing reasons to replace the *Higher Education Act 1983*.

We know that we need rapid expansion of opportunities for our young people once they leave school. These are both educational and employment opportunities. To meet these challenges will require innovation, efficient use of resources and accountability for outputs. The Bill gives the new Department a clear responsibility for achieving sectoral and inter-agency coordination for tertiary education.

Mr Speaker, I say coordination not control because the way forward is through carefully negotiated joint actions and partnerships. Such partnerships will recognize the roles of different agencies and empower our institutions of higher education.

I commit to you that the new Department will work with other departments and agencies, including provincial and local level governments, to ensure a fully coordinated approach to improving our entire post-secondary education sector.

We must not only increase the number of institutions but we must make better use of the opportunities afforded by technology, to extend the reach of tertiary education to all districts in the nation.

An expansion of existing and new institutions will help also to increase national research productivity and technological innovation. The new Department will work closely with the Science and Technology Council to ensure coordination and effective implementation of the national research policy directions set by the Council.

Mr Speaker, the 1983 Act did not take account of the need for our institutions to aim for international standards of quality. It does not provide adequately for gate-keeping functions to protect the public from bogus or financially unsustainable providers.

Mr Speaker, the new Bill creates an independent Board within the Department to be responsible for quality assurance for all tertiary education institutions and for the PNG National Qualifications Framework.

Mr Speaker, this board will act to protect and enhance quality. An essential feature of the Bill is to separate regulatory decision-making on quality assurance from other funding and policy functions, to avoid conflicts of interest.

Mr Speaker, the Bill sets out comprehensive and transparent requirements for the approval and accreditation of all institutions, including universities and overseas providers. The

new Board may delegate approval functions to other agencies if it is satisfied with their quality assurance processes.

Mr Speaker, the 1983 *Act* imposes no requirements for accountability and performance of our institutions of higher education.

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No requirement for accountability and performance of our institutions of higher education. Our new bill gives powers to ensure better accountability in particular the bill's provisions to improve the governors of universities. This includes requirements for NEC approvals of members of public universities governing body. Importantly the bill sets out a clear process to be followed in the event of poor governance, mismanagement or other crisis at our state universities.

This process will help to avoid a reputation of the unfortunate series of events that occurred in the Unitech saga. The new legislation has been designed to allow flexibility in future developments of our tertiary education sector. To provide partners for further education and training for all our school leavers. It gives a new department opportunity to develop new, more cost effective and sustainable funds model.

In summary the new bill represents a significant updating and recasting of arrangement for tertiary education in Papua New Guinea, to emphasise coordination, partnership and quality. The new bill has been developed consultatively, it provides legislative framework that is fit purposely for the 21st century.

Mr Speaker, I commend, the Higher Education General Provision Bill to the House.

Dr ALLAN MARAT (Rabaul) – Mr Speaker, let me firstly commend the Minister for Higher Education for coming to the Floor of this Parliament with this bill. I believe all Members of Parliament are passionate about the quality and standard of education in this country and many of us would like to see our children excel in terms of quality education.

Mr Speaker, I have not read through the bill but I believe from the statement from the Minister it sets out what we hope to be quality in the administrative process in education. Some

of us believe that quality education is something that is found between the teacher, the pupil relationship in the classroom and outside of the classroom.

It is to be found in the actual researching methodology, researching of certain subjects and even to the extent of students becoming specialists in the various areas of interests. I believe that it is incumbent upon up on every Member of this House to fully understand the provisions of this bill and to contribute in their own ways within the perimeters of their district education system in order to assist with the actual quality output of the education that our students obtain.

Mr Speaker, there is a lot more to obtaining quality education than just legislating for it. For instance we can ask ourselves the question; how do we promote among the students, perseverance in research and commitment. These are things that we expect our students to have in their search for quality knowledge. These are things that remain to be found in this bill.

And of course if quality procedure is provided well and good, I believe what really matters is the end product and it is the students, the human being what he or she receives in this relationship between the teacher and himself or herself.

15/07

And for this this country can go a long way if quality is given to the student so that the student can have quality understanding and knowledge and perhaps a comprehensive understanding of the existing knowledge in their areas of interest. That is what we are looking for and I hope that this Bill will enable us to be able to achieve quality education on the part of our student and for the future generation to come.

