

SECOND DAY

Wednesday 28 October 2015

DRAFT HANSARD

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LEE SIROTE

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

SECOND DAY

Wednesday 28 October 2015

The Acting Speaker (**Mr Aide Ganasi**) took the Chair at 10 a.m.

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

Sitting suspended.

The Acting Speaker again took the Chair at 10.30 am., and invited the Member for Lae, Honourable **Loujaya Toni** to say Prayers.

'Eternal God, the creator of Heaven and Earth. In whom we receive our beings as leaders of this wonderful nation. We appear before you this morning Father, inadequate, insufficient so unable sinners in need of a saviour, we plea the merits of the precious blood of Iesua, we ask O God that you forgive us for the people that we represent are suffering.

Father, we ask that you take your place in this House and expose where we have gone wrong. And we ask that your grace and mercy are bound to help us to help your people. We ask in no other name but in the name of Iesua our Saviour and together we say the Lord's Prayer this morning.' Amen.

QUESTIONS

Disaster Affecting WNB

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – I direct my questions to the Minister for Agriculture.

Mr Acting Speaker, natural disasters are affecting many provinces. The disaster relating to my province in West New Britain is more specific. We have more than 300 oil palm blocks already burnt down due to bush fires. It is more than 583 hectares of economical oil palm trees.

While we are looking at providing some short term measures, I thank the National Government for supporting the initial disaster funding of K500 000 to the province.

My questions are:

(1) While we are looking at the short term plans, can the Minister also look into how we can insure some of the agricultural crops, especially the commercial crops? Oil palm is a permanent product of 30 years of fraternity in terms of income earning potential.

(2) Is there an opportunity whereby we can insure the commercial crop like the oil palm so that during droughts or bush fires, the people can be compensated?

(1) Is there a possibility to use some of the money allocated for agriculture to subsidise the costs of fertilizers and pesticides so that our farmers can be on par with the company in terms of its production?

Mr ASSIK TOMMY TOMSCOLL - Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Governor of West New Britain for his good questions. West New Britain is the main province that hosts the oil palm industry in Papua New Guinea. This is an industry that contributed K1.4 billion to the purse of this country.

Whilst we are in the middle of a drought, it is not just a concern of the Governor of the Province, the people or the farmers who are in the industry but it is also a great concern of the Government because anything that happens towards the destruction will obviously have an effect on the income or revenue that will flow into the country.

02/02

My Ministry is also concerned and the Government is also concerned. In fact, we have appealed to our people to take responsibility at this period of time and must restrain themselves from unnecessarily lighting fires. The destruction of Oil Palm was partly caused by our failure to observe, and our farmers failure to observe and not to light fires and to be careful and cautious. It does not only place Oil Palm at risk but it also places the lives of people and infrastructure at risk.

Mr Acting Speaker, the first question relates to insurance cover for crops. The industry is young and it is growing. The Oil Palm industry does not have a lot of players or actors in the industry. The industry in Papua New Guinea is monopolised by two companies in PNG, apart from our village oil palm growers. Our village Oil Palm growers also contribute about 30- 40 per cent of that revenue.

Mr Acting Speaker, the industry at the moment is monopolised and not structured in a way that is conducive for the business sector to decide whether it is viable to carry out an insurance program over such crop. It is a business decision determined by investors but the

Government will look into it and see what the possibilities are in starting an insurance, but that has to be done with or in partnership and consultation with the insurance companies that operate in Papua New Guinea and of course it will take time to undertake such a program.

Mr Acting Speaker, the second question relates to subsidy. At the moment I am not sure which subsidy fund the Governor is referring to that is in the agriculture sector which we could use to subsidise the cost.

In trying to increase the flow of cash into our farmer's pocket, we commissioned a study and we are still awaiting the result of that study. The study once completed will determine what the new FFB price is. At the moment it is probably stuck up at the Treasury office somewhere there, and until it comes public we will know and decide which path to take. The only subsidies the Government has been funding has been in the area of cocoa and coffee and oil palm and because there is a monopoly in the sector and because the prices have been somewhat not been stable over the years, the Government has not seen the need to subsidise.

The agriculture sector is an important sector and oil palm is an important industry but because of this drought, my Department is now focused in looking at how to revitalise the crops not only oil palm but that would include coffee, cocoa and other crops after the event of the drought. The focus of management is important to the sector, the sector believes that it is important that we address not the event itself but the aftermath of the event, where we have to rehabilitate lives and where we have to rehabilitate crops so that normalcy comes back into those communities and families that depend on the crop.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am sure I have answered the question and I hope it will meet with the satisfaction of the Governor. Thankyou.

03/02

Mr Acting Speaker, I have answered the questions and I hope it satisfies the Governor.

Disaster Relief Funds, Teleformin District

Mr SOLAN MIRISIM – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker for recognising the people of Telefomin. I want to direct my three questions to the Minister for Finance.

This country is faced with a severe drought. Just one week ago, you mentioned in the media and assured the people of this country that all the elected Members of Parliament will

be allocated K2 million each from their DSIP allocation to cater for this natural disaster. Most of us members have already used up these funds in other areas such as projects and programs.

My questions are:

(1) Where is the K25 million that the Government has allocated for natural disasters to assist the people of this country? Most part of this country is badly affected by this drought and relief supplies are yet to reach them since beginning of this long drought and they are still waiting in vain.

(2) Can you explain to this Parliament so that people of this country will know where exactly these funds are and who is managing it and when will those people who miss out on the food supplies get their shares?

(3) If this drought continues for an indefinite period, does the Government have any long term plans and funds allocated to cater for this unexpected natural disasters now and future as well?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for Teleformin for asking questions that are pertinent to this serious issue that is before us as a country.

Mr Acting Speaker, when we handed down the 2015 Budget last year, no one anticipated a disaster of this magnitude we are currently facing.

