

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 9 August 2016

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD

The Draft Hansard is uncorrected. It is also privileged. Members have one week from the date of issue of Draft Hansard in which to make corrections to their speeches. Until the expiration of this one week period, Draft Hansard must not be quoted as final and accurate report of the debates of the National Parliament.

Corrections maybe marked on a photocopy of the Daily Draft Hansard and lodged at the Office of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter, A123 [next to the Security Control Room].

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

Amendments cannot be accepted over the phone.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LEE SIROTE', with a large, stylized flourish on the right side.

LEE SIROTE
Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 9 August 2016

The Parliament met at 2 p.m. according to the terms of Resolution of 22 July 2016.

The Deputy Speaker (**Mr Aide Ganasi**) took the chair.

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

Sitting suspended.

The Deputy Speaker, again took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and invited the Member for Pomio, **Honourable Elias Kapvore** to say Prayers:

‘Heavenly Father, we thank you today, we are proud about our leaders; appointed leaders and elected leaders of this nation to come together in this honourable House to discuss issues and important matters that affecting our nation today. We commit our people of Papua New Guinea, all our citizens. We thank you for our Prime Minister, the Opposition Leader and Members of this Parliament as we continue to discuss important matters affecting our nation this very day and the next couple of days. Lord, we invite your presence here and our discussions will be for the benefit of everyone in this nation. Lord, we thank you as we commit all our lives unto you. We humble ourselves as you lead us in our discussions. Lord this is our prayer. Amen.’

BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS – STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SPEAKER

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament that the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings met today and resolved that:

(a)The *National Broadcasting Corporation* (NBC) will be allowed to broadcast live on television and radio Questions Without Notice, and;

(b)TVWAN will be allowed to broadcast Questions Without Notice for the duration of this Meeting for news purposes only.

CERTIFICATION OF ACT

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform Parliament that the Speaker, in accordance with *Section 110* of the *Constitution* certified the Manam Resettlement Authority Act 2016 (No. 2 of 2016) made by National Parliament.

DEATH OF FORMER SPEAKER AND MEMBER (MR JEFFEREY NAPE) – STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SPEAKER

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform Parliament of the death on 8 July, 2016 of Mr Jeffery Nape, the former Speaker of National Parliament and Member for Sinasina-Yonggamugl Open Electorate. He was first elected to the Seventh National Parliament for Sinasina-Yonggamugl Open seat from 2002 to 2007. He was elected Deputy Speaker of National Parliament following the formation of Somare-Marat Government and then became Speaker of National Parliament on 28 May 2004 replacing Late Sir Bill Skate. He was re-elected to the Eighth National Parliament for the same seat from 2007 to 2012 and subsequently was voted in as Speaker of National Parliament for second term.

All honourable Members present stood in their places and observed a minute silence in memory of the late gentlemen.

I thank the Parliament.

02/01

QUESTIONS

Councillors' Wages

Mr KERENGA KUA – I direct my two questions to the Deputy Prime Minister but since he is not here perhaps the Prime Minister can take note and have him answer in due course.

Firstly, there was a resolution by Cabinet and also budgeted for in the 2016 Budget to pay for all our councillors throughout the country. Those wages have come to a stop somewhere midstream without any explanation and the councillors in the country are wondering when those wages can be paid.

I believe when the Cabinet made the decision to pay those wages, it was a long overdue decision.

For over 40 years, several generations of councillors have worked without wages, and when the Cabinet made that decision it was welcomed throughout the country. But the fact that the payment has ceased has disappointed a lot of people. Therefore can the Prime Minister can ask his minister to find out why that has happened and whether those payments can be resumed as soon as possible?

Secondly, there are uncertainties about the election of council presidents. In the 2012 National Elections the council president was elected by the people. And that has its ups and downs so the people are suggesting that we should revert back whereby the councillors elect the president as we do for a prime minister. These things need clarification so if the Prime Minister can do so or get his minister to clarify whenever he is available.

Mr PETER O'NEILL – I thank the Member for Sinasina-Yonggamugl for his questions but before I answer his questions, let me on behalf of people of Ialibu-Pangia and the PNC Party extend our sympathies to the former Member for Sinasina-Yonggamugl. He was a two-term great Member of Parliament and we will surely miss him.

