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LEE SIROTE
Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

SEVENTH DAY

Thursday 19 February 2015

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SEVENTH DAY

Thursday 19 February 2015

The Deputy Speaker, (**Mr Aide Ganasi**), took Chair at 10.a.m

There being no quorum present, the Deputy Speaker Suspended the Parliament until the ringing of the bells.

Sitting suspended.

The Speaker (**Mr Theo Zurenuoc**) again took Chair at 11.a.m., and invited Member for Nawaë, **Honourable Gisuwat Siniwin** to say Prayers:

‘In the name of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Spirit, Gracious God, we are thankful and we confess and profess that you are our Lord and Saviour Thank you for that faith that we have. Continue to strengthen that faith in us that we may proclaim your name at the same time as we do the work of the Government. Thank you once again for electing us to hold the positions as leaders of this Nation. We come before you and we ask for your wisdom and knowledge and we ask you to give us your understanding and the Spirit that make us to walk and stand up speak for our nation. Lord, we ask special blessing for our Prime Minister, our Speaker, and all the Ministers and all the Members of this Parliament. May you bless us and may you continue to embrace us with your word, wisdom and knowledge and give us that Spirit to drive us so that we can be motivated and give us the power to do things which is right for our electorates and our people. Lord accept us as sinners and bless us for we are sinners and make us holy for you are holy. Lord this is the Prayer we ask in the name of our Lord and coming King. Amen’.

QUESTIONS

Ms LOUJAYA KOUZA – Thank you Mr Speaker. I would like to direct this question to the Honourable Minister for Works.

Mr Speaker, in the light of compensation issues and Government need of the timely completion of the Highlands Highway,

Does the Works Ministry have any measures in place for the uninterrupted highway development?

Mr FRANCIS AWESA – Thank you Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable Member for Lae, Loujaya Kouza for this very important question.

Compensation issues has dominated the media and in rural areas especially in the Highlands Highway areas. I want to answer this question in this manner. As a result of all this compensation issues which is becoming more common and more entrenched in some areas, the measures that we intend to take as of today would be signing of an MOA between ministers of State, Police, Defence, the Commissioner for Police and the Defence Commander and the Works Minister and the Works Secretary. We are signing an MOA today whereby the MOA will spell out in detail the call out that Cabinet has approved recently.

The Cabinet in its wisdom decided to have this call-out in place and the call-out cannot be effective without some measures being taken on the ground. What we intend to do from today onwards would be to have four locations along the entire Highlands Highway route, starting with Kainantu, Kauge, Nipa, Watabum, and Wabag. Each of these locations would be manned by units of Police and Army personnel comprising in numbers of up to 100. Logistics support and all other support will be forthcoming once I put the case for funding by Cabinet.

I want to say that compensation issues is a very big industry where we have allowed people who are very fortunate to stay along the highway and roadsides and are already lucky because they are fortunate to have these roads in their area. This highway enables them to go to main centres, and sell their crops in main towns and cities but they have forgotten the rest of the people who reside at the back. I think it's about time the Government takes a positive action.

I want to state here that we are not just talking; we are going to take action. And compensation issues, I believe, will be a thing of the past because I am in consultation with other agencies like the Lands Ministry, Transport and Police and we will be looking at legislation to outlaw compensation altogether. Where there is fair compensation we will consider it but not unreasonable compensation.

I think we should all stand up to it and say no because it is hindering progress and development in this country especially in the rural areas. We must take a positive stand and that is the reason why we are taking these measures. It is very unfortunate but it is a measure that is warranted because we have allowed this situation to get out of control in some areas.

02/07

I want to reiterate again that in a lot of areas, the leaders are not supporting the National Government. They are participating in compensation demands and they want the Works Department and the contractors to pay compensation. Concerned citizens should stand up and demand problems along the Highways because every time when there is a landslide or any natural disaster people living along the Highway claim compensation against the Government. They even hold up big trucks and rob passengers in public buses and demand for money too. They have been doing this for a long time so Government has to wake up to this problem because these people cannot hold the traveling public and country to ransom. We have to take drastic action by involving the Defence and Police personnel throughout the entire 800 kilometres of Highway. They will be patrolling day and night to make sure that the travelling public is not harassed or harmed in anyway. During landslips the contractors and engineers of Works Department will take charge of to allow free access to the travelling public. This measure will come into force as of today when we sign the MOA.

Supplementary Questions

Mr KERENGA KUA – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am glad that the Minister has moved forward in taking decisive action on these issues regarding our National Highways. We need to understand that these highways have been in existence for more than 50 years already and the 40-metre corridor that they occupy has already been acquired and owned by the Government. The Government does not need any more than the 40-metre corridor, it already owns that. Anybody who is inside that 40-metre corridor is himself a trespasser.

Having understood that, my questions are:-

(1) Can the Minister, now that he has signed up and engaged the military and the police, insist upon the State's rights to the 40-metre corridor?

These trespassers are not entitled to monetary compensation. What they are entitled to by law, as I understand, is just reasonable notices.

(2) Can you ensure that they are just given reasonable notice and after the expiry of the notice you move the strong arm of the law? You need to manage the scarce monetary resources to build the road and not to pay compensation, so are you going to do these two things?

Mr FRANCIS AWESA – Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for Sinasina-Yonggamugl, Honourable Kerenga Kua, for his two important questions.

In relation to the 40-metre corridor, everybody understands and knows this law 40-metre corridor, especially on the main highways is always regarded as the State acquired land. But we have allowed people to settle within the 40-metre corridors. They even build trade stores and grow crops few metres away from the main road and this has grown uncontrollably in many areas. When the Government wants to rehabilitate or extend these highways people claim compensation.

In 2010, the Government passed a law called *Roads Infrastructure Protection Act* and it is in place to stop these types of activities but it has not been enforced as yet. So part of this exercise with the call-out involving the military, police, we will also involve the judiciary to take legal action if people continue to disobey

03/07

Hopefully, the Courts will introduce penalties that will be severe due to the importance of the issue. The penalty we are looking at is five years imprisonment and K100 000 fines. This is what we are embarking on, as it has been over four years where we have not really applied the use of this law.

The second question in relation to reasonable time it will also be part of the exercise that will be given by the works department, working in collaboration with the police and defence personnel. I want to say that this is not a one-off exercise and that it will continue as it is a big issue. We will look at it in the long term so that the country is seen to be moving forward.

Mr TITUS PHILEMON – Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Fisheries. Before I ask my question, I would like to commend him and the Government for amendment that was brought to the Parliament yesterday. And I would like to thank him on

behalf of the people of Milne Bay, as under the Coastal Fisheries Program a new jetty was built at Rabaraba, which was recently opened by the Prime Minister.

Under the same program, the jetties of Kiriwina and Kaibola were built and they are now used by cruise ships and other operators on the island. And I know we will apply for some more in the future.

My question is in relation to the moratorium on beech-de-mere in the country, especially in the coastal provinces. This is not the first time that we have asked the question to the Minister and it seems each time the issue is raised; we are referred to the scientific research being made on the moratorium.

From rumours, it is said that this moratorium will be lifted in 2016 and if this is true; this will be good news for our coastal communities.

Can the Minister confirm or deny that the moratorium will be lifted next year?

Mr MAO ZEMMING – I want to thank the Governor of Milne Bay for his question. Beech-de-mere were depleting in stock, therefore, the previous Government imposed a moratorium. Many of our people benefited from the revenue. However, due to some problems and that there were very low stocks; the ban on harvesting was imposed.

Scientists believe over-harvesting saw the depletion in stock and recovery was very slow. The Government recognised this and created the National Sea Cucumber Management Committee to monitor these stocks, and according to a report from this team, the recovery is so slow and there are low stocks in the sea, therefore, the moratorium cannot be lifted.

The management team will meet at the end of this year and review data and information that they have collected since 2010. And if their findings say that the moratorium can be lifted then it will be lifted but should their findings say otherwise, we will see the ban continue until the stock numbers are good.

04/07

I just want to elaborate more on the programs on the Coastal Fisheries sector. When we removed this industry there were a lot of problems that arose from the coastal provinces.

But when this Government came in, Mr Speaker, we realised the problems and we put the District Support Grants where the Members of these coastal provinces can assist our people with alternate programs.

The Government has realised this too and have organised the "Jetty Programs" that

the Governor has mentioned, we are trying our best to have jetties in all the coastal provinces while we are still in office.

The Governor of Milne Bay has made a very good statement that he is very happy with us on how we are running this program.

I want to assure the Parliament that the Government has a coastal fisheries agency in place that is looking after the Jetty Programs and in the National Planning we have a boat program whereby all the districts in the coastal provinces will receive a boat each.

These programs are in place so our government has realised our problems in the coastal areas and we are trying to address them but it will take some time. Also the provincial governments are given provincial grants, like in the Milne Bay Province, we gave them K2 million and I know that the Governor has done good with it by distributing it to the electorates which were affected and during the disaster we gave K6 million.

So the Governor of Milne Bay has been benefiting a lot from the Fisheries Sector and he has asked this very good questions and I can make it clear to the nation that this Government is aware of this problem and is doing everything possible to look after our coastal fisheries. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Mr WESLEY NUKUNDI – Thank you Mr Speaker, for recognising the people of Dei. I know why you are all laughing because there is no fish in the Highlands.

It seems that there is a lot of money in the Fisheries Ministry and the Minister is dishing out money in all the coastal areas where there is plenty fish but in the Highlands we must not forget that we do have fresh water fish.

If you read the newspapers daily you will see that there is fish training in the Highlands where the fisheries officers are conducting training in each district on how to make a fish pond and the processes involved.

In my own district I can tell you that each little village has its own fish pond. They are doing this because in the newspapers Fisheries is advertising that funds will be provided to help start up fish ponds and many of my people are coming up to my office and asking me for money to help fund their fish farming projects, but under the DSIP there is no money for fish.

So when the Minister is saying that he is giving money to the coastal provinces can he make it clear to the people of Highlands, the people who are farming fish, if there is any fund

from his Ministry? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr MAO ZEMING - Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Dei for asking this good question on the inland people.

There are inland programs, I can't deny, but normally the National Fisheries Authority use to help a lot with the inland projects which they call the Provincial Development Funds. This program started when we came into office and realised it was not functioning well. There were many false or paper fishermen involved and it was not functioning well so the government reviewed this program.

I want to assure the people of Dei that we will start this program again but we have to find out how best we can run it so the people can benefit in a transparent way to earn money. So this program is still there.