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable Minister for Higher Education, she has lived up to her undertaking in response to my question this week. Thank you.

SIR PUKA TEMU (Abau-Minister for Public Service) – Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I want to join the honourable Member for Rabaul in congratulating the Minister for Higher Education on this important Bill. I know that every leader on the Floor of this Parliament will stand to support her.

Mr Speaker, when the University for Papua New Guinea opened up in 1966, 48 years ago, there was a sense of pride. On this occasion I also want to acknowledge UPNG for the role it

played in training of the human resources before Independence and also the role that Vudal played in 1967 when the first enrolments were made. Not to mention the University of Technology of Lae, Goroka Teachers college and many other colleges and research institutions, especially in the area that I have come from which is the Institute of Medical Research.

Mr Speaker, I graduated just after independence and it is sad to see that the quality of the education as well as the quality of graduates is not the same as the nation had expected. Having come out of the University of Papua New Guinea as a medical graduate, we were taught at Taurama Medical School to uphold the Hypocrites oath. With the knowledge that we had gained at the expense of the taxpayers of Papua New Guinea, we must dispense our knowledge and responsibilities professionally. I remember the American and Australian professors and lecturers ensured that even as students, we dressed properly and turned up on time. If we were on call, we would advise the nurses on our location if the patient needed us. We made sure we were not out of reach and there were no mobile phones, only beeper systems. We were taught that if we were on call at the Port Moresby General Hospital, we were not to go to Boroko for lunch or to our houses to have dinner so that when we were needed we were there right on time. That was discipline and professionalism. We earned our money. Mr Speaker, I was paid K300 a fortnight when I graduated.

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I was on-call from Friday night through to Sunday night and when a 69 year old man came into the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) I found myself falling asleep on his stomach because I was exhausted but I knew my job. Today, nurses are running around looking for doctors because they are nowhere to be found. This is because doctors are moonlighting somewhere at a private practice.

Mr Speaker, apart from the law, we need to bring back the responsibility that professionalism, ethics and values of graduates that are going to take this country into the 21st Century.

Mr Speaker, this is the type of commitment that we need from this legislation. Our future generations must have the commitment to be patriotic and serve our country to the best of their abilities. You will see the long lines of people queuing up at the hospitals, Lands Department,

Public Prosecutor' Office, private accountant or et cetera. This is because there is no courtesy due to lack of discipline.

Mr Speaker, we need to bring back all these values because these are the values that will take this country forward.

Mr Speaker, as of yesterday we had the greatest opportunity. I have always said that we are still on the tarmac and have not taken off yet into the skies. As of yesterday we are close to taking off but we have not taken off yet. When I championed the Vision 2050, I got everybody going around the country and we asked the people what kind of Papua New Guinea they wanted to see in 2050. And with that, the Vision 2050 says three big things. It says that we will be wise, smart and prayer.

So for every citizen, we want them to be smart Papua New Guineans. We want to be people with wisdom and live a life of prayer so that we will be a happier society. These were the cries of our people throughout the country. I went to the districts asking the mothers and they would come out and say that, we want to be smart people, we want to be wise people. And this is the drive that we need to build.

Mr Speaker, the second point that I want to make is that, today, Information Technology (IT) is the new religion now. The rate at which IT develops is faster than any other development that I have known. Nevertheless, right now and into the future, it is the knowledge and ability of a nation and the institutions of those States and their ability to harness the power of IT, I believe will determine the pace at which they will advance in terms of knowledge.

Mr Speaker, right now, as we speak and I speak on behalf of my 53 000 people of Abau, 99 percent of my elementary, community and primary schools do not have access to IT. This is because the technology is not there and all they have is a mobile phone.

Therefore, we must now slow down the digital divide between the urban and rural citizens of this nation. I believe that the way of the future is harnessing IT through all the educational institutions including the higher education institutions. We need to resolve to provide a budget to make sure that every school in this nation has access to IT and that every child is computer literate and IT literate.