Mr Acting Speaker, as part of our normal allocations we allocated about K25 million but Cabinet will sit later today to approve on a statement that Government will release to the office of Deputy Prime Minister or Prime Minister on exactly what the Government will do in as far as addressing the disaster issue that confronts us.

Mr Acting Speaker, the K25 million has been used to address firstly, in the Highlands frost that took place earlier and from there on the extension of drought that is taking place. Total breakup of the program will be announced through our government statement that will be presented tomorrow by the Deputy Prime Minister or Prime Minister.

Mr Acting Speaker, we realise that it's a severe drought and it will extend for an indefinite period comparing to the last drought that we had in 1997.

And so as responsible Government, we felt that the closest allocation in the Budget to the people is the DSIP allocations.

Mr Acting Speaker, we know that districts are the closest agency of government to our people. Therefore, they are already in an engagement with the people as far as assessing what is second place and mitigating immediately some of the relief programs locally.

04/02

We at Central agency have now given allowance for them to use DSIP funds at a maximum of K2 million so that districts can take stock of the disaster. They are already taking stock and can also make provisions to assist the National Government in as far as providing relief rations are concerned.

And yes, I confirm that we have agreed for the use of the funds and I have issued financial instruments to ensure that up to K2 million of all DSIP funds is to be used for disaster and drought relief efforts nationwide.

We continue to face instances of many impediments in the service delivery like many other programmes. We have so many layers of Public Service machinery that continue to impinge on expeditious delivery of service delivery. And in this instance of disaster, I have called and now am calling on all 89 CEOs of districts across this nation to set up your own district disaster committees so that you firstly, assess the level of disaster on the ground, especially drought. And for you to also work and report to the provincial disaster team and submit the report so that at the Central agency we take stock of the level of disaster right across and mitigate in as far as disasters are concerned.

Let me use this opportunity to confirm across the country that up to this year we have remitted K6 million in DSIP funds into all district accounts including Wau-Bulolo district and other districts. Many times we complain but we do not seem to say thank you when it happens. Complaining is easy but saying thank you is few in coming from many of us. And so I appeal to all districts including Wau-Bulolo to go through your district treasury and if you have not yet received K6 million then my office is open to anyone so please come to us.

The last we remitted into the district treasury accounts was three weeks ago with K1 million each. We made allowance in the financial instruction within the powers I have as the Finance Minister and so let's defer certain programmes such as education, health and roads which will be still here, but if our people are facing problems out there then do not expect the government to come up with extra funds from elsewhere to deliver. The money that we have already, we are reallocating to this sort of programmes. Therefore the districts must be the first point of contact for your people and start using the resources that you have already been allocated in the K2 million. You can go to service providers and procure the rations to deliver at your districts. That is the program that we have. We will very soon remit another K1 million each to all districts so that you can continue to engage with your people.

With regard to the last question on what the Government is planning to do, we are responsible enough knowing that our people are suffering. When the Treasurer hands down

the Budget next week, you will see that a substantial amount of funds is parked for disaster programmes. An increase in allocation will be evident in the next Budget to be delivered and that is how we are responding. Between now and as we migrate to the next fiscal year we expect all districts to take responsibility of the disaster and manage the allocations that have been given to all districts.

05/02

Possible Rollover DSIP

Mr SAM BASIL – My question is to the Finance Minister again.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Budget of the DSIP from this year stands at K15 million, and I believe that most districts including my own have received only one-fifth of the allocation and in a few weeks, this Parliament will sit down to deliberate on the 2016 National Budget.

Can the Honourable Minister clarify if the 100 per cent of the K15 million towards the financial year ending 31 December 2015, will be met by the Government or it will be rolled over to next year?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JAMES MARAPE –Mr Acting Speaker, let me thank my friend from Wau-Bulolo who is always continuing to ask me questions on DSIP and you are a friend and my brother so thank you very much.

Mr Acting Speaker, let me put one little correction into his question; it is not K15 million as DSIP. DSIP allocation for this year is K10 million for all districts and a matching allocation for PSIP right across for all Provinces at K5 Million per District and that has totalled to what each Province is receiving or will receive for PSIP.

Mr Acting Speaker, he mentioned K15 million and the additional K5 million is money designated and quarantined for Health and Education Infrastructures. It's a PIP money that is parked at National Planning and every District is to submit their Plan for educational infrastructures health infrastructure.

Why Education? It is simply because we are investing substantial money in the Free Education Program. In the last 2-3 years, many have complained that, that is not a matching allocation for classrooms and building infrastructures to address the increase in enrolment in our district schools, elementary schools and in our primary schools.

So, as responsible as we are, we parked the additional K5 million especially quarantined for PIP Infrastructure and to be disbursed in National Planning because it is a PIP

Fund and I would like to advise all Members of Parliament through your Districts to submit your PIP Infrastructure Plan for these two funds and to access through National Planning. At the moment as we speak the Planning Minister and his department have received plans from most Districts and they have disbursed up to K2.5 million to the two sectors.

So DSIP is continuing to see the K10 million and may I remind everyone including our good Deputy Opposition Leader, these are not Constitutional Grants but these are Budgetary Allocation per Government Policy. As far as the *Constitution* is concerned they are all dependent on funds and fund availability and so we manage funds and we manage programs as we go along depending on budget availability and for this year, and as I said already, K6 million of all DSIP funds have been transferred into the accounts for PSIP.

For the benefit of all Provincial Leaders and Governors sitting here we have warranted and noted to the equal percentage that all Districts have received this far, most would have realized by now that they have received similar to the allocations districts that have been receiving and that is something Treasury and Finance Departments are working on to address so that by the time we close this fiscal year all Provinces and all Districts received the allocations that we have earmarked for in this year's Budget.

Thank you very much, Mr Acting Speaker.