05/07

These programmes are still current and we have been assisting the coastal provinces with almost K2 million and the highlands provinces with K500 000, however, we encountered problem with false claims so we stopped these program.

Mr Speaker, I wish to inform this Parliament that it is currently under review. Once it is done and if we are satisfied with the new formula to rollout these programmes, we will inform the people of PNG.

Mr Speaker, I also want to inform this honourable Parliament and the Members that when we ceased these programmes, we saved almost K212 million. This money was given to the State as the dividend. This is the very money that all of us are getting through DIP and DSIP; some to fund our works programme of the Games and the road programmes in the country. In addition, I am proud to announce, as a Minister to this Parliament, that the National Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority have paid dividends to the State.

Mr JOE SUNGI – Mr Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister for Finance, concerning the delay in processing of cheque to the banks. I believe most of us are affected by the delay.

Mr Speaker, I presume that the Minister for Finance is aware of the bank system and in checking all the necessary procedures and processes to clear all the cheques. Having said

that, the BSP bank, in my opinion, is acting like Provincial Administration, Supplies and Tenders boards and the Ombudsman Commission.

I am talking on behalf of our hard working district administration staff, generally our public servants and the contractors who are struggling to deliver goods and services for the development of this country, but the process has been delayed by BSP bank.

I believe the process of approving a claim is simple because it has gone through the process by obtaining quotations, invoices and FF4 and FF3 are filled and checked by the respective officers of the Treasury, that is, the certifying officer, requestion officer and the financial delegate. It then goes to Treasury for a certifying clerk, the examiner then to the accountant.

Mr Speaker, I think after all these checks and balances are conducted, the end result is the printing of cheque. However, when the suppliers get the cheque, it goes to the bank but it takes another fortnight or months to process it. My questions are:

(1) Can the Minister inform this Parliament whether he is aware of the delay caused by banks in processing cheques?

(2) If he is aware of it, can the Minister summon the Management of BSP, or if there is some kind of Financial Instructions that is in place to be removed immediately?

Mr Speaker, we want to fast track the implementation of the project because we are now getting a lot of money going through the district and some of us do not even have banks in our districts. We need this to be clarified by the Minister for Finance so that, we are promoted to work with the supplier and the developer with peace of heart and mind to deliver to the people.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for Nuku for raising a very pertinent question which is very important for our districts and provinces to effectively implement the projects.

Mr Speaker, I wish to highlight here that almost all of us, I have gone through the similar situation. I do not have first-class treatment with the bank but they put us under lot of scrutiny, especially at this time when we have huge transfer of funds out of Waigani directly into the districts and provinces.

06/07

There are many government cheques floating in the banks around the country as well but I do not intend to speak for them.

According to the banks standards and code of practice they are trying to stop money laundering and false claims. So we are unfortunately paying the price for these delays.

Mr Speaker, while I give the background information as well as highlighting some instances why the banks are coming back to us, the government caucus had discussions with the Bank officials from BSP to raise these issues last year. The common ground that needs scrutiny as far as the issuance of cheques is concern is the issue of money laundering, corruption and false cheques.

Mr Speaker, let me highlight a case here. There were cheques of K19 million in float purportedly printed out from National Planning last year. A simple lady residing at 8-mile produced a cheque and someone said this lady picked up a cheque from the National Planning Office unfortunately this cheque was not honoured by the bank. We later realized there is a corrupt con man who is operating and printing cheques similar to government cheques outside. Yet, you and I blamed for corruption and misuse of funds.

Mr Speaker, this woman ran up K15 000 just to pay the con man who walks into Vulupindi House with a yellow envelope and walks out with a thicker yellow envelope and says your cheque is printed already from the Vulupindi House.

Poor woman, she goes home and prepares a nice dinner for her family but has emptied her account, her husbands account including her father in-laws account of K15 000 just to pay the con man. In return the con man gives her the photocopy of the cheque which is not from the Planning Department. In the following weeks the poor woman is still waiting for the original cheque to reach her but there is nothing. So there are instances of many con men.

Mr Speaker, the banks have valid ground in terms of protecting government cheques and system of entertaining false issuance of cheque.

Mr Speaker, while I understand the Government's view, I assure the Honourable Member and the House that I will call the banks for discussions and we will try our best. I do not have the powers to summon them because they operate under the Central Bank and are totally dependent. But we will call them for a dialogue and ensure that there are no impediments.

For the benefit of the nation we procure contracts through the requirements of *Public Finance Management Act*. I can give that guarantee to all the Members of the House so long as they have complied.

Mr Speaker, I know that you have all complied with the procurement process that we have in place. The CSTB requirements, PSTB requirements as well as district procurement are complied with. In many instances I go through the same extreme and my district programs are held back at the bank for one to two weeks and it eats into our development time.

So, I will take it upon myself to call the bank and have dialogue with them including the Central Bank, so that there is order and not so much unnecessary red-tape regarding our district programs funds, and for it to be expeditiously handled at the bank level.

07/07

Mr Speaker, we have in one or two instances experienced bank officers requesting for favours for our cheques to be cleared. This sort of practice must not take place.

It has become prevalent that at every layer of procurement or paper transaction there are Papua New Guineans at all levels asking for favours. This is quite embarrassing, alarming and disturbing. I urge the hard working Papua New Guineans that this sort of nonsense must come to an end.

Every Officer working in Banks, District Treasury and Provincial Treasury must recognize that they are paid to do their jobs and not seek favours before putting in some effort. These are the officers in line to deliver Government services.

Mr Speaker, let me assure the Member that I will take this matter to the highest level. Whilst the Banks have the duty to protect from money laundering, corruption and all the abuse that come their way they are also on call to expeditiously deliver Government services when all the processes of the *Public Finances Management Act* has been complied with.

Dr ALLAN MARAT – Mr Speaker, I direct my two questions to the Minister for Justice and Attorney General. My questions are in relation to the conflicting legal advices made available to the public and especially the people of Gulf Province as to the conviction of Mr Havila Kavo and whether he –

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I must remind you that the matter is before the Courts. It will be sub-judice for us to discuss this issue. Various advice have been given already and let us not exempt the Court in this Chambers.

Dr ALLAN MARAT – Mr Speaker, with due respect, these two questions are in relation to the convictions that is public information already and the two convictions are in appeal right now. My questions are in relation to the conflicting advice given by the Minister for Justice and Attorney General and the Minister for Inter-Government Relations.

Mr SPEAKER – I have made a ruling that this matter is sub-judice therefore; you cannot ask your question.

Mr SAM BASIL – Mr Speaker, I direct my questions to the Prime Minister, which are in relation to two Ministries in the Government. I wish to preface my questions.

Mr Speaker, since 2013 we talked about SME and the involvement of our small people to move the economy.

There were projections of 500 000 people being developed to be small entrepreneurs by 2030. However, we have been focusing on extractive industries which are enclosed activities to grow the economy. We must be mindful of the needs of our people to also sustain their livelihood.

Mr Speaker, we need to support the SME sector and enable the people to start using their land for agriculture and cottage industries. Many small holder farmers are concerned about the lack of action to address the failure of the NADP.

Mr Speaker, many SME conferences have been held, yet the IPA has announced the gazetted increase up to 500 per cent in fees for filing and annual returns and in registration of businesses.

Mr Speaker, my questions are as follows:

(1) Can the Prime Minister advise us of the status of the NADP and the Ministerial Report presented by the Minister for Planning and Monitoring on NADP in 2013, on how many paper famers have been arrested and jailed so far with the missing millions?

(2) Does the Department of Agriculture and Livestock have a permanent Secretary? If so, why do we have many acting and care taker Secretary's in that department?

(3) Is the Prime Minister aware that most of the Commodity Boards do not have stakeholder members appointed as per the RSA Act and various legislations?

(4) How are the Boards operating without governance, direction and control?

(5) When will the appointments be made?

08/08

If the boards are vacant and there is no quorum the RSA Act allows the departmental head to seek directions from the Secretary for Personnel Management, however, is the Secretary for Personnel Management vested –

Mr xxx – Point of Order! Mr Speaker, it is only right that the honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition ask the questions to the respective Minister because we have the Ministers here.

Mr SPEAKER – Go ahead and ask you question.

Mr SAM BASIL – Thank you Mr Speaker. I made it clear that it's a question that involves two ministries and concerns government policy.

(5) Is the IPA Board aware of the government policy announcement and its role to facilitate and regulate investments and business and not to make money from fees?

(6) Can the IPA revert to the original fees?

(7) To promote and develop SMEs require Small Business Development Corporation to be in the forefront to deliver training, advisory and extension services. Is the SBDC still functioning and if not, is there a new agency tasked with promoting SMEs in Papua New Guinea?

(8) The security and the guarantee required by NDB is 30 per cent and why are small people being forced to provide that with a government funding that is supposed to support the SMEs grown and repay the loan?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition for his series of questions.

Quite frankly they cover a range of issues so what I will do is that I will direct these to each individual minister to present to this honourable House a detailed statement and each of

the questions that he has asked especially around the issue of the EMS Policy that the government is developing.

I want to assure this honourable Parliament that the good Minister for Trade, Commerce and Industry is well advanced in that policy development. As he has stated on several occasions on this Floor, he will shortly be presenting a policy statement and an SME plan and the SME Act.

On the question about NADP, yes, we are all concerned about the abuse that took place at the NADP programme where many paper farmers took out grants that were meant for development of agriculture in the country.

Mr Speaker, hundreds of millions of kina was wasted in that program.

I will make sure that the Minister for National Planning present to this honourable House a full report. I understand that investigations are complete and the reports will be made available.

Mr Speaker, we will do as much as we can under our existing laws to try and recoup as much of those funds as we can from those farmers who really were not entitled to receive them.

The issue about the commodity boards and the issues relating to agriculture and livestock; the Minister is going to present certain policy statements in the coming meetings of Parliament. As part of the review of those commodity boards he will also make a statement to that effect to give clarity to some of the issues that the Deputy Opposition Leader asked about.

Mr Speaker, the Minister for Trade will also talk about SBDC; how it is functioning and how and it is helping us to develop SMEs in the country. With the presentation of the SME policy he will include and cover the questions that he has asked.

Mr Speaker, NDB bank, of course all of us are concerned about the requirements that they are stating out there. We have stated to them that as a government policy we want to make cheap loans available through the grants that we give to NDB. I think we have given them almost over a hundred thousand kina a year to support SME and agriculture businesses in the country.

Mr Speaker, I want to assure the Deputy Opposition Leader and this House that our aim is to give cheap loans to our people so that they have an opportunity to develop their businesses. We don't want to give them expensive terms over loans which may be unaffordable and cannot help to sustain their businesses.