This is the way of the future and because of this businesses and the education sector because of how they will harness IT. And so, please, let us focus on some of these smart ways of

doing business in the world. I believe that if we can harness and expand the infrastructure of our Information Technology and cover the entire country, our future children will compete with their counterparts in Australia and America as competently as they can.

17/07

That is the opportunity that this Government will create because we have access to the volume of resources that no other government had ever had.

Mr Speaker, the third point I want to raise is on the issue of research and development. I am a passionate believer of innovativeness because only when we give due credit to institutions that take the lead in research and technology, we will fall behind no matter how much political rhetoric we bring on the Floor of Parliament. If we do not give due credit to research and development in the country, we will be way behind.

For instance, Malaysia and other countries were on the same pace of development with us 40 years ago, now they are 40 years ahead. We were at the same level of knowledge on farming cash crops like cocoa, coffee and rubber but they are 40 years ahead of us because of research and development. I have always echoed this sentiment from the Asian Development Bank, that for nations to move forward at a pace that is cognizant with the rest of the world, three things are important; good infrastructure, strong institution and innovativeness.

We should aim to have widespread infrastructure, covering the whole country because Papua New Guinea is a small country with a small land mass. Fifty per cent of my Abau District doesn't have roads. I travel by dinghy and sank four times in the sea.

Mr Speaker, we should be covering the entire country with roads; for example, link Kupiano with Alotau so I can travel to Alotau and back anytime or from Kupiano to Tufi. We need to now cover the country with public infrastructure; not only roads but electricity, water and IT technology. That is what I mean by public infrastructure. We must wake up PNG Power and Telikom to perform their duties and hook these institutions with IT.

Mr Speaker, research and development is very important, and for the Minister responsible, it is so critical. I will now share one very proud sentiment. While I was a young medical student, one of the scientists, Professor Gajdusek was recognised by the world as one of the top scientist in the world because he discovered virus that causes Kuru in our Okapa people.

He did his research in this remote place in Papua New Guinea called Okapa and became famous. No other nation knew about Papua New Guinea until this scientist discovered the Kuru virus and put us on the world map, and that is what research can do for our nation.

Motion (by **Mr Ben Micah**) agreed to –

That the question be now put.

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

Bill read a second time.

18/07

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

A message from his Excellency, the Governor-General dated 8 May 2014 was announced recommending the expenditure of public monies in accordance with *Section 210* of the *Constitution* insofar as the Bill relates to and provides for such expenditure.

Third Reading

Leave granted to move the third reading forthwith.

Ms DELILAH GORE (Higher Education Science and Technology) – I move –

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Motion – That the question be now put – agreed to.

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

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

Sir Michael Somare – Point of Order! I rise to raise a question on the Third Reading. I was going to ask a question on the TVET concept that is introduced in Papua New Guinea that goes with the Higher Education but I've not been noticed.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, sorry we have passed that stage of the process already so I will just go on. I think this question comes under the Minister for Education so I will let you ask your question tomorrow during Question Time.

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

AYES – 75

NOES – 0

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

Bill read a third time.

20/07

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr CHARLES ABEL (Alotau –Minister for National Planning and Monitoring) –I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

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

Motion (by **Mr Charles Abel**) agreed to-

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent the Order of the Day No. 140 this day called on forthwith.

CIVIL REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 2014

First Reading

Bill presented (by **Mr Charles Abel**) and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr CHARLES ABEL (Alotau-Minister for National Planning and Monitoring) – I move -

That the Bill be read a second time.

Mr Speaker, I am very privileged today to present the Civil Registration Amendment Bill and I think that you will have noted that yesterday in my response to a question from Honourable Tobias Kulang on the statistics of our Government and its efforts to improve the statistical recording system around the Census and CPI statistics, the GDP data and all other data relating to statistics by our Government.

As part of those reforms is our attempt to bring in the ID system, and I am pleased to table this Bill. I have a long statement but I will read some of it and commit the rest of it to be incorporated in the *Hansard*.

I acknowledge the Government for the decision to introduce the National ID card system under the special ID project as part of the reform, and as part of the initiative to improve the generation of timely statistics to inform Government decision.