Relieve Measures, All Provinces

Mr GARY JUFFA – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My questions are directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

06/02

Since we are on the subject of drought, I have some questions that I think require the attention of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Firstly, I would like to give a short summary that will give some context to my questions. We are very well aware that this drought was going to be upon us. It is interesting to hear my colleague brother over there saying that, they did not know this. Scientists were warning about this and the drought is expected to last until April 2016, and this is going to be worse than the 1997 drought.

My questions are:

(1) Deputy Prime Minister, what is the role of the Ministry that you are in charge of insofar as its strategy for the delivery of relief to all provinces?

This is because we are confused as the Prime Minister's Department is involved and the Finance Minister is also involved as well.

(2) Where is the Deputy Prime Ministry in all these?

It is the mandated ministry for the delivery of such services and goods during such times.

(3) Did National Security Advisory Council sit and meet, and consider these strategies and declare a State Of Emergency, as was the case in 1997?

(4) What is the total amount of funds we are allocating for this effort?

This is because, while everyone is running to Waigani, people out there in the most remote and rural areas are dying, especially the most vulnerable who are the women, children and elderly.

Mr Acting Speaker, it pains me that we sit here giggle and laugh like children in a playground while our people are suffering and dying out there.

(Members interjecting)

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Yes, my questions will come. You may be laughing but your people are also suffering from this drought.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Governor, ask your question.

Mr GARRY JUFFA – I had already asked some questions and I would like to repeat them.

(1) Have the National Security Advisory Council sat down to discuss this issue?

(2) How much money have they allocated?

(3) What is their strategy?

In 1997, we had asked the Australian Government to assist us with logistics, and they sent their Navy and Army personnel to assist and work alongside our Defence Force personnel.

(4) Do we have any strategies in place to again ask for assistance from the Australian Government and to use our Defence Force personnel?

There is confusion between the provincial governments and the district development authorities. Provincial Governments have the disaster management unit in place while the district authorities are also setting up their own disaster management unit in the districts.

(5) Therefore, which of the two are really supposed to be carrying out the work?

This is because both will still report to the provincial administrator but now they are confused as to whether the personnel from the district authority will report to the district administrator or the CEO.

(6) Can the Deputy Prime Minister clarify this matter?

Thank you.

Mr LEO DION – Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to thank the Governor for Oro for his series of questions.

Mr Acting Speaker, the questions that he has asked is also best answered by the Provincial Governors and the district administration.

We all know that the Disaster Office of this nation has not been properly funded for many years. As a result of that, we as a government are trying to repair and come up with some strategies in terms of improving the office operation and administration, as well as decentralizing some of the powers to the provinces and districts.

If we really take a look into this issue regarding the Disaster Office, in the last 40 years we have treated this Office like the National Fire Service. We tend to ignore the Disaster Office and focus on other developments, but disasters cannot be predicted.

Mr Acting Speaker, as the Governor mentioned, we were warned about the drought and it was common knowledge and that is true. Even though scientists can predict such disasters our planning system has issues and we must admit to these.

07/02

Mr Acting Speaker, I must admit today, that the National Disaster Office with its capacity at this time has been trying its very best to attend to all the disasters that has been happening in the last three years.

Before I answer the other question, let me state here that the National Disaster Office has already delegated tasks to the provincial governments. It is up to the provincial governments to take ownership at all times. I know that most provincial governors will disagree on this but at the same time the District Development Authority is there as well.

Mr Acting Speaker, all provincial governments and the DDAs have been funded and just a while ago we just heard the Finance Minister that this funding will continue in next year's Budget.

Mr Garry Juffa – Point of Order! Mr Speaker, let me make a clarification. In 2013 the Prime Minister made a commitment to the tune of K5 million to disaster funds in the Northern Province and we are still awaiting K3 million from that allocation.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, your point of order is out of order.

Mr LEO DION – Mr Acting Speaker that is a new question. Let me try and answer it in a way that satisfies the Governor.

The second question is in regards to whether the National Security Council deliberated on this issue. In the provision there is no such requirement for the National Security Council to deliberate on that. The total amount was delivered by the Finance Minister.

The K25 million that was allocated, depending on the availability of funding, the K12 million has been expended for distribution to our people where 1.7 million are really in need of this assistance.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the provincial governments and District Development Authorities who are attending to this disaster areas by providing food supplies, water and hygiene.

At the same time I would like to ask provincial governments like the Northern Provincial Government that government agencies such as agriculture, health, education and also national departments are also in some provinces. So the question we can pose is; what is their job there? For such situations like this there must be some strategies and routines in their work to make sure that they coordinate with provincial governments in order to come up with some strategies, and mitigations to attend to disaster relief activities that are going on this country.

Disaster is a natural phenomenon. It cannot be stopped; we have to work with nature. Every time there is a disaster everyone is looking for answers with the National Disaster. They require miracles from this office. I must say to the parliamentarians that there is no miracle here.

What I am saying is that I am supporting what the Minister for Finance is saying that we must first of all attend to the needs of our people. After all they are our voters because it will have repercussions when election time comes.

Mr Acting Speaker, I have tried to answer the questions in this manner. At the sufferings of our people on behalf of the Government I say sorry and extend our sincerity because the disaster office was literally underfunded.

Mr Speaker, I extend my gratitude to the Government for recognizing this and allocating K70 million in next year's Budget. It must be properly and prudently coordinated and I must admit my ministry is responsible but as I have said there are some issues in relation to capacity.

Mr Speaker, recently, an assessment team called the Rapid Assessment Team visited all the provinces in this country and they came up with detailed information urging provincial governments to plan better for the future by giving information to Government on how much funding is needed.

08/02

The Government in its wisdom has entered that by saying that this assessment by the response team indicated that the Government needs K175 million.