Mr Speaker, if 30 per cent is the requirement of the bank, I will ask them to review it so that it will come down to an acceptable level.

09/07

Mr Speaker, nevertheless, we also need our people to put some of their own money into some of the projects that they embark on. We do not want them to think that this is a free handout from government. This is because people do not take seriously free handouts. Therefore, they must put some of their own money so that they can also feel that, if they do not make it work then they will also lose some of their savings as well.

Mr Speaker, therefore, those are the issues that the relevant Ministers will take charge and make presentations to Parliament.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr BIRE KIMISOPA – Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, my questions directed to the Minister for IPBC are in relation to PNG Power. I have about four questions to ask, but Mr Speaker, can I just say this on top of my head? The supply and delivery of power in this country is a national disgrace.

Mr Speaker, we are blessed with so much in this country. The economy is growing and we are blessed with so many resources and we are also blessed with power blackouts.

Mr Speaker, Goroka's electricity demand is currently 4 MW. It is currently on a standby of 2 MW and it is going to require about K6 million to bring the capacity up. The Ramu grid is approximately 90 MW starting from Lae to Hidden to Madang and all the way to Mendi and we are all sharing the Ramu grid.

Mr Speaker, I understand that NCD has ramped up their demand to about 120 MW and that is good for NCD. There will be lights in NCD with no blackouts but there will be blackouts in the rest of the country.

Mr Speaker, my questions are:

- (1) What is the exact energy needs for all the towns and cities of this country?
- (2) What is the requirement that we need in Goroka, Lae, Wewak, Vanimo, and et cetera?
- (3) What is the total cost to meet the short term, medium term and long term goals for this country?

(4) What is the energy mix that we need to put in place for this country so we mitigate the high cost of electricity in this country, and also the unreliable supply of energy?

Mr Speaker, we have hydro, thermal, gas turbine as well as many others.

(5) What is the energy mix that we need now for the short term, medium term and long term goals?

Mr Speaker, as I understand, Ramu 2 has been in the incubator for more than four years waiting to hatch.

(6) What is the state of Ramu 2?

(7) What is the exact cost that will be required to ramp up Ramu 2 so that we can exceed the current 90 MW power supply starting from Lae all the way to Mendi?

(8) When will Ramu 2 get off the ground?

Mr BEN MICAH – I thank the Member for Goroka for his series of good questions.

What the Honourable Member said about the country facing blackouts is quite true.

Mr Speaker, about 90 percent of Papua New Guineans do not have access to the grid including people in the Markham Valley, Ramu Valley and along the ExxonMobil pipeline, where the source of energy is passing by. Nevertheless, these people are still using home fires, battery operated torches and kerosene lamps.

Sir Michael Somare – Point of Order! Can the Honourable Minister answer the questions that the Member for Goroka asked, instead of beating around the bush?

Mr SPEAKER – The Minister is getting to it, and it seems that everybody is beating around the bush in Parliament. No one seems to be getting to the point.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr BEN MICAH – Take it easy, I will get to the point. Like the Sepik River, I have to slowly follow it all the way up to reach the source.

Mr Speaker, the point is that all his questions are very good and inter-related. This issue has been in public discussion for quite a while now.

10/07

What is been in the public discussion for quite a while now is PNG Power which is only providing power to only five per cent of the population only. In regards to his question on the emergency requirements, I will be tabling a report to Parliament hopefully in the May Sitting. I will put in a full comprehensive report on my findings regarding issues that are afflicting PNG Power in certain areas of the country, mostly urban centres that are receiving supply of power from power generation sources that the company is providing throughout the country. I will not be guessing here. I already know and I have shown some of the Members yesterday about how much power is being produced in their districts and towns and how much people are paying for this power. So that exercise is ongoing and I intend to give a very comprehensive report on that.

On the issue of the LNG, that is a very important and very good question although it is a very technical one. We are one of the very few countries in the world, Mr Speaker, who has all the sources of producing energy from what nature has gifted to us.

We can produce energy from our many rivers, from the sun, from the wind, from tidal energy, from gas from oil, from bio mass and from geothermal. We have all these sources in our country. We are a very blessed country but unfortunately there has not been any clear energy policy and clear energy direction on how we can harness all these energy from all these natural sources so that we can be able to provide power to everybody. Standalone power to five hundred people, or standalone power from solar or wind to a thousand people. This is now the direction that the Ministry is looking at after we do the review and the state of emergency is lifted.

I will also table in Parliament a very comprehensive strategy on the way forward that we anticipate will provide energy requirements to all of Papua New Guinea within the next 20 to 50 years.

Mr Speaker, as for the question regarding Ramu, not long ago, maybe he didn't see the news in the media, I'm not sure, but we have already received the final feasibility study from the consulting company that has been doing the work on Ramu Stage Two. I am very happy to inform Parliament and the Members of Eastern Highlands province that the stage two work on Ramu which is anticipated to provide additional 19 megawatt of power into the Ramu grid will commence very shortly. We are now moving into feed stage of the project and before the end of this year, we hope to announce the financing arrangements for the

completion of the feed stage and the beginning of construction of Ramu two. Thank you Mr Speaker.

11/07

**BOUGAINVILLE AUTONOMY ARRANGEMENTS BY THE NATIONAL
GOVERNMENT AND THE AUTONOMOUS BOUGAINVILLE
GOVERNMENT – PAPER AND STATEMENT –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr PETER O’NEILL (Ialibu-Pangia-Prime Minister) – I present the following papers pursuant to statute:

*Joint Review of Bougainville’s Autonomy Arrangements by the National
Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government*

I ask leave of the Parliament to make a statement in connection to the paper.

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to present to this honourable Parliament the first report of the joint review of the Bougainville Autonomous Arrangements.

Mr Speaker, the Bougainville Peace Agreement part 15, and Section 337 of the National Constitution require both the National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government to jointly review the Bougainville Autonomous Arrangements every five years from the date of its establishment of the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

Mr Speaker, in line with this constitutional requirement on 18 October 2013, the joint supervisory body of Bougainville and the joint review appointed a team of independent experts to conduct a review.

Mr Speaker, the purpose of joint review is to contribute to improving and giving clarity and strengthening the Autonomous Arrangements who are consistence with the objectives of the Bougainville Peace Arrangement.

The review, Mr Speaker, covered five specific areas which included: (1) Financial arrangements: (2) the Bougainville Government Services, (3) Legal and Constitutional

Aspects of the Arrangements, (4) Social and Economic Aspects of the Arrangements, (5) Referendum.

Mr Speaker, the focus on the Financial Arrangements looks at the financing of the Autonomous Bougainville Government through various grants, Internal Revenues and Taxation Arrangements which come into two sections; the first section reveals grants and revenue which examines the *Organic Law* and Grants, Taxation, Revenue Overview, Development partner assistance, progression towards a physical self-reliance, the National Government assistance and services which are not part of the ABG Budget, and consistency and disbursement of those grants, effective use of those grants by ABG and the National Government, and the capacity of the Finance and Treasury within the ABG Government.

Mr Speaker, the second section reveals the taxation arrangements under the peace agreement where the taxation powers and of course the concept of physical self-reliance is a major part in that peace agreement. It further outlines the legal and policy bases on which the taxation in Bougainville and the Internal Revenue Commission of Bougainville supports Bougainville into the long term future also the review of Bougainville Government Services and its ability to roll-out those services. It carefully examines the implementation of the Autonomous Arrangements and of course at the broader governance and administrative levels of governance on Bougainville. It also focus, Mr Speaker, on the leadership and management at the political level against all internationally accepted standards of good governance.

Mr Speaker, with regard to the legal and constitutional aspects the review covered aspects of noncompliance with constitutional requirements in relation to transfer of powers and functions, the capacity of the House of Representatives, legal capacity of the ABG administration itself, policy and Correctional Services, mining and legal aspects of the re-opening of the Paguna Mine.

The social and economic aspect examines the impact of the Autonomous arrangements on Bougainville. This relates to the state of the local economy including the state of private sector development and areas of potential growth especially in the resource sector, human resource and of course the impact of those developments in the social sector including the delivery of health and educations services, law and order and infrastructure development.

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The final aspect of the review covered under this development was the issue of referendum. The review outlines the low surroundings and the conduct of the referendum itself and it also covered what people thought about the referendum and the critically unresolved issues relating to the referendum and the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

It also talks about the organisational issues questioning the arrangement of the referendum and what sort of questions to be asked on the ballot papers, if the referendum takes place in future. Those issues were discussed; bearing in mind the freedom and fairness of the voting system when voting takes place during referendum.

The timing of this is also very much dictated by the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Whatever is done between the National Government and ABG on Bougainville is very much dictated by the peace agreement and the terms of the peace agreement are very strictly articulated. We have never departed from those agreements and we must continue to maintain the requirements of those and only unless it's fully implemented then the issue of referendum can be discussed.

Mr Speaker, the review was conducted successfully but the findings show that the autonomy arrangement is very far from being fully implemented. It has been ten years since the establishment of the ARB government and many bougainvillians are saying that the autonomy has not really done much nor made any progress.

Some even question whether the ABG is ready and they also think that the National Government will not deliver on the referendum. These are some of the findings that are taking place in relation to the ABG issue. They are also aware of the government's renewed commitment towards Bougainville and our genuinely to engage with them on the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the roll out of our Government services to Bougainville is gaining momentum.

Mr Speaker, the people on Bougainville appreciate the commitment that our Government is doing. This is the first review and given the significance of the National Government's support to ABG and Bougainville in recent years, the next review will show that there are huge progresses in the performance arrangements for Bougainville.

Mr Speaker, with those few comments, I commend this report to Parliament, thank you.

Debate (on Motion by **Mr James Marape**) adjourned.

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA NATIONAL PARLIAMENT MEMBERS AND THE JOINT
POLITICAL PARTIES DELEGATION STUDY TOUR TO THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF CHINA – PAPER AND STATEMENT –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr ANTHON YAGAMA (Usino-Bundi) – I present the following report to Parliament:

*Members of Papua New Guinea National Parliament and the Joint
Political Parties Delegation Report on a Study Tour to the Peoples'
Republic of China, from 23 September 2014 to 1 October 2014*

I ask leave of Parliament to make a statement in connection with this report.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to present my report on the joint Papua New Guinea National Parliament Members and the Political Parties' delegation to the Peoples' Republic of China, from September 23- October 1, 2014.