I also put on record the support of the following agencies, the Ministry and the Department of Community Development, Youth and Religion, the National Civil registry Office and the leadership of my fellow Minister Loujaya Kouza, in terms of developing the legal framework and the assistance of other key agencies under my Ministry for the overall project and the leadership management and the National Statistical office for the ongoing project and Huawei contractors for the systems design and technology and other participating agencies.

Mr Speaker, every country throughout the world needs to know the identity and civil status of its citizens, a characteristic of the trends and changes in its population. And the global lessons are that the countries with accurate and reliable statistical information are progressing in development.

Those countries that lack in quality and quantitative population suffer the opposite. In March 2013, the Government recognised the need to record and account every individual citizen, which the country has over the years failed to address. As a responsible Government, a strategic decision was made to introduce the National Identity Program.

Mr Speaker, the Government subsequently directed the formulation of the policy and legislative development to establish a national register to serve as platform to capture the entire citizen identity, civil status and for the reliable update of population information for a trustworthy registration and identification system.

The NEC Decision No 97/2013 approved the establishment of an eID Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Minister for National Planning and the National Task Force to oversee the development of the National ID Card Project and the lead NEC role to the Department of National Planning and Monitoring. In May 2013, the Ministerial Committee directed the Ministry of Community Development to undertake the legislative and community development which was accomplished in November 2013.

The policy legislation was further supported by Huawei through the engagement of renowned international consultant in Professor Raymond Wong an expert in biometrics, identity design and management systems who provided independent assessment of a draft of civil and identity registration, policy and legislation.

21/07

In December, 2013, NEC decision No: 464/2013 approved the drafting instructions on the Civil Registration Amendment Bill 2014. On the same date, NEC decision No: 466/2013 also approved the National and Civil Registry Policy and further directed the integration and housing of the NID with the office of Civil Registry.

In February 2014, the responsibility for the *Vivil Registration Act* was transferred to Ministry of National Planning and Monitoring from Ministry of Youth, Religion and Community Development under the Ministerial Determination of Titles and Responsibilities of Ministers, and Gazetted in the Gazettal notice No: G38 Friday, 7 February 2014.

In March 2014, the NEC Decision No:80/2014, noted the content of the policy submission and approved the Civil Registration (Amendment) Bill 2014 for tabling in Parliament.

Citizens Identity Issues

Mr Speaker, the formal registration and identity system was introduced in 1963 through the enactment of *Civil Registration Act* (1963) to cater for registration of births, deaths and marriages. Sadly, 50 years later, 80 per cent of the total population of citizen's legal proof of identity remain unregistered

In the last decade, birth registration and certification gain prominence as a result of the increasing end-user demand for identity verification. However, it lacks reach and coverage to most parts of the country due to organisational and institutional capacity of the current registration system.

Other population data collection agencies such as the Electoral Commission, and National Statistical Office have been able to establish population estimates for the country, however, these agencies are mandated to collect only specific quota of the population figures over a set period of time. It is common that lack of linkage and information systems and administrative records on individual citizen does exist and this creates islands of information.

More so, the issues of corruption in all forms such as trans-border crimes, human trafficking, fraudulent claims to inheritance, ghost payrolls, double voting and et cetera are all related to the inability to establish the identity of a person.

Establishing a trustworthy identity system is essential for true identification, legal and social protection, reliable population and statistical information to the Government and many other users.

Policy Framework

Mr Speaker, the National ID project in 2013 developed the 'National Persons and Civil Registration Policy', which is about the identification and registration of persons through collection of individual citizen bio-data and biometric images to identify and authenticate each individual for the issuance of National Identification Card (NID) the NID card will supersede all national forms of identification by linking administrative records with national register to end user system through a linking identification number randomly generated during the registration process.

The policy envisions to enable and ensure all citizens are fully accounted and identified with a trustworthy identity document and meaningfully contribute to the development of a safe, secure and healthier PNG, where all citizens including children are proud, happy and value their identity, originality and citizenship.

Mr Speaker, the civil and persons' registration policy is guided by the following policy objectives.

(1) To design and develop a live national database providing a national register containing entries on personal, civil and biometric information, population events and population information with data interfacing capabilities.

(2) To enable and ensure effective collaboration between lead agencies (Civil Registry Office and National Statistics Office) in the overall project implementation on persons', registration infrastructure, data interfacing capabilities.