We've got an answer for that, which the Minister for Finance already stated. And that is, to use your DISP and PSIP to attend to that. If you use your PSIP it will be more than what is required as per the report from the assessment team. It's going to be more than K200 million and this Government will provide that to attend to this disaster issue.

Let's admit, there's money down there but on the other hand, Mr Acting Speaker, I would say that when it's time for disaster it's time for conman to mastermind and high-jack Government services at these times. Therefore, the provincial government and DDA must take leadership and take control of these things.

Take control and don't come fighting and urging on those matters if you yourself fail in your provinces and DDA to address these issues.

Mr Acting Speaker, the onus is on the governors and on the District Administrator because the system of government in place already to attend these matters.

(Mr Garry Juffa interjecting)

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Order! The question has been answered.

Mr LEO DION– Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to see that our peoples' lives do not become politicised.

(Mr Garry Juffa interjecting)

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Order, Governor!

Mr LEO DION – Mr Acting Speaker, I think what I said has excited the Governor of Oro Province. Please tell him to sit down and be quiet.

As I was saying, we must not politicise our peoples' livelihoods because they have suffered enough already. It therefore time for the provincial governments and BDAs to attend to this issue.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Disaster Relief, Lagaip Pogera

Mr NIXON MANGAPE – I wish to direct my questions to Deputy Prime Minister. My district is the worst affected area. I told my district disaster officers to make a report and I submitted this to the office two months ago but we haven't received any funding.

Will you approve the K 25 million and when will you release the money to Lagaip-Pogera?

I am asking this question because Lagaip-Pogera electorate has contributed 16 per cent of GDP for the country in the last 25 years. The people of Lagaip –Pogera are in immediate need of assistance.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr LEO DION- Mr Acting Speaker, I want to ask my brother to come to this side. I thank the Member for Lagaip-Pogera for his good question, I want him to come and see me after Parliament session today

Disaster Relief Gulf Province

Mr RICHARD MENDAN- Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for recognising the people of Kerema. Last year in July, there was a major flood in Kerema District and all of Gulf Province My JDB and JDBPC urgently approved K1 million to provide relief supply and provided a report to the Office of Disaster and Emergency.

09/02

Out of that report, K3 million was released and given to somebody, but that money never went down to the province. About K2 million was paid to a shipping company for logistics and hire of a helicopter to a chopper company. And eight containers of food supplies were delivered to a jetty outside Tubuserea and my people never received those supplies. Eventually I had to get detectives to go and cut open the containers only to find out that all the food was rotten inside. Five of the containers were unaccounted for.

And this year, Mr Acting Speaker, I have already done some assessments for the disaster which is affecting my people with the support of my District Development Authority.

(1) What has the Office of Disaster and Emergency done to take those culprits to justice for having failed the people of Kerema?

The province had done some disaster assessments and the reports have been furnished to the Office of Disaster and there are reports coming out of Kerema District of people dying.

(2) What are we going to do about it and when will action be taken?

Mr LEO DION – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker for the questions from the honourable Member for Kerema. I think that issue is general knowledge as it was publicised in the media and publicly.

I think the questions now is directed to the Police Minister to take police action in relation to the people who perpetrated that suspected or alleged theft of public money that the Government allocated for disaster relief, food supplies and so on to the Gulf Province, including Kerema District. I can answer the questions this way.

Secondly, I want the Member to come to the office so that we can try and settle his claims and reports of theft and misuse. We have all heard the grievances he echoed generally about the funding that was made available to these places. I thank the Member for Kerema for taking a proactive action in relation to proving the necessary funding to his people in this situation but at the same time it was unfortunate that Gulf Province people were made to suffer because of the situation that arose from the misuse of the funding that went somewhere else instead of going to our people.

Tailings Dam Required, Tolukuma Mine

Mr PETER ISOAIMO – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker for recognising the people of Kairiku-Hiri.

My question is directed to the Minister for Mining and I ask the Minister for Environment and Climate Change to take note.

Mr Speaker, we now know that the Petromin Company has changed its ownership of the Tolukuma Mine to a Singaporean company namely 'Asi Dokona Mining Resources PTE Limited' incorporated in Singapore on 22 July 2015.

All transactions have transpired without stakeholders including the Central Provincial Government, Goilala DDA, and Woitape Rural Local Level Government. But I want to raise these questions on behalf of my people of Mekeo, Kuni and Kairuku IIGs who live downstream, who are inhabitants of downstream Angabanga River Ring and who are being affected for the last 25 years.

There have been reports by Dr Allen Dinghey of Oxfam Australia and our PNG's very own Dr Sylvester Kotapu who indicated for the last 10 years saying that there are very high levels of chemicals in the bloodstreams of people living downstream of the Angabanga River.

In answer to my last questions, I was assured that there were some research commissioned by both departments and the findings will be made known.

10/02

In my last question I was assured there were some research commissioned by both departments and the findings would be made known. But until today, my people are still waiting.

Mr Acting Speaker, in the recent public and the chiefly meetings we had in Kairuku, as the Member responsible for downstream people I have been pressured to ask the Minister for Mining. But we understand that in resource development there is always sacrifice involved. But what had happened to my people in the last 25 years, it has not only been disastrous but a case of genocide. It is the humble plea of the people of Mekeo and Kairuku.

Do you have plans in place before the mine reopens to ask the operator to build a tailings dam and manage its wastes because currently our people are enjoying the crystal clear water they have enjoyed 25 years ago.

In other words, the people of Mekeo and Kairuku are demanding that a tailings dam be built before the mine reopens. Thank you.

Mr BYRON CHAN – Thank you Honourable Member for Kairuku-Hiri. I witnessed the transaction of sale from Petromin to Asi Dokana last month. A Singaporean Company took over Tolukuma Mine. I believe they have done their own due diligence with Petromin and vice versa Petromin with Asi Dokana directors.