I, as the leader of the delegation, honourable Robert Ganim, honourable Joseph Yopyyopy and Members from the Office of political parties and parliament support staff toured China.

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Mr Speaker, I was leader of delegation which included Honourable Robert Ganim, MP Chairman of the Parliamentary Referral Committee on Education and Honorable Joseph Yopyiyopi, MP Chairman for Pensions and Retirement Benefits and also members from the office of the Registrar of Political Parties and Parliamentary Support Staff.

Mr Speaker, Papua New Guinea and the People's Republic of China have enjoyed a close bilateral relationship. The exchange between our political parties and political leaders at both the National and Local Level Government is important in promoting mutual friendship, respect and understanding between the two countries.

While on these note, I want to place on record my sincere thank you and appreciation to the International Department of the Central Community of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in extending this invitation to the Papua New Guinea National Parliament to organise this visit.

Mr Speaker, the delegation was engaged in exchanging views with their Chinese counterparts, on enhancing governance capabilities of Political Parties and to learn how the Chinese model of Government works.

Mr Speaker, such visits will further promote and enhance friendly exchanges and promote cooperation between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the different Political Parties of Papua New Guinea. We visited several major cities holding fruitful discussions with various Government Officials and Private Business Organizations.

Mr Speaker, Papua New Guinea established formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in 1976, immediately after we gained our independence and successive Governments have observed and maintained a "One China Policy".

Both the countries have gained immensely by observing the "One China Policy" with mutual respect, bilateral trade and generous Chinese aid has increased not only to Papua New Guinea but also to other Pacific Island Forum Countries.

Mr Speaker, with a conducive environment, China has taken advantage as a major Global Player to increase its balance of trade and increase its investment portfolio like investing in the Ramu Nickel Mine in Madang Province to the tune of \$US 1.8 billion. The other notable investments are:

- (1) The \$US 3 billion loan by the O'Neill-Dion Government to invest in infrastructure developments,
- (2) Residential upgrading program at the Goroka University,
- (3) The Waigani Convention Centre; and
- (4) The Chinese assistance in cultivation and production of domestic and commercial rice which had proven a lot of Multi-National Corporations and people wrong as rice can be commercially produced in PNG.

Mr Speaker, the group was met on arrival at Beijing International Airport by Chinese Government Officials from the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) who accompanied the delegation to visit Yantai and Weihai cities in Shandong Province.

Mr Speaker, we were briefed by the deputy Land-Major of the Yantai city on the background information of the province; and on its Fisheries, Agriculture and Industrial Developments.

The province specializes in production of sea food produce for the domestic and international markets. The main sea food products include:

- (1) Sea Cucumber;
- (2) Prawns;
- (3) Fish;
- (4) Sea Weed;
- (5) Crabs, and other marine produce.

It's Agriculture Products include:

- (1) Wine (only province producing wine in China);
- (2) Citric Fruits (Oranges, Apples, Peaches, Pears and others);
- (3) Rice; and
- (4) Wheat.

Mr Speaker, Shandong Province has advanced industrial development and has similar climate condition to Papua New Guinea; we could easily exchange ideas and learn from Chinese experience to advance our agriculture and technological developments.

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We could also learn from their advanced fisheries methods to genetically breed fish and farmed marine products.

Mr Speaker, in Weihai City, we visited a local village setting to see the functions, organizational structures and responsibilities of the village community where young people or able workforce have daily work routines while old people busy themselves with household works and also active in community work.

These community oriented activities included painting, poetry, creative dancing and practicing on traditional instrument to produce modern music. The painting, poetry and music are sold in the local market and to the international tourists to generate extra income for the community. The senior citizens of the village that we visited were very active in the daily activities.

Mr Speaker, the delegation visited notable landmarks in Beijing which include, “The Tienmen Square, The Mao-Memorial Museum, The Forbidden City, The Great Wall of China and The Great Hall or The People’s National Congress”.

The delegation was given a brief on the history of the Communist Party of China and operation of the Chinese Government. The last official engagement was our visit to Huawei Technology Co. Ltd and Metallurgical group Corporation (MCC) owners of the Ramu Nickle Mine.

Mr Speaker, Papua New Guinea can learn a lot from Chinese experience, development and growth that propelled China into a major superpower retaining their cultural heritage and blending to develop unique modern China. The visit to China was an eye opener that changed our perception on the many general misconception about China for many of us before our visit to China.

Hence-Lessons Learnt

(a) Before the delegation's departure to the People's Republic of China, there were many general misconception of China because the country was governed by Communist-led Government. After the trip, the delegation's views and perceptions on China changed because China has developed a political system that is operational which Papua New Guinea can learn from.

(b) Even down to the local council level, the Chinese System of Parliament is totally merit based. Theoretically, you will have to make your way up the system which does not promote short cuts or Wantok System and as a result the clever ones continue up the ladder. As a direct result of this, the top political structure will have both men and women who are not only clever but wise and would have an accumulated vast experience to govern the country.

(c) Everything is planned before the actual physical development. There is no tree or grass nor building being constructed without a development plan. As a result, cities we visited are well laid out and looked beautiful. Beijing and other cities we visited are no longer polluted as we are led to believe. Currently, these are modern bustling cities with lot of activity.

(d) There is order and the people are very respectful in their behaviour that leads to general cleanliness of the cities visited.

(e) The people develop very high respect and regard for their system of government that delivers to their needs and requirements.

(f) The Chinese Government and its people have developed high regard for their culture and cultural heritages and have developed government policy to preserve their cultural heritage for future generations. The Papua New Guinea Government can exchange views and ideas and can learn a lot from the Chinese experiences

Recommendation

(1) Both Governments should encourage and promote more educational tours not only for PNG delegations to visit China but vice versa to appreciate each other.

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(2) Maintain a core group of Parliamentarians that have visited China to maintain continuity and develop avenues of dialogue between Parliamentarian of both countries, exchanging views on bilateral trade, investments cultural exchanges and sports.

(3) The notion of sending our political representatives to China must be encouraged for them to study the Chinese Political Party System that has worked well for the Chinese with the objectives and view to strengthen and develop our party system.

(4) Future delegations should have the benefit of an official briefing from the Chinese embassy before departure.

We return with clear perception on China and why China is a super power with many lessons to learn and embrace in our development and growth as a nation retaining our cultural heritage and blending into a modern society.

Debate (on Motion by **Mr James Marape**) adjourned.

**DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL PLANNING AND MONITORING –
NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY 2015-2024 – PAPER AND
STATEMENT – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr CHARLES ABEL (Alotau – Minister for National Planning) – Mr Speaker, I rise today to table the National Population Policy 2015 – 2024 Volume 1.

First of all I would like to thank the participating agencies and partners that continue to support Papua New Guinea and driving its important issues.

On behalf of the Government we really appreciate the on-going help from the multi-national partners in particular the United Nations and the UNDP and of course Marie Stopes, Rotary Australia and the Motherhood Paperline. A lot of good things are happening and we will highlight the pilot programs that we have done with them.

Mr Speaker, the Population Policy is part of a range of policies and acts brought in by the new government in the recent times. Some of these important ones are the current Sovereign Wealth Funds, the amendments to the *Fisheries Act*, the Agriculture and the right policies brought in by the Minister for Papua New Guinea to attain sustainable future we

need to recognise that there are elements of planning that have not been given sufficient planning in the pipeline.

We have been talking about it in the government caucus, on the Floor of Parliament and in various government interventions, but I think we are beginning to recognise that the population is not just cross-cutting the side issues. The matter of population brings human development to the equation and the very issue of number of people in a given space is critical to the success of that development.

Obviously, the more people that are put in pressure, it is harder to service those individual people. So as far as the development strategy is concerned one must consider population. We must also be careful to stress and place human beings at the centre of development.

So as you can see, we have deliberately placed a young baby on the cover page because what we are saying is that development is about this particular person. Every individual in Papua New Guinea, particularly our children are important. They are a blessing to this country and we have to make sure that all our interventions are centered in the most conducive environment for the development of this particular individual.

16/07

Mr Speaker, logically if you bring it down to the family level and the empowerment and the support of this particular individual, it is not conducive because there are too many children competing for the same needs.

It is about giving choices to our people, to our womenfolk, our families so that they make better decisions to support the development of this individual.

Mr Speaker, our Government has made record interventions into social development policies. We have put record funding into health, education, sub national levels, despite record levels of growth in our economy over 10 years there is still quite a gap from where we should be, where we want to be, and where we are actually now.

All of us gave examples and we have talked about them on the Floor of Parliament constantly. We have examples of what is happening in our districts day to day.

Like a particular primary school I was at on Monday where a DSIP Program was implemented classrooms were being built and more children than ever are having access to quality education.

In this particular grade 5 class, there were three students allocated to a desk and as I went to the elementary school I saw 500 students in saw makeshift classrooms.

Despite our huge efforts and record funding and doing many good things, there is an issue in terms of just people and the growing volume in numbers.

We tend to concentrate on economic growth and the policies but we ignore one of the fundamental issues and drivers of our development and that is the sheer volume of people that keep entering into a stream.

A classic example we always talk about is the number of students coming out of schools and the number of grade 12 graduates and the lack of tertiary places for them.

Mr Speaker, as I have said, our Government is making a massive effort into resolving that but despite that we are struggling.

Mr Speaker, as part of being responsible and being part of a sustainable development this Government is saying we need a National Population Policy that puts human development at the centre and will cascade down to various activities.

Mr Speaker, I want to make it very clear and I also said yesterday that this is not a population control policy in the sense of control and I noticed that one of the of the dailies has used that headline population control policy and as I have emphasised on several occasions that in no way are we going to go and tell them and force them that they are going to have a particular number of children.

If you want to have 10 -15 children that is your personal choice but the Government is trying to encourage, create awareness and give you means so that you make an informed choice.

We are finding that more and more of our families want to have less children. They understand that in terms of giving best access to education for those children you are better off having less number of children so that you can manage.

Mr Speaker, unfortunately, we find many of our people disempowered because they don't have that awareness and that choice and they get stuck into a poverty cycle, a cycle where their children are disempowered and it goes around in circles.

And then you have a broader implication on the environment and so on like we have to go out further to catch fish. We have to get out further to find sago, kunai and we are conflicting over land.

Not only that but in the macro sense globally population is becoming an issue because of things like Climate Change, the Human Footprint, the warming of the Oceans, the record

temperatures that are being experienced around the world and the increasing in the size of the desert and so on.

In positioning Papua New Guinea globally, the National Strategy for Sustainable Development as we look to position as a solution provider this policy is also very important.