With regard to wages of the councillors, it was a historic decision that this Parliament took in ensuring that the leaders closest to the people are recognised and paid some sort of remuneration for their effort in keeping our societies together.

Mr Deputy Speaker, there has been some problems with the wages being ruled out. I will get the minister to make a statement at a later time to give a more detail clarity to his questions. But let me say that there has been some delays in payments partly related to the failed elections

where the councillors did not complete the election process in many provinces throughout the country. It has given us complications with regard to this issue.

Secondly, those failed elections were not conducted. There has been some disputes, court cases and all sorts of a range of problems that has delayed that. However, I am told by the Treasurer that the councillor's wages were received last week and some were paid last week. But I will let the Deputy Prime Minister to make a statement to the Floor of Parliament.

On the issue of the election of council presidents, I am certain that we changed the law in this Parliament that allowed us to revert back to the old system where the councillors will elect their president in the chamber. I think that law has changed but I will get the Deputy Prime Minister to give some clarity on that through the statement that he will make.

03/01

But there are some provinces who have made their representation to government that they want to keep the same system going; that is that their presidents to be elected by the people directly. We would certainly want some uniformity across the country so that we do not have dual systems working for that level of Government but we will work it through and I will certainly get the Deputy Prime Minister to make a statement on those two subjects.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Need for Revised *Mining Act*.

Mr WERA MORI – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to raise and ask a question to the honourable Prime Minister but before I do that I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the 45 thousand people of Chuave to thank the Prime Minister and his Government for appointing a son of Chuave, Mr Michael Dick as the acting Chief Ombudsman. This is for the first time on record that a Chuave has been appointed to any high office.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to raise these question in relation to today's National Newspaper page 42, there is a big publication on the Chamber of Mines and Petroleum being accused of blocking law reforms.

May I say this at the outset that there is a debacle taken by the secretary for mineral processing and geohazards and as a consequence the mining industry, especially the exploration sector suffered since 2011 from an expenditure of K930 million where exploration companies spent money on exploring for new minerals. What has actually happened is that it had declined to under K300 million last year.

Mr Deputy Speaker, it takes at least 25 years for a new mine to be discovered. I would like to ask the Prime Minister if the Government immediately intervene and save the industry because here we have a situation where the secretary of the department who should be promoting the industry is accusing the very industry. We must not forget that before oil and gas there was mining, after oil and gas, mining will still be in this country.

So my question is, can the Government immediately intervene in these non-sense that goes on between the secretary of the department of minerals, policy and geohazards and the chamber in this battle?

Because we need a revised mining act that will save this industry in the long run.

Thank you

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker and let me thank the good Member for Chuave for that question.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this review has been going on since 2006, and it was the first review that was conducted and it was stopped in 2009. We resumed the review in 2011 and it has been going on for quite some time and I want to inform Parliament that the review by the department and of course, many consultations were done to the industry including the investors, many stake-holders, landowners and the provincial governments.

Mr Deputy Speaker, that submission is before Cabinet. Cabinet has already started deliberating on this matter and of course again we have received representations from the PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum raising some concerns about the Mining Act that has been proposed to government by our officials.

04/01

Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to assure this Parliament and our country that one thing is very obvious and that's is we need to look after all our stakeholders, more importantly the landowners, the provincial governments, our citizens and our country.

We need to have a greater stake in the industry and the industry law today does not allow us to exercise that option.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to assure you that we are looking at this in a very diligent manner, we want to be fair to everybody including the investors. Without the investors, some of the large scale mines like Fredda and Wafi cannot be developed if we take up all the equity and the investors have no equity to take.

Mr Deputy Speaker, over the course of the next two weeks, we will be making some statements in Parliament in regard to the shareholdings in OK Tedi and Bougainville. For the first time, these two mines are being controlled by Papua New Guineans. In relation to the 4.27 percentage stake holding by the landowners in the Hela Province and the LNG Project. I will make a separate statement on this.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to assure the good Member that we will communicate with the industry. In fact the matter was discussed in Cabinet this morning, but we have deferred the discussion to next week because I want to put a senior ministerial committee to discuss with other ministers on some of the concerns that are being raised. We have to iron out all these concerns before we bring the legislation to this Parliament.