I was told there was consultation amongst the Members of Parliament for Goilala and possibly Governor of Central Province. For preliminary consultation and discussions –

Mr Paul Moi – Point of Order! There was no consultation between the Member for Goilala and the LLG president of Woitape and the landowners including our good Governor. Our Honourable Governor told us not to witness it so can the Minister for Mining be honest.

Mr BYRON CHAN – Thank you very much Honourable Member and I congratulate you on your election on behalf of the people of Namatanai. I have been honest to my people for the last 15 years and I am still here.

Mr Acting Speaker, as I was told on that day, I have not been privy to process of the takeover. I was there as the Minister responsible for Petromin who owns the Tolukuma Mine.

I was told by various chairmen and the directors that there was consultation taking place and why the Central Provincial Government and the Honourable Members were not present because they were having their PEC meetings or some schedule meetings.

I am not privy to the discussions or the sale. I was there as the responsible Minister. I was told the consultation was taking place and the transaction was made. So I was there as the Minister responsible to Petromin to witness the sale.

11/02

I was told consultation was taking place, the transaction was made and as the minister responsible to Petromin, I was there to witness the sale and that is the truth. On the report to date, on various questions raised by the honourable Member for Kairuku, I believe most again related to environmental problems and I would request that the Honourable Minister for Environment take note of those questions raised by the Member for Kairuku.

Mr Peter Isoaimo – Point of Order! Can you tell the people of Kairuku-Hiri and Papua New Guinea that he will direct the new owners of the mine to build a tailings dam, that is the question and the supplementary question was, why is the Central Provincial Government only given 10 per cent of nominal shareholding and not preferential shareholding and a nominee of the provincial government or the Governor be on the board of Asi dikona. This is also an insult to the people of Central province. Asi Dokona in Motu means it's never ending, everlasting, so it's an insult for the people of Kairuku and Mekeo also.

Mr Kila Haoda – Point of Order! I was never given privilege to talk on behalf of my people. I was given only 10 per cent. I went to Singapore myself and asked them for a better deal for my people. This is my peoples' land, this is my Government's land and I must be given more than 10 per cent, thank you.

(Mr Don Polye Interjecting)

Mr BYRON CHAN – Thank you very much, Mr Acting Speaker. The Prime Minister is attending a funeral at this time of a former statesman and Member of Parliament. I did say previously, I was not privy to any of the discussions towards the sale of Tolukuma, I was not privy to deliberations on the shareholding, equity, et cetera because Petromin is the company responsible. Petromin's directors are the ones that discussed these matters with the various stakeholders. Petromin being a state entity would have taken the responsible actions and duties to give that shareholding which they thought may seem to be reasonable. Like I said, I was not privy to those discussion so whatever was discussed and agreement was between Petromin and the current owners of Asi Dokona. I cannot say anything further but if there is anything like the tailings dam, that can be addressed through the current MoA. The takeover has been done however the MoA still exists and there is an opportunity for members of Parliament and the Member for Goilala, the Member for Kairuku-Hiri and the Governor to participate in any discussions on the operations of mines, the tailings, environment and other projects relating to the operation of the gold mine project in Tolukuma . When the opportunity arises in discussion on the MoA and the door is still open at this stage. Thank you very much.

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS –
EXTENDED TIME FOR QUESTIONS**

Motion (by **Mr Don Polye**) put –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent the time for Questions Without Notice this day being extended by 15 minutes.

There being no absolute majority, motion not carried.

12/02

Supplementary Question

Tolukuma Mine

Mr DON POLYE – Please allow me to ask the supplementary question because it's a concern to you as well as the nation about Tolukuma Mine.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for that wise ruling. Before I ask my question, I commend the Minister for being honest in saying that he doesn't know about these issues and this poses a big threat to other mines in this country as well, such as OK Tedi Mine and Bougainville Mine. If there is no transparency and no consultation with Minister responsible and the landowners of these mines then there is a big problem.

You as the Minister responsible, it's your duty to know all these issues but you are saying that you don't know anything about this issue.

(1) Why did you not know about all these issues?

Mr James Marape – Point of Order! Under *Section 145* in the *Standing Orders*, questions already asked must not be repeated again.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – I will allow the supplementary question.

Report of Sale, Tolukuma Mine

Mr DON POLYE – Thank you, second supplementary question and I want the Minister for Finance to take note.

I got a report that states here that the mine was sold for K85 million only.

(2) Can you confirm whether Tolukuma Mine was cheaply sold for K85 million to a company which was in existence in 2015 only?

This is a threat to OK Tedi Mine because it already closed down and likewise to Bougainville Mine. Otherwise all our mines will be sold cheaply to K2 companies.

(3) Can you assure the people of PNG and other resource owners in each provinces and this Parliament, how safe OK Tedi and Bougainville Mine and other projects in the mining industry are, if Tolukuma Mine has been sold un-transparently?

Mr BYRON CHAN – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. All our mines in our country are in safe hands of the O'Neill-Dion Government. With this responsible ministry that I hold, they are very safe and they are protected by our laws and owned by various companies and protected by *Companies Act* and they are allowed to deal independently themselves. In case

of wanting to sell out their businesses then it's their right and the Government has no right to stop them with their sale but unless it's of national interest then the Government will intervene and acquire the necessary mines. Otherwise, all mines in the country are safe and dealings are done transparently.

13/02

The government does not interfere with that type of business.

In the case of Tolukuma and Porgera they have their rights as well. The companies that hold licences have the right to conduct their businesses and the government does not interfere or the daily operations until we are asked to do so. Like I said, transparency occurs if companies are in the process of selling their mines, and for that I would have been advised by the other companies like Porgera or by Petromin. However, I was not privy to the discussions.