Mr Speaker, in concluding, I want to thank the Health Department who have delivered this policy down to community health aid post level.

17/08

This policy entirely coincides with the 10-Year Health Plan. The 10-Year Health Plan talks about the fertility rate, the number of children in every family.

It has already stated in that in their effort to improve the health of women and children they have talked about reducing the fertility rate from above four down to about 2.8. It is already stated explicitly in the National Health Plan.

So it's already aligned with that. We're just elevating it as more of a priority in terms of giving women their choices.

Mr Speaker, in concluding, the intervention that we want here is in terms of an action sense and getting down to the nuts and bolts of it is through the Community Health Post. Now we need a Community Health Post, not only for this particular matter but for all health delivery intervention in every single council ward. And that Community Health Post, as we know is staffed with three people and we want them to conduct and support this awareness programme around population as well. And also provide the necessary intervention so that our women and men can have access to family planning.

Mr Speaker, I am going to wrap it up like that, I don't want to read the statement, I just commend it to Parliament and place it before you. I am very proud of this policy and want to thank the Prime Minister and Cabinet for supporting it.

I thank the Prime Minister also for elevating the issue somewhat in a very diplomatic way. It has come through in terms of the Leadership Summit we had recently and has been included as one of the policies there, so I am very thankful to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet for that.

Also, Mr Speaker, I would be bringing in the new MTDP, Medium Term Development Plan, and the five-year development plan shortly. It will be accompanied by the Planning Act which will capture some of these high level principles of planning, bring them down to a link, to the annual budget, establish a monitoring and evaluation framework and

also a service delivery structure which we keep talking about. This will link the regional centres and provincial centres to the direct headquarters, zones headquarters, and even down to the ward level where you have minimum service delivery intervention there. Through this we will deliver all government policy in a more organised manner according to that planning framework, including the population policy.

So with that, Mr Speaker, I commend this report to the House. I don't know if they are handing it out, I hope so, I have instructed the Sergeant-At-Arms to get it out there and the attaching statement also. I would like to commit it to *Hansard*.

Mr DON POLYE (Kandep) – I move –

That the Parliament take note of the paper.

Mr Speaker, from the Minister it is a very important government policy which is brought to the Floor of Parliament, especially a policy that looks at the human being in a very concentrated integrated manner.

The Opposition would also like to contribute from our side as to how we see this main issue at a later time after we have gone through the report and the policy presented by the government through the Minister.

In the meantime let me just observe a few things. Our most immediate perspective, looking at the circumstances in Papua New Guinea such as population growth and the number of people we have in the country.

The figures based on the recent population census that were given out, the Opposition is yet to ascertain if what the Government is seeing is really what it is.

Whilst supporting that the human population starting from infancy, as the Minister said, it must be ascertained as to whether the infant will gain employment or have a job in his or her life and such issues are very important points to consider.

These are issues that this House is responsible to address for our people but the question that we'd like to ask is, is it right to suggest to young people to make an educated decision as to how many children they wish to have in their family during their lifetime. Should that be seen as a population issue or should it be seen as the Government's inability to provide from the population as against the population growth matters.

18/07

For instance, when I hear the Minister make a passing comment like, there are three children sitting sharing one desk, is it because there is a population growth issue or is it because the Government has not provided for the children. We have got to demarcate between these two very important issues.

This is because you need a skilled population for the economy to flourish. Apart from that, the Government must see ahead of a growing population because you must have a growing population to grow, live and drive the economy. But the Government must see ahead to provide for this population.

What is the population that Papua New Guinea should sustain? At what level of service is provided to them and how should the government be ahead in terms of its ability to provide for this population growth?

We have got to learn to listen very carefully because you hear economists say things like social entrapment. When you say that the services provided by the Government are not enough because of a large population then you see that people cannot be provided with services. Therefore, social entrapment is where the services are not enough to cater for the population or is it because the Government lacks the vision, unable or no skill to provide for that population.

Then the Government adversely says, let's cut down or control or is it because the population is going ahead of the government's ability to provide for the services and long term visions. Therefore, these are issues that I think that we should need to address and discuss by way of this policy.

Whilst we do commend the Minister for the policy addresses the human fact of development, which is very important but we would like to study more about the government's inability to provide for a population or is it really a population matter. And that must be taken into consideration as to what is the population at present.

We are facing the problem of three students sharing one desk and does that indicate that the population has grown more than 10 million? Or has the population been around that figure and the Government is just unable to provide for this population? So, which is it?

Mr Speaker, we have got to address those things quite critically and the Opposition has taken note of the statement that the Minister has made. And the little time that we have to debate on this policy, we have to have him be more informed based on the statistics that we have. So in that way, we do not do a policy because the people like it but it must be one that

the Government must provide. If the Government fails to provide then it is an issue that it must address.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr MALAKAI TABAR (Gazelle – Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to also contribute to the discussion on the National Population Policy.

I thank the Prime Minister and the Cabinet for supporting this endeavour and I only stand to congratulate the Department for Planning and the Minister for such an effort. Nevertheless, there are some big challenges ahead of us and this is a guiding statement from the Government for the benefit of the country.

This policy does not stop people from getting married and having children but basically to make aware to our people of the availability of resources that we have. Many of us have made big families and we have seen that resources are running short.

Therefore, there is this responsibility as we stand in partnership in our endeavours of development in this country. And that the seven million plus people of this country understand their responsibility in our hands and homes because our people basically own 494 000 square kilometres of this country. Almost 99 percent of the land of Papua New Guinea is customarily owned.

19/07

The huge lands mass of Papua New Guinea is in the hands of the people in the village. Early this year my colleague Minister and his Department of Education put a stop to all secondary and primary schools project fees and the Government has taken up all these responsibilities instead. The Government has effectively taken up its responsibility in providing for the population of this country but the people in the village are failing because they are producing too many children yet are not assisting the Government in taking care of these children.

It is a big responsibility for the parents and we must not blame the Government for not providing services because the Government through the different departments like Works, Education and Higher Education are trying their best to deliver services. Even programs like DSIP and PSIP are in place to take care of the people. We are the Shepherds of the Government that are assisting to take care of the people. The people in the villages have a

huge responsibility. I come from a district which is running out of land and I have openly discussed this issue in my district. I am sorry if you think these things should only be discussed in the bedroom because we have to discuss this issue. It is important to know that if you produce too many children in the village without taking proper care of them then they are likely to cause problems for you. They will steal, and destroy property in the community and this will affect development in the community. Therefore this is a very important guiding statement from the Government and I thank the Government and the Minister responsible.

I appeal to all Members of Parliament and the provincial assemblies as well as the leaders in the village to take note of the Governments call and look into this issue. There is this effort of introducing the early childhood learning and the elementary school system. I am basically apprehensive in that we remove those very young children from the home causing the parents to feel the need to make more children. Please parents, as part of the Government we have taken on this tremendous task of ensuring that the children receive proper education so that they can help this country to grow.

The number one pillar out of the seven pillars of Vision of Vision 2050 is human capital development, and so the Government has taken on that task to fulfil that pillar. I thank the Government for taking on this huge task and as we have heard from the Secretary of Education and the Minister for Education, parents won't be paying projects fees this year and this is the effort by the Government in ensuring that all children are able to receive an education. On Tuesday, it was reported in the media where the Minister for Finance was quoted saying, there were some school-aged children living on the streets and in the bush. This is not the responsibility of the teacher or the Member of Parliament, it is the responsibility of the parents, who must make sure that they take their children to school and enrol them and continue to support them in their education. The 600 000 children who are still out of the education system of Papua New Guinea are the responsibility of parents, especially the fathers.

God has given the fathers the responsibility to take care of our household and many of us are not taking ownership of our responsibilities and yet are looking at taking in new wives. We must make sure we look after our family especially our children and make sure our children receive proper education and we can stand together and build this nation.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I believe all the Members will take queue in this policy and we can contribute meaningfully in our districts and provinces in making sure that we stand together to implement this policy.

Mr JOSEPH LELANG (Kandrian Gloucester) – Thank you Mr Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in congratulating the Minister for National Planning and his ministry for delivering this important policy today.

20/07

Mr JOSEPH LELANG (Kandrian-Gloucester) – I want to join my colleague to say thank you to the Minister for Planning and his Ministry and congratulate them for delivering this important policy.

Mr Speaker, I want to say that this Population Policy is timely, especially taking into account the recently concluded National Population Census. The demographic trends and other trends in our social indicators and social statistics have already been published in this population census of ours. It is therefore very appropriate and opportune that the Minister brought in this important document to guide and alert us in the formulation and framing of our social policies as well as economic policies over the next five-10 years. The agencies of government will be able to use this policy the way it should be used.

Mr Speaker, the demographic population data obtained through the 2011 Census showed 64 per cent of our population is considered as youth and 86 per cent of us are still in the rural areas. This has very big implications, especially for the government to look at. Some of these implications include what the implications are for taxation, especially in revenue raising and what are the implications for delivery of basic services. As we know, in 1960 we had a population of one million, at around 1980 we had a population of three million and from 1990 up until now we have seven million population.

Many a time we miss the target in the delivery of basic services because when we are dealing with population we are dealing with a moving target. Many times in our rural and remote areas the developmental challenge and issues that are prevalent cannot be eradicated. And the reason is because when we build an aid post or classroom, 20 years ago we would be dealing with a similar population. Now that population has grown in that same area and if we do not increase the size of that classroom or health centre we will experience congestion and other problems.

So, it's a simple thing. It is not rocket science. I appreciate this and thank the Government for giving us DSIP. It is the main programme we have for rural intervention, and is more applicable to those of us representing rural electorates. This will aid us greatly.

I thank the Minister for giving us this policy because many of us will now use this as a guide to frame up our programmes to address the key areas that the population statistics have highlighted.

How did our population grow? Many of us have debated on this in this honourable House about how population outgrew economic growth or vice versa. What are the implications of these? Also, whether or not population growth or economic growth has outgrown labour force participation rate. What is the workforce rate? All of these key questions are in those policies and statistics.

We must actively study the meaning and implications of this. I want to encourage each and every one of us to get this book and study it diligently, get our officers to peruse it because it is very important when we are dealing with our people and their welfare. This is very, very critical.

Mr Speaker, to conclude, the environmental aspect is also important and so I further congratulate the Minister because he was talking about population within the context of a sustainable development strategy which we, as government, have already passed.

This is important because in his speech which I quickly scanned through he referred to the Cairo Summit in 1990 and also the ICPD or International Conference on Population and Development. These are important international conferences which give us many good policies and international obligations which we can incorporate into our domestic policies and are also of importance.