Supplementary Question

Amendment to the *Mining Act*

Sir JULIUS CHAN – Mr Deputy Speaker, I want the Prime Minister to see whether he can bring my paper on, which is relevant to the question being asked and has been in the Notice Paper since September 3, 2014 on the amendment to the Mining Act.

The Prime Minister will agree with me that I have spent a lot of time with himself, his chief of staff and the other departments who never turn up. The Prime Minister is aware, we have spent a lot of money holding our lawyers here to discuss the very roles that the Prime Minister is talking about like the accommodation of all interests in the mining sector and up until now we have nothing.

Can the Prime Minister assure this Parliament that my Bill will be brought on as soon as possible, since I have no one to talk to? Those departments that you have directed, or the chief of staff has directed never turn up and we spent months staying here, paying our lawyers to discuss, outlining the whole concept of better sharing, with all the interested parties.

Prime Minister, since my notice is almost two years old, will you consider bringing it on, after my exhaustive discussion with yourself?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker and I also thank the Governor of New Ireland. Of course, I know that we have discussed this matter on many occasions especially his bill but we have some concerns about it.

The bottom line principles of the Bill itself is one that is going to allow for greater participation for our people, for our landowners and provincial governments and our country.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we agree with many of the issues that he is talking about but as Government we are responsible to consult all stakeholders in the industry and now we have done so. The matter has been brought before the Cabinet by the Minister for Mining and his department, and I want to assure him that as soon as Cabinet has deliberated on this consultations and the mining law that is in place, I will bring both issues to Caucus to deliberate on before we present it to Parliament. Thankyou Mr Deputy Speaker.

05/01

Return Woodluck Island to landowners

Mr GORDON WESLEY – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister for Lands, but before I do, I would like to thank the people of Samarai-Murua for returning me for the fourth consecutive time to represent them in this honourable Parliament.

Mr Deputy Speaker, secondly, I would like to say that, I am not too sure if I am in the right seat. I am sitting on a seat without a name. Therefore, I would like to be shown if I am sitting in the right place. Now, I direct my question to the minister for Lands.

My question to the Minister for Lands is that, is the Minister going to be returning the so much talked about land of Woodluck back to its people?

That is my only one question Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you.

Mr BENNY ALLAN – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I would also like to thank the Honourable Member for asking that question.

This is a long and outstanding issue, Mr Deputy Speaker, in 2014, I think, if we all can recall, the Prime Minister made a statement on this Floor of Parliament and directed the Department of Lands through myself to work on the Woodluck land.

Now, for the benefit of this Parliament, the whole Woodluck Island is alienated land, which means that it is State land, and we had people living on that island who are squatting or living on State land but they belong on that island.

Therefore, our good Prime Minister directed us to work with the Department and try to return the land to these people. It has taken awhile and I am happy to inform this Parliament and also the Honourable Member that a declaration has been gazetted.

The declaration has now been gazetted and we will now formally do a letter to the Prime Minister informing him that the declaration of that land has been done and gazetted. And that the land will now be returned back to the customary landowners.

There are eight clans on the island and the Department has started the process and has identified the eight groups of clans. We will assist them to divide the land between the eight clans and have them registered under the Customary Land Registration through their ILGs.

Therefore, I would also like to commend the Member because he has been consistently following up on this issue and I must thank him for that, it is his doing that this land now will be returned back to the landowners out there. I would like to thank the Governor for Milne Bay and he will formally announce to the people that the land now has gone back to the landowners.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Kerema Office Complex

Mr MARK MAIPAKAI – My questions are directed to the Minister for Finance.

(1) Mr Deputy Speaker, is the Minister aware that a sum of K9 million was front loaded without following proper tender procedures to a tucker shop owner in Kerema Market for the construction of the Kerema Office Complex?

To date, that structure is a monument and my investigation confirmed that the contractor was only given K3 million and the revelation is that there is no more money to complete the construction work.

(2) How can you release money without properly following procedures of progressive payments?