The managing director of Petromin told me that we are going to sell because we do not want to close the mine and we do not want to give problems to the people of Goilala or Kairuku. We want this mine to operate so that we are looking at alternative ways to sustain the operation. Their discussions are theirs but they came and told me that they are looking for a company to take over which, I agreed to. They are protected by the law under the *Companies Act*. That is a fact and you are a business man and you know that the Government cannot come in and run your business. When you attain a licence to run a business the government or anybody else for that matter cannot come into your store to sell your products and reap the profits. Basically, that is company confidentiality and I cannot overstep my line of duties.

I am only the Minister responsible for the mining leases, the operations, the safety, and issuances of licenses. The environment is the responsibility of Honourable John Pundari but, if it extends to the roads then it is the prerogative of the Transport Minister I, therefore cannot overstep my boundaries.

At the same time, I would like to assure the people of Papua New Guinea that all the mines are safe, they are operating well, and they are protected by our mining laws and by our Government who is there to help them seek the benefits for them from our resources.

I would also like to ask everyone at this time that my department will be presenting the new policies on legislative changes on the *Mining Act* so that we can benefit more from our resources. I would expect everyone to participate in the debates once those legislations and proposals are done.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – I have to inform Parliament that question time has lapsed.

**OMBUDSMAN COMMISSION OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA-ANNUAL
REPORTS, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, AND 2013 -
PAPERS – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – I present the following paper pursuant to statute:

*Ombudsman Commission of Papua New Guinea –
Annual Report, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2013*

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

That the Parliament take note of the papers and debate be adjourned-to a later date.

Debate adjourned.

14/02

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori) – I ask leave of the Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

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

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

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspend as to prevent Notice No. 255 Government Business being called on forthwith.

MANAM RESETTLEMENT AUTHORITY BILL

First Reading

Bill presented by **Mr Leo Dion** and read a first time.

Second Reading

Leave granted to move the second reading forthwith.

Mr LEO DION (East New Britain – Minister for Inter-Government Relations) – I
move –

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr Acting Speaker, following the eruption of an active volcano on Manam Island in 2004, the entire population of the Island was forced to evacuate. Since this time the former residents of Manam Island refer to this place as care centres.

Mr Acting Speaker, in 2006 Parliament passed the *Authority Act*, the Act would have established an Authority responsible for overseeing the resettlement of Manam Islanders. However, the Act was never implemented and the Manam people have not been resettled. The displaced people continued to live at care centres at Sorumba, Magen, Potsdam and in Bogia District in Madang Province.

At the time of the population of the displaced person were approximately K4 000, it is now approximately 12 000 this is due to increased food security and access to Health Services.

Mr Acting Speaker, displaced persons cannot return to Manam Island, the State has been advised by the Volcano Observatory that there will be another eruption and the volcano will remain active for some time and it is not safe for the people to return to Manam Island.

Mr Acting Speaker, a new entity is created called the 'Manam Resettlement Authority', the authority is the legal entity capable of issuing and being issued and able to own properties. The functions of the Authority shall be carried out in consultations with –

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A new legal entity is created and called the Manam Resettlement Authority. The authority is the legal entity capable of suing and being sued, and able to own properties. The functions of the authority shall be carried out in consultation with the Madang Provincial Government.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Authority will be responsible for the following:

(1) The identification and acquisition of land for the resettlement of displaced persons, which includes negotiation with landowners in Aduram;

(2) The provision of services and infrastructure for the resettlement area, and this would include building access roads, airstrips, schools, aid posts and ensuring safe water supply;

(3) The provision of care centres and associate services such as health care, education, food safety, water supply until such time as the displaced persons are resettled;

(4) Liaison with other donors and international organisations to ensure services to displaced persons are properly coordinated and acceptable to international standards;

(5) Ensure that the human rights of displaced persons and the members of the host communities are protected. The host communities are those people living in the Asarumba, Mangem and Potsdam areas which host the care centres.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Authority has all powers necessary to fulfil its functions. This will include tendering, awarding projects and overseeing contracts. Monitoring of the authority and the Department of Provincial and Local Level Government Affairs is responsible for monitoring the authority.

According to *Section 9*, the Authority has the board comprised of the following members: the Chairperson nominated by the PEC, appointed by NEC; Archbishop of the Catholic Church of the Madang Diocese, Provincial Administrator, Deputy Chairperson, one representative of the landowners of the care centres, centre communities nominated by the PEC and appointed by NEC; Manam Island Chief, nominated by the PEC appointed by NEC; a representative of the Aduram; and our officer from the National Disaster Office.

Members are appointed for a maximum of three years and are eligible to reappointment. The Minister may terminate an appointed person in some circumstances after giving the Member the opportunity to respond to any allegations. Any vacancy in the membership does not affect the powers and functions of the board. The board is required to meet at least once every quarter, and such meetings are to be held in Madang. The minutes of the meetings must be kept and the resolutions posted on the notice board or some other

accessible location at the care centres. A quorum is half the number of members plus one. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy will chair the meeting; however, the meeting cannot proceed without both the Chairperson and the deputy.

The Minister on the advice by the report prepared by the Secretary of the Department of Provincial and Local Level Government Affairs may recommend that NEC suspends the board of the Authority; where the NEC is satisfied that the board is:

- (1) Incapable of affectively in performing its functions;
- (2) Conducting its affairs in a grossly and improper manner.; and
- (3) That the authority is or misappropriating funds.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – When under suspension the powers and suspensions of the Board will be transferred to the Minister for Inter Government Relations. The NEC can revoke the suspension at any time. An officer from the Department of Provincial and Local-Level Government Affairs can be authorised by the Minister to inspect documents under the control of the Authority, and to question board members and staff.

The Minister can also give directions to the board and if the Minister is satisfied the direction is necessary to ensure the proper functioning of the authority. A chief executive officer will be appointed in accordance with the regulatory statutory appointment to *Certain Officers Act*.