21/07

One of this is to do with social responsibility and accountability and this refers to big companies that are working with the environment, particularly those that deal with such acts of pollution that affects the livelihood of our people. That is why the issue of sustainable development is very critical and we need to look at some of the laws that are governing the international community.

The United Nations has a very comprehensive issue on this and when we relate to the issue on social accountability, we must also look at the processes involved in looking after the environment, because much of our country's population is in the rural areas and their livelihood depends on the environment.

If we do not look after the environment it will affect the people as they are connected to the environment and much of their daily survival comes from the environment. This is all I

have to say on this paper, and I want to congratulate the Minister for putting it in line with the development strategies that will be discussed.

And we must go a step further and look into big companies operating in the rural areas because we do not have a framework available to hold these companies accountable should something go wrong with the environment.

Mr MARK MAIPAKAI (Kikori) – I just want to make an observation and I congratulate the Minister on presenting a very important piece of policy in terms of population and what we would want to see is to consider ourselves and take the issue of population control because no matter how much money will go into the system today, it will not make any impact because of the rate in which the population is increasing.

The onus is for the Government to come up with a policy on birth control and that must relate to the economic growth, you cannot see this through in isolation, you have to come up with the policy and tell us what our population rate is like today. How do you intend to grow your economy 30 years from now and how do you translate that into the policies that we have.

If we do not do this now, no matter how much money that we have now from the gas and oil, the policy will not be beneficial because the population will not be more than what the policy was framed for in the first instance.

It will be with us until we take charge of population control so I am challenging the Government to come with birth control, otherwise no matter how much money the Government puts in the system there will be no impact. From the Opposition's perspective, we will probably do something along that line and give an alternative policy based on where we think the Government should be heading in terms of controlling populations against GDP growth.

Look at a small country like Fiji, it's beyond comprehension because we have seven million in population and they have a population of roughly 800,000. And their GDP is US\$5, 000. Compared to PNG; we have 1 400 GDP per capita. If we want to enjoy that we have to take charge now. I am challenging the Government to come up with the best control policy and translate that into planning for this country.

22/07

Sir JULIUS CHAN (New Ireland) – Mr Speaker, I want to congratulate the Minister for Planning and the Governor for coming out with what I consider to be probably one of the most important policy of any nation. This population policy is very, very important.

I just want to tell the Minister that now that he has printed this beautiful child on that page, and it's a very handsome child, you owe it to him to make sure that he grows up to like you one day, if not better than you and, of course to be as good as the Prime Minister and the Governor-General of this country.

To get there the process must be correct and I think the government has taken some very bold steps. I want to see if there is any parallel of working together; the provincial government and the National Government.

We always talk about the tree. I am going to use the tree as an indicator; the tree of development. The tree always has a biblical connotation by all who want to talk about biblical things. I want to compare the Government's national policy on planning with the New Ireland experience.

The first branch of that tree that we grew in New Ireland is what the National Government has done; Free and Subsidised Education. You've achieved that. Now compulsory education, as the Minister for Finance explained, is not an easy goal to achieve. Before we can introduce compulsory education we must have enough space and transportation to travel for every child in this country. So that is a hurdle, it's not an easy thing to achieve.

In the case of New Ireland before, we already had a Provincial Compulsory Education Law but before we did it I made sure that there was enough space for every child to get to school and is enough teachers and, therefore, we made it compulsory in 2013.

It's not easy for the National Government with some of the most difficult terrain in the world in this country to be able to fulfil that but I'm so glad that at least our government is making every effort to get there to make it compulsory.

Mr Speaker, when we introduced free education we had a reason and I noticed that the Minister for Planning has a reason for this policy. We had a reason; we talk about free education because we come from the islands with many outer islands where not everybody can plant crops. Where do they grow crops? They can't grow it on top of salt water, can they?

So, we grow their brains so that every New Irelander will be able to compete with all the other children, just like this beautiful child will have to do, and I hope the Government

can open up the opportunity for this little child, wherever he is from, to be able to compete with every other child.

That's why we introduced free education. It's not just a publicity stunt nor is it a means of buying votes. We did it in New Ireland for a purpose. And the purpose is that our island is too small and the availability of land to grow cocoa or coffee was fast becoming scarce. So we grow it in their brains so that they can grow up one day and export their talents to earn an income for the little island group. That's the reason for it.

The other branch of the New Ireland Tree of Development is under the Malangan Declaration. Malagan Declaration is something like what the Minister said. It is really a spiritual document. It's not even a plan, it's a document that is pointing to human development.

23/07

It is about changing times but holding onto unchanging principle.

So, the second branch of our tree is 'pension' and we have already introduced it in New Ireland in 2009. We have the old age and the disable pension and that is for a good reason because when development emerges, we will assist. I've being out in limbo for 10 years and I have noticed that they do not have food for their meals.

Mr Speaker, it is because of transportation, and all their families are now educated and they are moving out and the old people are left. However, they are very lucky to have one meal a day thus we introduce the second branch of bacterial free development in New Ireland to look after the human being. The little child has not grown old but it is not old in New Ireland but it's looked after when he/she gets old in New Ireland. We have already introduced this.

Is not a big thing but just to enable him/her to buy one little meal a day but at least it looks after that old man or woman in New Ireland. We also think that during his/her life time, we are trying to create opportunity for him/her means we are trying to build a better life for him/her, so we have another policy, which we call a 'roof over head'.

Mr Speaker, we are trying to build iron roof rather than the bush material roof. So the last few years, we, through own budget, set aside almost 60 thousand corrugated roofing irons almost every year. We subsidize it and give it out because many of us in New Ireland do get sick like diarrhoea, et cetera. Like I said, we do it for purpose and when they have clean water to drink, they do not get sick and they are strong to work harder and get less medicine. They

do not need to visit the nurses and visit too many hospitals. So, what we give up in front, we save at the end.

Mr Speaker, we do it all the time, Mr Minister for Planning and Monitoring, because we are promoting the life of the little child from what you have presented us today right up to when he grows old.

I think, we build an opportunity for those who want to work and ask the Minister for Agriculture, he may be interested, but we give equity grants and it is not a loan. The grant is given by the provincial government for free. If you plant one hectare of coca or copra and we prove that you have already sweat and we pay for your sweat, which we call 'sweat equity grant'. We give K2 500 and if a person can do it without any help from the State, he will double and triple it. This is an opportunity that we created for people to work hard to live their lives.

Mr Speaker, one thing that I want the Government to be very careful is not to rely too much on these non-renewable resources. A lot of people in Kavieng do not know how to grow potatoes or kaukau anymore. They are living in a completely different state now because they are taught bread, butter and sugar, et cetera.

24/07

We give opportunity to our people in New Ireland by supporting them in the agriculture sector. We must help them. I am not suggesting for government to give grants but certainly we may look at guarantying viable projects. You do not have to pay cash for it but you guarantee it.

If you look at the Israeli project, they are doing well. According to the Prime Minister, they are already exporting our vegetables to McDonalds in Fiji.

So what we need is to support the basic crops like coffee, cocoa and coconut. Let us not introduce any new things here, instead we should concentrate on the basic crops and stabilise the costs and income. We have stabilised our crops in New Ireland as well.

I looked at the total of every cost of copra, coffee and cocoa for the last 10 years by average and established a threshold, so in New Ireland the price of copra, coffee and cocoa will not fall below that price. So our people will know that and will continue to grow these basic crops to make money.

Now, I want to come back again to this paper because my time is not up yet, Mr Speaker. This paper is a population policy and I commend the Minister for it. I know you are

very sensitive in saying 'control' but we have to start educating our people on regulating population policy.

There are countries like Philippines whose population has doubled in the last 30 years. And it is increasing beyond its GDP. So whilst the GDP is growing the population is also growing, above the GDP. And now it is going to be very difficult to get Philippines off the mark. Although they are educating them, their population growth is uncontrollable.

There is no restriction to the number of children in Singapore. For every first and second child born to the family, education is free, but the parents must pay for every third, fourth and fifth child instead. So that by itself provokes a lot of thinking in the minds of the parents and how many they can afford to have.

So in a nutshell I think New Ireland is experiencing our policy which is running in parallel with the Government's plan. We can now have the unified development strategy to finally bring this child from where he is. You have to make sure that he deserves everything this country can afford. Thank you.

Ms LOUJAYA KOUZA (Lae) – Mr Speaker, sorry, I missed that acknowledgement. I rise to speak on behalf of the 3.3 million women of this country. I apologise that my two sister Minister and Governor are not available in this House but I trust that we share the same sentiments.

I would like to commend and congratulate the Government, especially the National Planning Minister on this timely and appropriate policy.

25/07

And of these, we will be submitting a report to the United Nations, where 2015 is the year and time for countries who have signed up to the International Conventions including PNG especially where the MDG's are concerned.

This population policy intervention supports 3.5 million womenfolk in this country, especially empowerment of women through health care, education opportunities and financial inclusion of women and to be able to manage the number of children we bear within our household, the home economics of it and also managing the stresses of our own personal health.

Most cases one would expect such a policy would have been brought to the Floor by a female but I am so grateful and thankful that we have broken traditions by having support

from our male counterparts from the Parliamentary Committee on Population. I commend honourable Malakai Tabar on that and again thank the Minister.

We have realised that this is not only about womenfolk in general but it is a shared responsibility. I like the word Viable used in front of the policy paper, a viable population.

Mr Speaker, let me recommend just one consideration especially to those that are going to be refining this policy further to implement it. We should look at the dissemination of a population quota into areas of needed development as per aptitude testing. We will ensure that all our population groups are economically viable.

Let's put a cap on those that we currently have and engineer that we have an understanding of their aptitude capabilities and fill all areas of development in this country.

How many farmers and cowboys do we need? How many pilots, nurses and doctors?

Let us disseminate the population so that we are able to place them in a category of quality of life rather than hold them to a survival mechanism where we are still planning our Budgets around.

The whole point is to elevate people to a quality of life and we can begin to do that by ascertaining their aptitude. Seeing where the gaps are in our development agendas and direct traffic of an educated viable population into that.

Mr RICHARD MENDANI (Kerema) – Mr Speaker, I thank you for recognising the people of Kerema.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister and thank him for having to table a very important policy in Parliament.

This Policy needs to be carefully taken into account by all Members because it will change the way things are done in this country.

Mr Speaker, one of the fundamental questions I raise with the Members of my JDPBPC is; who do I represent?