(3) To ensure and promote regulatory and compliance requirements guaranteeing the protection of the National register, privacy of information and systems application.

(4) To facilitate and interlink the national identity card with electoral voter identification and other user agencies for visual and electronic identity verification purposes.

(5) And to elevate the status and build the organisational and technical capacity of the National Civil and Persons Registration Office to effectively administer the National Register, registration system, identity management and delivering the issuance identity documents and related population data.

Policy Content

Mr Speaker, the National Database will contain the National Register and population information on persons residing in the country. As a live database, it will determine the up-to-date information about the size and characteristics of the population and requires effective collaboration and linkage with the National Statistics system, Health information system, Education information system and other agency information systems and administrative records.

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The National Register will also have files on the current population events relating to internal and external migration (first time registration of immigrations and foreigners entering the country,) change of name, relocation, change of residential address, granting and withdrawing of naturalised citizenship.

Capabilities include data inter-linkages with other agencies on things, for example; for passports, criminal records, taxation, disability, elderly care, education, public service and et cetera.

The registration system is defined as the Office of the Registrar-General providing institutional and administrative infrastructure, provincial and district civil and identity registry, ward civil identity unit, and the Central Archives. These offices and units will be adequately resourced and delegated with statutory responsibility to perform the registration activity. Twenty two civil and identity registries will be established and administered by a delegated provincial register. Every individual and family within the community is obligated to register every birth, marriage, including customary marriage divorce and death.

Mr Speaker, the National Identity Card remains the property of the State. The first time issuance and renewal of the National ID Card is free. The card holder is obligated for the safe keeping of the card and to tender the identity card wherever the ID is required by any agency and reported to the nearest police station or civil and identity office if the card is missing, lost or

stolen. A user fee will apply for replacement after the first replacement. The National Identity Card will be issued to citizens 18 years of age and above, and the card is valid for 10 years and renewal every 10 years.

Mr Speaker, the foundation for sound individual identity and civil registration systems and population management systems in the country is based on a well-designed policy and legislation that gives clear guidance on how the Citizen Identification and Registration System will work. The registration of individual's personal details, bio-metric images and fingerprints must have a legal basis.

The law guarantees the protection of privacy reservation of individual records and issuance of legal identity, and civil status documents. The legislation conforms to the *National Constitution* that accords all citizens equal rights and further guarantees all citizens born before and after Independence. The issuance of identity cards supports accountability in terms of identity and nationality.

Mr Speaker, furthermore, it complies with the International Covenant On Civil And Political Rights for defending the rights of registered births, marriages, death, divorce, the right to a name, the right of place of origin, the right to own an identity and other human rights.

In order to fully capture the Government's intention to introduce the National Identity Cards to its citizens, minor amendments were proposing from the status and organisational capacity of the Civil Registration Office. In line with policy requirements, legislative amendments are necessary to ensure provisional laws for the registration system to capture individual citizen's bio-data, bio-metric image and fingerprints, and the issuance of a trustworthy identity document, and the protection of this private information.

In general terms, the law as it is now has provisions that enable the issuance of a unique registration number, however, further amendments are necessary in the following terms: for the Registrar General to establish a National Register for the enrolment of all citizen's personal information; to prescribe the type of information to be collected; strict security measures to protect the information system; Common Seal and signature of Registrar General; other registers and indexes; compulsoriness of registration; eligible age for issuance of cards; characteristics of the National Identity Card; unique registration number; registration of customary marriage;

registration of divorce; appointment of the Registrar General by Head of State; and elevating the status of the Civil Registry Office.

Moreover, the National Identity Card will also enhance non discrimination, accountability and visibility of every citizen to equal opportunity to take part in the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of the country consistent with the National Goals and directive principles and other legislations, including the *National Citizenship Act 1975*, *Marriage Act 1963* and *Lukautim Pikinini Act 2000*, that govern and support the establishment of the identity and civil status of a person.

Mr Speaker, the National Identity Card will contain prescribed and regulated individual identity information required and protected by law. The card will contain the name of the card holder, date of birth, place of origin and facial image in the front of the card, and a full bio-data about the person.