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A Chief Executive officer will be appointed in accordance with the regulatory stationary appointment to *Certain Officers Act*. The terms and conditions of his/her appointment will be determined by the Board in accordance with the *Salaries and Remunerations Committee Act*. Other staff of the authority will be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer and their terms and conditions will be in accordance with the *Salaries and Remuneration Committee Act*.

Mr Speaker, the Authority will receive under part 8 of the *Public Finances Management Act* apply, appropriation from the National Government and Provincial Government and any donor funds.

The Authority is required to submit its annual budget to the Minister for Treasury for approval by the 31 of March every year. A copy of the Budget must be provided to the provincial government.

The Authority will provide a quarterly performance report to the Madang Provincial Executive Council and provide an Annual Performance Report to the Minister for Inter Government Relation.

The Minister shall determine the form of the Reports. The Minister is required to report to Parliament by 31 March each year outlining the performance of the Manam Restoration Authority.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

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

That the Parliament take note of the Paper and the debate be adjourned to a later date.

Debate adjourned.

Mr Jim Kas – Point of Order! Mr Acting Speaker, I think the process has not been completed. I am expecting a vote on the Manam Authority Bill today.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, the debate has been adjourned.

Mr Jim Kas – Point of Order! My people have been suffering for a long time. The Government promised them six months and they have been suffering in the care centres for almost 12 years now. I just want it to be recorded in Parliament today.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, we have been interrupted with a point of order so I will ask the Minister to seek leave again to make his statement.

17/02

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY – ANNUAL REPORTS, 2013 – PAPER –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr JIMMY MIRINGTORO (South Bougainville – Minister for Communications and Information Technology) – Mr Acting Speaker, I seek leave of the Parliament to make a ministerial statement on the 2013 Annual Report of the Department of Communication and Information Technology.

Leave granted.

Mr Acting Speaker, as the Minister responsible for Communication and Information Technology, I have a functional responsibility for three important government agencies. They are; Department of Communication and Information, National Broadcasting Corporation and National Information Communication Technology or NICTA through National Gazette No. G234 of 18 August 2011, the Executive Government added Telikom PNG limited to my list of responsibilities.

The 2013 Annual Reports covers 1st January 2013 to 31st December 2013.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Mission Statement of the Department is to generate effective awareness on development information, bridge the digital divide using information communication technology (ICT) through appropriate professional advice and partnership with the communication sector agencies'

Its primary objective is to have development information accessible by and to all citizens through efficient and affordable communication means throughout the country.

This is done through;

Efficient effective dissemination of the government information through radio, television and the print media;

- Monitor the implantation of the Government under the Universal Obligations (CSO) of the government under the Universal Access Scheme through the NICTA Act (2009);

- Ensure effective communication network and broadcast services is available through the country, and

- Develop appropriate and relevant ICT policies to provide a level playing field for the communication industry; and advise the minister regularly on the progress of the implantation of ICT policies.

When I took over responsibility for the Department in august 2011, I found it was operating on a staff strength of 17 of an approved structure of 28 positions.

Mr Acting Speaker, I found it incredible for such an important Department to be so short- staffed yet tasked with the implantation of several major Government initiated projects that are vital for growth and development in the communication sector.

Upon my instructions and in a very short space of time, the Department undertook a structure and increased its staffing to 48 positions.

The integrated Government Information System (IGIS) Project. Mr Acting Speaker, let me turn to an impact project that has a great potential to transform the performance and delivery of goods and services in the country; the Integrate Government Information System IGIS is the forerunner to an eventual e-government system for the Government.

Assisted by the departments of Treasury and National Planning and the Office of State Solicitor, the Department of Communication & Information completed concessional loan negotiations in 2010 with the Export-Import Bank of China for a US\$53 million loan to fund the IGIS project.

The Loan Agreement was then signed on 17 March 2011 in Beijing, China, between the state and the EXIM bank of China. Prime Minister, Hon. Peter O Neill signed on behalf of the State in capacity as Treasurer then.

Mr Acting Speaker, the IGIS project aims to computerise and integrate all government departments and agencies from national provincial and district level using ICT.

It includes building a government network (IGIS network) that all government departments and agencies will link their system and run on.

Huawei Technologies Ltd of the People's Republic of China has been engaged to develop the network, software application and Government Managed Services.

Construction of a Government Data Centre at the Telikom Rumana Building is completed. It is a facility that will provide hosting capabilities for the whole of Government including high speed internet connection, holistic security protection, centralized storage & backup function and convenient operation & management system to government. The Centre is the critical work of the whole project. It is the foundation and core of IGIS system services.

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It a facility that will provide hosting capabilities for the whole of government including high speed internet connection, holistic security protection, centralised storage and backup functions and convenient operating and managed system to the government. The centre is the critical work of the whole project; it is the foundation and core of IT system services.

For the network, Huawei has collaborated closely with Telikom PNG to ensure no duplication of network infrastructure. Forty seven government departments in Waigani and NCD, the provincial headquarters of East Sepik and West Sepik, Goroka in the Eastern Highlands Province, East New Britain and West New Britain Provinces are integrated and

connected online. Few offices are pending reconnection due to office relocation. The rest of the country will follow suit in phases two and three.

Now I'll turn to Rural Communication Projects which, is called 'RCP' for short. Mr Acting Speaker, the Department is also the lead agency in the implementation of rural communication projects.

The World Bank has provided US\$15 million as seed capital to pilot the voice and internet projects in the demonstration sites of the four regions of the country.

Digicel PNG has won the bid on voice telephoning project and has commended roll out of the towers in 2014.

In addition, RCP will see the establishment of up to 60 internet point of access in the selected districts throughout the country.

This is part of the broader universal access scheme the government is promoting to make communication accessible to areas that have been deemed as commercially uneconomical by the operators.