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I want them to know that I was elected into Parliament by my electorate, by a population and one of the major things I always wanted to know the population profile of my electorate; whom I represent, and how to deliver services to these people. Was I elected to Parliament because I need to deliver roads and bridges or what is the reason for my election? Those are question that I ask and so I thank the Minister for presenting this report to this

Parliament, and I think it would go down in history. This Parliament needs to start answering some of the fundamental questions: Whom do we represent? What type of electorate do we represent? Is it a happy electorate?

I think the Minister and the Prime Minister have a very important task on hand. That is to coordinate the roles, duties and responsibilities and the functions that are performed by various government agencies.

Over the last 40 years successive governments have been going on a spending spree helping build roads, bridges and education infrastructure but we've never really understood the population profile of our country and even the electorate that we represent.

Over the years the baby boomers gave a challenge to this country and made them look like fools by allowing them to start building roads and bridges, going to the house and asking for funds to pay for schools fees, provide medical fees and pay for coffins. I think the baby boomers are smart.

We continue to plan and spend money but I think as elected leaders of this country our job is now to take the challenge head on and be able to give the challenge back to those baby boomers and tell them that they have a duty and responsibility. That means that each of us needs to go back to our electorates and see what our population profile is. How many happy people are there and how many sick people are there. How many active people are there who can join the workforce but are not engaged in the formal sector? How many are in the subsistence sector but are finding it very difficult to integrate into the modern cash economy. I think these are the fundamental bases for us to start formulating our development policies and plans.

Until we answer these critical issues, we are not going to be able to address some of the important developmental challenges facing this country.

So the containment of population growth is critical otherwise we will continue to go on a spending spree, continue to recruit Defence Force personnel, police force and even the CS and after 20 to 50 years we are going to run out of resources as a country.

I think this is the right time so I want to commend the Minister for Planning and I want all of us as Members of this Ninth Parliament to go back and take a critical look at the population profiles of our electorates and assist the Minister and Prime Minister to address some of our impending development problems.

Let's not talk about education, marine resources or forestry. We are elected into Parliament to represent an electorate. We are here to represent a people and I think that is why the real planning should start from.

Mr DAVID ARORE (Ijivitari) – Mr Speaker while taking the cue from all the other speakers I'd like to acknowledge the Minister for Planning for this very important policy statement that was delivered in the Parliament.

Mr Speaker, when I look at the cover page of this policy; The Population Policy, it says promoting a viable population and environment within the paradigms of a responsible sustainable development.

Mr Speaker, I come from an electorate which is in the process of being declared a conservation zone. I come from the Mangalas Plateau which is an area containing about 20 000 people, 360 000 hectares of land and is home to the Queen Alexander Birdwing butterfly, which is the biggest butterfly in the world.

27/07

Mr Speaker, I come from Mangalas Plateau and that is where the world's largest Queen Alexander Bird Wing Butterfly comes from. And there are about 20 000 people over 360 000 hectares of land.

Now, this particular land area is in the process of being declared a National Conservation Area by the Department of Environment and Conservation. Nevertheless, I am having problems with them.

Here we are, trying to promote responsible and sustainable development but at what cost. The population of the people living in and around this land area is growing and now they are being told not to cut down trees or clear the land because there is a shortage of land.

If that is the case then do we have any alternatives for the people, when we start telling them to control the usage of their land in terms of agricultural development and expansion of cash crop plantations.

The Higaturu Oil Palm is currently the best and classical example. When Cyclone Guba hit the country all the top soil as far up into the mountains were washed down to the sea. While other provinces are complaining about the rise of sea level it is the opposite for us. For our land area is extending out to the sea.

If you were to go and visit our beaches you will see our coastlines have actually extended outward towards the sea. If you think that I may be lying then you go to a place called Gouna and you will be surprised to see the coastline extending out to sea for about 300 metres.

Soil erosion that took place up in the mountains was a result of the uncoordinated oil palm development that we have in the province. And I wonder if the State is actually concerned about what is actually going on with the development of the oil palm industry in the province. We are now in the fourth generation of this oil palm industry in the province but the province has not benefitted.

The deals were done prior to the provincial government days and so the 20 per cent share equity of the oil palm development in Oro Province is still with IPBC. I had wanted to ask the IPBC Minister today, but Mr Speaker, you did not allow me to ask my question. Therefore, when will that 20 percent share equity be given back to the people of Oro Province? They rightfully deserve it because it belongs to them.

The houses of the oil palm owners are in shambles and disarray. Their fourth generation owners comprise of 30 to 40 families who live on a 2-hectare piece of land. There is no fresh water supply or water tanks provided by the company or even access to electricity for there is absolutely nothing, and here we are talking about sustainable development. I need this government because putting out a policy is another issue but ensuring that it works for our people is completely another issue altogether.

That is the reason why I am in support of this particular policy and what our government is doing today, I just want to remind us all of some of the issues that are affecting our people today. As for us in Oro Province, and like I said, when Cyclone Guba came everything was washed down to the sea and today we continuously face this problem. When there is rainfall for one or two days the whole top soil gets washed out to the sea. We have huge floods in the province because of what Cyclone Guba did in 1997.

Therefore, I would also like to appeal to this government to actually go out and see the 20 000 oil palm growers that live in Oro Province. The state there is very sad with the lack of drinking water because the rivers are polluted with Gramoxin from the oil palm mills.

Oro Province is just two electorates and there are Sohe and Ijivitari and it is a sad state of how the people are living now as a result of this oil palm industry.

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At the same time, the Government is embarking on conserving 36,000 hectares of land on the Manglas Plateau the land where the Queen Alexander Birdwing Butterfly, the world's largest resides. This is the home to the people who I represent, where I am the landowner, now are we seriously thinking about sustainable development are we thinking about trying to enhance or put some money into this type of world heritage sites.

Tufi fiords are we going to preserve the Tufi fiords. If we are talking about sustainable development, we will have to start putting money where our mouth is. I am sorry Minister for Conservation but I am going to cut the logs down. If you are saying conservation, what alternatives do you have for my people?

Mr Speaker, I am sorry I am just making a general statement through you to the Government. The Government can push for conservation there, but what alternatives do we have for the people if we are going to tell them to conserve and protect the forests. You are talking about protecting the Kokoda Trail by not developing a gold mine there, but for whose sake? Is it for the sake of the Australians or the people walking the Kokoda Trail? What alternative forms of development will come for the people of Kokoda Trail or the people of Manglas or the Tuffi Fiords which is probably the only second fiord in the world apart from Switzerland and New Zealand for that matter. So I appeal to this Government, while appreciating this very important policy on population growth within the paradigms of responsible sustainable development, to start thinking seriously about some of these impending issues that surround our people.

With that, Mr Speaker, I commend the Minister for National Planning for this very good policy for our people.

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL (West New Britain) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to join my other colleagues in congratulating the Minister for National Planning for bringing this very important policy.

Mr Speaker, I will keep my comments short to allow others to also give their thoughts. In terms of the population policy, I just want to speak more on population control based on some of the experiences of the country where I was born.

Mr Speaker, countries like India and China having a population of 1.2 billion and 1.3 billion are very aggressively promoting population control. The government put up logos and mottos on vehicles and government offices some 20 years ago saying 'We two, harvest two'

meaning we are two so we create only two. Then when I went to India some two years ago that policy changed I saw some signs being put up saying 'We two harvest one'.

Mr Speaker, it is ultimately the attitude of the people and I believe in taking ownership. If we are not able provide that same attention, love and care to our children then why would we produce six or seven or even three children if we are not able to provide equal importance to all these children in terms of education opportunities or health care . The Government must aggressively create awareness in terms of bringing those kinds of mottos, government messages and facilities as alluded to by the Governor for New Ireland province.

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Even in India when a mother goes to deliver her second baby in a private hospital the doctor or nurse in charge will ask her to fill the consent form to go for family planning operation in Government hospitals they are very strict.

The Government provides incentives by giving them money, bags of rice and nutrients to those who agree to have two children only and go for family planning.

When we talk about family planning we are not referring to women only, men must also take part by going for operation so that they don't produce another baby. Why would you want to produce more babies when you already have enough to look after and take care of their basic needs?

(Members applauding)

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – Most of us here are practising polygamy. If we want to talk about population policy we have to lead by example as leaders of this country. If I practice this then I will be shy to say it, but I don't do and I have one wife and two kids only.

(Members interjecting)

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – All the Government hospitals must introduce this policy with some kind of incentives to mothers and fathers who agree on having two children. We must compensate them in terms of money or food to do this operation.

Mr Speaker, in China it's illegal to have more than one child but if you have more than one child you will not work in a Government office.

Just recently, what the Chinese did was they took special medicine to produce twins so that they can have more than one baby. That medicine was selling like hot cakes through the internet.

Mr Speaker, we need to do a lot of awareness through education and health agencies through the general hospitals in each Provinces, you cannot implement this policy effectively if National Government does not work with the Provincial Government as mentioned by the Governor of New Ireland Province.

When we talk about PNG, PNG is made up of 22 Provinces and don't regard Port Moresby alone as PNG. The policy won't be more effective if we only talk and concentrate here in Waigani only.

We must encourage this through our health department and each provincial and district hospital must be given this strict policy stating that those who produce more than three children will not benefit from the Governments free education policy.

If both parents have decided to bring this additional life into this world it's their responsibility to take care of the child by paying for the school fees.

Mr Speaker, we have to create a lot of employment opportunity because most of the people have a lot of free time back in the village. The Lord has richly blessed this country and we always say PNG is rich in natural resources but at the same time fertility rate is very high. If we don't create a lot of employment opportunity then they have a lot of free time to do this other work of producing more babies, Mr Speaker.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL - I tell you it's not easy to survive in other countries like Singapore, India or China; you have to really work every day for a like minimum of 10 or 12 hours in order to make your money.

30/07

In other countries like Singapore, India or China, you have to really work a minimum of 10-12 hours to be able to survive. If I work hard for 10 to 12 hours I won't do any work but go to bed because I am already tired.

Mr Speaker, I believe that some people really do not want to work because they have lot of land and they have huge garden for their survival. But as the development goes and our people are involved, they will see the benefit of their hard work.

I think this will also contribute to the high rate of the population growth because the national average rate of 2.5 or 3 per cent is really high in terms of population growth. In Singapore, it is negative because their fertility rate is very low. The Government gives you additional funds and incentives for example in Australia, they do that to encourage birth rate and increase their population.

It's an attitude thing as well like what the Member for Ijivitari said, about chemicals spoiling the land and it really affects predominant agricultural countries like India and they are now beginning to go back to sustainable development and are not using chemicals and to go organic.