The security features of the card include micro text that is commonly used throughout the world with miniature text 'Independent State of Papua New Guinea' both in the front and back of the card. Laser anti-counterfeiting also enhances the physical appearances of the identity card. Ultra violet ink similarly used in passports is used on the extracted image of the Southern Cross and Bird of Paradise.

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Robust security feature also includes Optical Variable Ink (OVI), which is widely used around the world to display variations in colours when the card is seen in different angles.

The chip containing the general information is based on Petos material and the chip is fully compliant with International Standard Organisation (ISO) 7816 (contactless card) and ISO 14443 type AB card.

Benefits of the National Register and Identity Card

Mr Speaker, the benefits of the Civil and Identity Registrations system, National Register and the use of National Identity Card has multiple benefits both to the individual card, end-user agency and the government.

Firstly, citizens are fully accounted by face value and identity card holders have guaranteed identities to clan membership, claims to royalties, inheritance, estates and other

entitlements. It is also useful for accessing vital government subsidised services such as education and health, pension for elderly and disabled persons or other government benefits.

There are also other vital areas such as financial inclusion, disaster alert and management, migration or online visa and passport processing, access to records and archives and online transactions in the future. Furthermore, card holders will use it to enroll and vote during election without their identity duplicated by someone else.

The registration and identity system will generate timely, reliable, updated and accurate population and statistical information that will significantly enable the government to make informed decisions on development agendas and service delivery.

The identity system promotes citizen's life cycle management enabled by the population information management system that tracks a citizen's life from when a person is born to the day they attend school, attain qualification, hold a job, apply for license or citizenship, travel, marriage or commit a crime and eventually die; their information will be continuously updated into the National Register by various contributing agencies.

Inter-Agency Collaboration

The National Statistics Office, PNG Electoral Commission and Civil Registry Office are the population data gathering agencies with specific mandates governed by specific laws. The Civil Registry Office is mandated as the custodian of individual personal information and issuance of legal identity and civil status documents. The issuance of National Identity Card is well within the mandate of the Civil Registry.

In an effort to inter-link National Register with other registers to enhance standardisation of identity management and data verification system with other agencies, system inter-linking will be addressed through the introduction of unique national identity number which will serve as the unique key enabler. Inter-agency collaboration is an important function necessary for awareness, user needs, standardisation and et cetera.

Implementation Challenges

Mr Speaker, a concerted effort is made to deliver national identity cards to all the citizens aged 18 years and above by 2015. There are challenges that are cultural, geographical, management and technical in nature that are likely to be encountered. As a country, we are prepared to deal with these challenges in ensuring the national identity card is delivered. Some

are already taking prominence. For instance, a misconception that the national identity card is linked to the religious belief on the number 666. The fact that mass proportion of the population have low literacy level and are computer illiterate, therefore can be easily misinformed about the national identity card and may have consequential implications to the successful implementation of the project. It is essential that churches are urged to take responsible approach informing their members with accurate information on the introduction and use of national identity card.

Given the fact that the population is widely dispersed throughout the country and reaching them will be a challenge, considering the country's topographical characteristics and geographical location of the communities. The experiences and expertise of other agencies such as NSO or Electoral Commission is required in the National Citizens Identity Registration Campaign.

Most communities are not aware of the civil registration system and the national identity document information and misinterpret it as another census or enrolment. Eighty per cent of the population lack the knowledge and value of registration and the use of legal identity and civil status documents and may include national identity card in their livelihood. Consequently, this will require intensive and accelerated awareness and advocacy activities to adequately inform and educate ordinary citizens.

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As to fully inform our people about the good benefits and assistance, the Government is serving them through this programme.

There is also a time factor we are facing because of our Government's commitment to put in place a mechanism to improve the electoral process and hence, directions from Cabinet and off course the Prime Minister to accelerate the programme and so appropriate measures have been undertaken to do so.

And we've brought the timeline forward by one year in terms of our programme to get this system underway in sufficient time before the 2017 Election so we can utilise the benefits of this system as much as possible.

Mr Speaker, the National Identity Project is governed through the Ministerial Committee as said, it's a part project governance, system design and development, institutional design and development and infrastructure development.

I'll skip that but I'll just emphasise once gain the points that I've said about the 22 Provincial Civil and Identity Registry that will be established between October 2014 and September 2015.