(3) Can the Minister instigate an investigation into the Gulf Administration to ascertain as to how such funds were downloaded without proper procedures and the payment made to a Chinese man; a tucker shop owner who does not have any building experience a sum of K9 million?

Thank you.

06/01

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Deputy Speaker let me thank the Member for Kikori for asking this question. I have no knowledge of the issuance of this contract but let me assure the Member that I will call my Department to conduct an investigation into this matter and present a report to the appropriate authorities in due course.

Drug Abuse leads to Law and Order problems

Mr JOE KOIM KOMUN – Mr Deputy Speaker, I direct my question to the Attorney General but since he is not in the Chambers, the Honourable Prime Minister can assist by responding.

Our young people in Papua New Guinea are now into all kinds of drugs and are terrorising our good communities as a result of drug abuse.

Can the Minister and this Government come up with a strategy to curb the abuse of drugs and unruly behaviour resulting in the rise of law and order problems?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Deputy Speaker I thank the Member for Anglimp-South Waghi for his question. I will get the Attorney General to answer his question at a later date.

But for the information of this Parliament, Cabinet has approved a new *Summary Act* which will take into account some of the penalties that will go into drug taking, public drunkardness, assault and all the related offences that continues to disturb our society especially our women and children.

Mr Deputy Speaker that Act will be presented to this Parliament and I have the confidence of our Members to support this, so that we can bring some normalcy back into our communities.

DSIP and PIP Funds

Mr BOB DADAE – Mr Deputy Speaker my question is directed to the Minister for Finance regarding disbursement of DSIP and PIP funds to the Members of Parliament.

Before I ask my question, I take this opportunity to thank the newly appointed Minister for Higher Education for taking such a proactive approach to recommence the academic year for the Universities. I am pretty sure the parents around the country are very happy in this regard.

Secondly, my appreciation goes to this coalition Government in ensuring that K10 million goes down to the 89 Districts of this country. It is the first time in the history of this nation for us to see K10 million going down to the districts making an enormous impact.

(1) Can the Minister assure the Members of this Parliament that the allocation of funds for this program will be accorded to them before the year ends, despite the serious cash flow currently faced by this country?

Most of the Members of Parliament both in Opposition and Government have yet to receive their portions of the funds allocated for Health and Education in the 2015 Budget.

(2) Can the Minister assure the members that we will be expecting this funds sooner?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Deputy Speaker, let me thank the Member for Kabwum for raising these pertinent questions.

The DSIP and the PIP funds are a direct intervention program by way of Government Policy that is meant for districts and provinces in this nation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we have remitted 30 percent this year of all DSIP and PIP allocations.

07/01

This year we remitted 30 per cent of all DSIP and PSIP allocations. That is K3 million each. At the end of this month we would have allocated 50 per cent each to districts and provinces alike.

Mr Deputy Speaker, let me make a correction to the question. These funds are not for Members of Parliament. This is an allocation for the programs in the districts and provinces. This fund emanates from government policy based on the Alotau Accord principles.

Mr Deputy Speaker, these funds are not to be left to the discretion of the Members of Parliament but is tied especially to the five key sectors of the Alotau Accord. The Government of O'Neill-Dion has placed the key correspond policies of the government; education, health, infrastructure, law and justice sector as well as economic sector interventions.

This year our Government stands to honour our full commitment depending on cash flow and so our roll-out programs have been based on the current liquidity and the cash flow management programs that are in place.

So as indicated, 30 per cent of district allocations have been given already. For those districts who have not picked up the fund, call into Finance Department because the fund is available.

By the time we close-up this month we would have made up the 50 per cent allocation. So we will run this as we go through this year.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I assure this House and the people of Papua New Guinea that for the last three years this government has not failed to honour our commitment to rural Papua New Guinea. That is where 80-90 per cent of Papua New Guineans are.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the DSIP and PSIP is the direct intervention by this Government to the people at the districts and provinces. People in this areas matter the most especially with our social and infrastructure programs.

We have honoured our commitments for the last three years despite pressing and depressing economic situations globally, regionally and within. We give our total assurance that, not because it is a political program, but we give total assurance that this program is run simply on the basis and promises that will have the greatest impact to where people are in rural Papua New Guinea.