Mr Acting Speaker, working on the premise, as part of its community service obligations the government will provide subsidies to entice the operators to go into commercially uneconomical areas of PNG to provide communication services. A project management unit is overseeing the implementation of these projects.

Mr Acting Speaker, allow me to go back in time to present to the Members of Parliament the path we took in reforming the ICT Sector to date.

The ICT Sector has undergone major reforms since 2007 moving from a monopoly to a competition regime particularly in the mobile telephone sector. This led to *Digicel* and *Greencom* being issued two new mobile telephone licences in March 2007.

Digicel commenced roll out of its infrastructure and services immediately while *Greencom* licence was terminated due to non-compliance of licencing its terms and conditions.

Parallel to this the Department commenced the formulation of National ICT Policy aimed at increasing the supply in ICT infrastructure and services through the introduction of effective and sustainable competition. The ICT Policy was adopted in 2008.

Setting up of NICTA, a major highlight of these reforms was the enactment of *National Information and Communication Technology Act 2009*. The *NICTA Act* also enabled the establishment of NICTA as the sole ICT regulator replacing PANGTEL.

The communication regulations were earlier vested with the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission, or the ICCC which was also transferred to NICTA.

NICTA came into full operation on 29 October 2010 taking full responsibility for the regulation of ICT industry while ICCC maintains the general competition rules.

NICTA Board, the NICTA Act provides for the appointment of the NICTA Board which comprises the chairman of the NICTA Board, the Chief Executive Officer of NICTA, Independent expert and a non-executive member.

The NICTA Board is appointed by the NICTA Appointing Committee comprising the Prime Minister as the Chairman, Leader of the Opposition, Governor of the Central Bank and Minister for Communication.

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The NICTA Board currently and the CEO are in place now despite the delay for almost 12 months.

Universal Access Scheme is a major focus on the policy reform as part of the government's overall community service obligation. This involves creating a funding mechanism through public private partnership what will subsidise service providers to roll out internet access and voice access to rural areas of the country where they have been deemed uneconomical or profitable by service providers.

NICTA Act contains details provision for the establishment of the UAS funding including institutional arrangement, financial management arrangement and to formalise the introduction of UAS levy. The Act also allows for the establishment of the secretariat with NICTA to oversee the various activities on UAS and the US fund.

Composition of UAS Board. Much like the NICTA Board, the UAS Board has been established through specific provisions of the *NICTA Act 2009*. The Chairman of the NICTA Board will also preside as the Chairman of the UAS Board, the three ex-officio members will be:

(1) Secretary of the Department of Communication and Information.

(2) Secretary of the Department of Finance.

(3) Secretary of the Department of National Planning. Another member will be drawn from the private sector and will be appointed by the head of state.

PNG Malaysia joint Committee on ICT was established through a Memorandum of Understanding between the government of PNG and Malaysia to provide and promote cooperation in ICT between both parties.

The MOU was signed on the 24 March, 2009 in Port Moresby and an inaugural meeting of the joint cooperation in ICT was held in Malaysia three months on 23 June, 2009.

The PNG delegation includes the representatives from the Department of Information and Communication, Telikom PNG, National Broadcasting Corporation, NICTA and the Department of Attorney General and Justice.

During this meeting the following committees were established to continue the collaboration between both countries on the agreed areas of corporation.

1. Aggie policy
2. Telikom telecommunication
3. Broadcasting Regulatory
4. Legal work group (through the Department of Attorney-General and Justice.

The reciprocal meeting was held in PNG at Kokopo on 8 December, 2010 where further

Sub-committee was agreed upon based on the fact that the Office of the Civil Registry is lead agency in the roll-out of the National Civil Registry system.

The third ICT meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur in 2012 and PNG will host that. I think it was hosted already.

Achievements and challenges, Mr Acting Speaker, the Department of Communication and Information consists of the executive branch headed by the Secretary and provides over management leadership of the department including maintaining of advisory with the Minister. It has two core functional divisions of policy advisory services and information services.

The policy division coordinates policy, formulation, implementation and monitoring. The division also provides advice to the Secretary on policy issues pertaining to the communication and information.

The information division is oversight for two key areas namely: public information and awareness and internal IT management. The public information awareness functions coordinates program and creating awareness, and disseminating government information to the general public particularly in rural Papua New Guinea.

Corporate service division provides administrative and logistical support to core divisions.

The Information Technology Board was transferred from the Department of Personnel Management through NEC No.124/2006. The Board has a number of tasks to coordinating government IT setup to ensure the integrating standards existing towards the realisation of fully pledged system.

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The information technology board was transferred from the Department of Personal Management through the NEC decision No.124 2006. The Board has a mammoth task of coordinating Government IT set up to ensure the integration of standard existing towards the realisation of fully pledged key government system.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Department is small in its capacity but it has undertook and brought about major changes in the ICT sector over the past year. It is currently in carriage of certain impact projects which I have pointed out earlier, geared towards utilising ICT for National Development.

In 2013, the department had a slight increase in its recurrent budget, however this is not enough to cater for increased scope of activities the Department has taken on board over time. PIP allocation for 2014 for two key projects that the Department is implementing namely, the Integrated Government Information Systems and Rural communication project has increase.

Mr Acting Speaker, developing economies are embracing ICT as a tool not only to enhance its social and economic development but also to integrate with the wider global society in pursuit of the economic and social needs. APEC member's economies, which PNG is a part of targets to have online trading by 2020 this is an illustration of the world becoming more reliant on ICT. We have taken the initial step through significant policy change which has resulted in improvement in telecommunication services and we will continue to be guided by the Department to harnessing the full potential of ICT for prosperity and also to be with our regional and international partners.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Departments 2013 Annual Report to this Parliament.

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agree to -

That the Parliament take note of the paper and the debate to be continued to a subsequent sitting.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 12.10.p.m..