Some will have new buildings, others will have renovated buildings, there'll be new staffing, remote site computer equipment, systems connectivity through the IGIS, Integrated Government Information System with the Department of Communication and all the necessary registration material to facilitate the processing of registration.

The Office will perform the key role of registration, issuance of certified documents and downloading of the registration from the mobile registration team that will be moving around within the provinces and the districts to download national data to the National Processing Centre.

Mr Speaker, for the first time Provincial Officers will be administered by Provincial Registrar as a delegate of the Registrar-General to sign and issue legal documents and certificates from the Provincial Offices, Ward, Civil and at any Registry unit would also be established in the 6189 wards as I was explaining from the Supplementary Question by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition yesterday. This is where the Ward Recorder and his record book comes in as very important, linking this process and the mobile unit will be responsible for the ID verification Committee, the port to mobile registration teams and to conduct on going registration of new vital events thereafter.

Ward Recorders defined under the *Organic Law* will be re-aligned as ward registrars under the Civil Registration (Amendment) Bill 2014 to administer the function at ward level, further collaboration with Provincial Affairs and Local Level Government is ongoing and necessary.

Mr Speaker in relation to that as well, the National ID Rollout will commence in five provinces initially namely the Southern Highlands, Western Highlands, West New Britain, Milne Bay and Sandaun beginning in October and the rest will follow in 2015.

The following agencies schedules will be interlinked in the inception stage, Department of Education Information System, Department of Health Information System –

Mr Peter Ipatas – Point of Order! – Sir, do not make a statement, present the Bill and we will vote.

Mr Speaker, I think he is making a statement to Parliament, I think he should just present the Bill and we vote on it.

Mr SPEAKER – Thank you, honourable Governor.
Minister I think you should incorporate your statement.

Mr CHARLES ABEL – Thank you, Mr Speaker, as you can see the timely intervention by the Governor there, sorry I didn't mean to read all that. It's just good for a bit of understanding.

Anyway, it will be interlinked and there's also, as I mentioned already the important work with the PNG Electoral Commission to incorporate it and get it ready for the upcoming election.

Mr Speaker, with that, I commend this Civil Registry Amendment Bill to this honourable Parliament.

Motion (by **Mr Patrick Pruaitch**) agreed to –

That the question be now put.

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

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Motion (by **Mr Charles Abel**) proposed –

That the Bill be now read a third time.

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Mr WILLIAM POWI (Southern Highlands) –Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognizing me. In my view, this is a very important legislation that underpins the development, governance and progress of this country.

Firstly, I commend the Minister for bringing this Bill forward to Parliament. I also want to commend the O'Neill-Dion Government for recognizing this important legislation that will set the benchmark for development and progress of this country in the years to come now and in the future.

There are 1.3 billion people of China, over a billion in India, around 240 million people in Indonesia and we only have 7.5 million people, but governance and management of our country has been a problem for us over the years. We have now realized the importance of identification, which will establish who we are and what we are.

Mr Speaker, that will set a lot of basis for the way in which we plan our predictability in population growth, how we deal with our criminal justice system, how we formulate our planning for now and in the future, how we deal with electoral issues and administrations of the elections in this country and that has been an issue of concern, let alone the national and supreme court have been bombarded with electoral petition cases.

So we need to prepare the provinces and districts in this country. This is very important and I want to raise this with the people Papua New Guinea and also to the Members of Parliament that this Government has brought about a very significant legislation. We need to take ownership and drive with it. We need to identify our people and know who they are and where they are.

A typical example in the city of Port Moresby is seen as when there is a road block, or when someone steals someone else's property, you will find it difficult to identify who he is or who she is. I think with this issue and legislation, you will bring about clarity in governance, in our planning system, the criminal justice system, and in the way in which we run our systems in this country.

There is potential to bring about progress and development in the years to come and this is an important legislation we are debating and we pass it soon.

I congratulate the Minister and the National Government for seeing the need for this country in the years to come. Thank you.

Motion (by **Mr Patrick Pruaitch**) agreed to –

That the questions be now put.

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

Bill read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Patrick Pruaitch**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 12.35 p.m..