Manure is very rich compared to the use of urea or phosphorous, it has much more nutrients than other form of chemical that is being used. Oil palm created an economic boom to a certain extent in our provinces but it created some socio-economic impact in the oil palm producing provinces.

I support the Agriculture Minister to introduce the National Rice policy and I would consider any society that would grow rice because rice unlike oil palm needs a lot of care and attention. If we are successfully growing rice then we can call ourselves a very well cultured society as far as agriculture is concerned because we have the attitude to really work hard to grow rice that needs all the care and attention to have a good harvest at the end.

We should introduce the National rice policy and would recommend that the Government must work with all our institutes who are willing to do the research and come up with suitable rice varieties because this is a crop that needs constant and special care. In PNG we do not have the formal irrigation to individual fields, in countries like India, they have electricity going to those fields and the Government even subsidises on power to farmers who are willing to grow rice.

We cannot deny the fact agriculture is important to our country and that if we do not grow our own rice we will be always at the mercy of those rice growing countries and we will be forced to depend fully on our imports. That is why while we have a huge potential on growing our own rice for our own domestic and import needs we have to do it.

I just wanted to share these points because population control is more towards our attitude and the Government has to put up a policy to attract more people to come forward

and do their family planning. And also to educate the people on the benefits that can be derived from the Government following their willingness to do family planning.

This way we can effectively control population and it is our attitude that if we produce this child we have every moral responsibility to give them that equal importance, attention, care, health and education to those children and also to educate people of what the benefits, they can derive from the Government because of their willingness to do this family planning.

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In that way we can effectively control population and it is our attitude, Mr Speaker, that if we produce extra children we have every moral responsibility to give them that equal importance, attention, care, health and education and this can only be done through awareness. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr BIRE KIMISOPA (Goroka) - Mr Speaker, I would like to contribute to this debate and if I may commend the Minister for putting out an excellent policy paper on population.

Mr Speaker, perhaps this is the overriding policy that should navigate us in terms of our public expenditure going forward.

There are number of important issues and I will not venture back to the issues that have been raised on the Floor.

The most pronounced sector of the population demographic of PNG as it is today is the ages of our children from 13-22 years in this country so perhaps, Mr Speaker, that is roughly about 70 percent of the population, and these are the ages where we get the high fertility rate.

Now, within the next 20 years, we will be still travelling at three percent and more dangerously we may go up to four or five percent because you are talking about 60-70 percent of population from the ages of 13-25 years within that bracket that is more pronounced in this country.

Mr Speaker, if that were to happen then, it would throw our public expenditure out. It is important at this critical junction of forty years; we owe it to ourselves to set the benchmark.

Now, if we are going to have a population growth rate of three percent, we start talking about mitigations and pegging it at three percent as we go along.

The ideal rate in my view should be one percent. That is important because at present we are unable to look after our own people and at the rate we are growing there will be a large number of people who will be dropping out.

We don't have a safety net in this country and the migration pattern in this country suggests to me that they are leaving rural communities and migrating to urban communities.

Mr Speaker, in my electorate Goroka we use to have a 30 000 - 40 000 population and all of a sudden we have gone up to 100 000. The pressure on Public Service, social services, health and education is at breaking point.

Mr Speaker, with the quality of life in towns and cities in Papua New Guinea, I am afraid to say this but we are not able to provide our citizens the kind of life they deserve we don't have football parks, recreational park and so forth, and the more migration we see in towns and cities we will have a massive problem on our hand.

So, Mr Speaker, to start with I would like to suggest that we decide for ourselves exactly what the population growth rate should be. Are we going to persist with three percent or let say we start with one percent and work towards bringing down the population.

Mr Speaker, we owe it to the kids who are born today, we don't need to bring more kids into the quagmire we are in. It will be grossly unfair on them and as we stand today we are unable to create everything for our people. We owe it to ourselves to determine the exact population growth rate.

Mr Speaker, in my view one percent is ideal for our country and in doing so we should be able to look after most of our people who fall off in the formal system, who cannot find jobs and are still dependent on their parents and relatives at some stage.

As rich as we are we should be able to create a welfare policy so that we will look after ourselves. Not all our people will be doctors, lawyers, carpenters, brick layers et cetera, there will be a large proportion of our population falling off.

Mr Speaker, we need to create a safety net and to do that we need to cap the population. It is in our interest to do so because as we stand today the public spending has gone out of control. It appears to be that every time we want to make an intervention into our public expenditure for our people we seem to be pegging it with an expansion growth or we need x number of doctors, policemen et cetera, per population.

Mr Speaker, this is a runaway train, as the population grows we continue to try and peg it with population and that is a bad policy.

The national conversation is being held right now and I would like to commend the

Minister, perhaps we need to be more bold and set the target, we must grow it at one percent because three percent is unaffordable, it is too expensive.

We do not have the means to look after our people, if we are struggling now as we speak what guarantee is there when the population hits the 20 million mark and if the drivers of the economy is in debt, we will have problems going forward trying to create affordable education and health.

Mr Speaker, the other problem we have in this country is that we have less than 10 percent alienated land in this country, where all the towns and cities are. You can talk about all these numbers but at the end of the day our people will be looking for a place to stay to do business, to leave or to send their children to school, or if they need medical health, they will always migrate to our towns and cities.

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We have only 10 per cent of alienated land out of 400 000 square kilometres of land in this country.

Mr Speaker, the Government is keeping everything within the towns and cities, the services like hospitals, administrative centres and schools and that is why the urban migration is more pronounced in this sector.

We did not make the land available for people so they move into towns and cities. If you are talking about population growth then obviously you have to talk about economic growth; then you have to make land accessible to our people so we can mitigate the high cost of doing business in this country to absorb the high level unemployment in this country. We have to pack the population growth to be one per cent then three per cent.

The fertility rate is exceeding three per cent with the population or the demography that is more pronounced between the ages of 13 to 22. If you look around in town and cities, you will not see any old person but young people running around in the supermarkets, banks, et cetera. It is crowded everywhere whether it is Mount Hagen, Kundiawa or Goroka, you experience a similar crowd.

Mr Speaker, sooner or later we will have problems. When we confine our development aspirations on mere 10 per cent on alienated land, we will have more problems. Rural-urban migration has no solution to it because our people will continue to move to where there are lights and services. They will constantly move and as the fertility rate grows, you will see more young people into towns and cities.

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide the kind of employment that our young people deserve in this country. If they fall off the line, as a sensible Government, we should pick them up when they fall and give them employment. We can give them some kind of welfare cheque that they deserve. We have lot of money; we are a rich nation and we can do it.

Mr Speaker, the population rate at three per cent is too high we have to have a reasonable number. After next 20 years to 30 years, what is the most likely population of PNG? Is it going to be 20 million or 30 million? As we are talking, I do not trust the Census figures of this country.

I believe, we are already 10 million and not 7 million. There are only, 111 stewards of 10 million people, including babies and old people. We must get this right based on our population demography and based on targets that we want set, then we can articulate the kind of public investment we want to make.

I also like to echo the sentiments by the Governor of New Ireland that we have to re-enforce the view that we need to have just two children so it is affordable rather have too many. In Papua New Guinea, it is very hard to look after many children.

We must do justice to our people and we should stress too that if you have two children the Government will only allow free education for only two. If you have three and four, it is the parents' duty to pay the school fees and this also applies to health services. I think, we owe it to the babies that are born now and the children who are still alive.

Mr Speaker, the ones that are not born yet, we will save them through educating the parents to have only one or two children and this is the kind of conversation that should be held at the national level otherwise the budget will be blown off.

Mr Speaker, the public expenditure for the public services last year was about K9 billion to provide services to our people, while our capacity to generate our economy is almost the same or a little bit over.

I overheard that the IRC is projecting K9.3 million and this is the target that they have to raise in this country. However, with the rate that we are going, where will this money go? We need number of circuit breakers in this country now. One of them must be for education and another for health.

Mr Speaker, I think we need to promote the idea of private education in this country because all the State institutions are filled up.

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Highly educated, affordable Papua New Guineans should be able to send their children to private schools in this country. We should free up the space so that we do not have three children sitting on one desk.

We need to create incentives for private education and private health. There must be a detour so that we will relieve and alleviate the problems in the social, health and education sectors. Affluent Papua New Guineans should be able to access medical and educational services at affordable rates leaving the public institutions free so that there is no congestion. We can invest in the new medical equipments as well as invest money into education.

I am weary at the rate that we are going because the people of Goroka deserve two Members of Parliament. According to the law I am entitled to represent 25 000 citizens however, there are over 100 000 citizens. So my DSIP cannot meet the demands of my people in Goroka which is an urban electorate. I cannot stop migration from Southern Highlands, Tari or Enga because it is their country. They are more than welcome to my electorate.

But if mothers are denied their rights to better child birth facilities then I have a big problem. The same applies to my children who cannot access the classrooms because of the number of people coming into my electorate.

Minister for National Planning has done an excellent job so the next time you bring another paper into Parliament you must set the target. Set the rate and propose the lever because the present generation always wants to have the kind of lifestyle they deserve. We also owe it to the parents so that they too must know that any new child they bring into the system won't be disadvantaged. That is very important so, Mr Speaker, I commend the Minister for National Planning because he has set the over arching policy based on the national conversation and will become more real.

What the Member for Kerema said is absolutely true. The Government is not about bridges and power lines. It is about our people. Our people should access all the basic services they are entitled to. Some of our people do not complain about the stupidity that goes on in this chamber. But as decent as they are, they expect affordable services such as roads and schools to be fixed and running as well as aid post to be operating.

Mr James Marape – Point of Order! I do not know whether I have heard him correctly but I would like the Honourable Member to withdraw the word stupidity.

Mr SPEAKER – Your point of order is valid, I will ask the Member to withdraw it.

Mr BIRE KIMISOPA – I withdraw it. I want to say that our people deserve the best.

Mr Speaker, this Government has an excellent track record in terms of intervention in health and education. So let us not spoil it. We need to be bold and decisive and we need to set the target so that we prevent the problems of tomorrow from happening.

It is important to look after what we already have on hand, the children who are currently with us.

Mr Speaker, we have a lot of impediments in this country that we need to overcome. One of this is the alienated land which is less than 10 per cent. That is the biggest structural impediment in this country.

The other one, Mr Speaker, is proposing a circuit breaker to alleviate the huge cost of public investment into health and education. If we can do that provided that we are bold enough to suggest a population growth rate, I think we will provide the kind of service our people deserve.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.50 p.m..