In conclusion, our Government will stand to deliver by the end of this month the 50 per cent of our total commitment and we will honour the balance as we go through the year. Thank you.

Supplementary Question

District Support Grant

Dr ALLAN MARAT – My question is in relation to the District Support Grants, which is a Constitutional Grant. Acquittals were provided for the 2014 DSS. The Acquittals were accepted to be in order. Certificate of Compliance was issued by the Department of Implementation and Rural Development. But no fund was paid. No DSG was paid for last year (2015).

Upon inquiry with the DIRD, I was told that the DSG for this year would be paid. I asked them upon what basis? If we were not paid in 2015, how could we acquit for 2015 and upon what basis would the 2016 DSG would be remitted to Rabaul District?

Thank you.

08/01

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, let me answer the good Member for Rabaul's question in this manner, it is not an issue unique to him. Many Members of this side of the House face similar especially in the acquittal aspect.

I note that he mentioned that his district provided full acquittals. There are still some outstanding balances from 2014 and 2015.

Our government has released enough funding to catch up on these balances that are outstanding over the last two years and since the media is broadcasting to the nation let me say

this, the DSG, a constitutional grant, is a grant that is termed as discretion funds and non-discretion funds. That consists of K250 000.00 each.

This is managed under the Ministry of National Planning and supervised for this version and acquittals by the Office of Rural Development.

So, Mr Deputy Speaker, we have given money to them to catch up on these one. If it is based on acquittals, please acquit. As you acquit and based on the assessment the funds will be rolled out and for some districts, like Rabaul and others who have been inconvenienced by those acquittal processes and protocols that have been put in place we advise you to liaise with the offices concerned.

And as I said, if we can honour the big allocations in PSIP and DSIP these small allocations for the non-discretionary and discretionary funds for each districts will be, likewise, fully honoured so please continue liaising with the Office of Rural Development and they will try to honour your commitments.

Airport Bank Robbery

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, my question is supposed to be directed to the Minister for Civil Aviation but since he is not here in the Chamber so I'll just direct this question to the Prime Minister to take note and make some response.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my question is in regard to today's front page of the Post Courier which states, 'Airport Bank Robbed',

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is a story that came on today's paper about something happening at the airport last week Friday.

I'll just reiterate a comment made by the editorial column which states in part, '...that the robbery of foreign currency centre at the country's main international gateway raises questions about the competency of NAC security contractors to secure the multi-million kina premises and ensure trouble makers are kept at bay'.

It also says here that the NAC needs to take the issue of security seriously, especially with the increasing terror attacks around the world targeting public locations including the airports. According to the report, the CEO said the CCTV was functioning but it was not commissioned as yet.

Can the Prime Minister make some response to this?

Can there be some full investigations into what has happened?

And what are the interventions that will be needed to prevent further occurrences of such to enable public safety of those travelling in and out of the country?

Mr PETER O'NIELL – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker and I thank the good <Member for Pomio for raising this particular issue.

I understand this this incident took place at 4.00 a.m. in the morning and of course, our security personnel should be fully alert. I does not matter whether it's 4.00 a.m. or 8.00 a.m. they should be on alert at all locations.

This is an international airport and we cannot allow these kinds of lax security arrangements to occur there.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we have already directed the officials to look into that and, those decisions that need to be made, including the termination of the security firms concerned, if they are not able to perform, they must be terminated.

So, we will get the Minister to look into that and make a statement and have a decent reply to your questions at a later part of the session of this Meeting.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

09/01

Central Province Rice Project Status

Mr PETER ISOAIMO – Mr Deputy Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock. The question is, it is well over six months now from the signing of the multi-billion kina rice project of which my electorate is supposed to hosts.

Today, we have received little or no advise on the status of the project so can the Minister inform this Parliament and the people of Kairuku-Hiri and Central Province as a whole as to where the projects is at and when can we commence operation for benefit not only the people in my electoral but the whole of Papua New Guinea and most of all reducing the rice import bill and everything else that goes with it. So, leaders of Central Province especially, me are blamed on viral Facebook that we not doing anything about this multi-billion kina project which is for the benefit of the whole country.

So, it is appropriate that I direct this question to Minister responsible to clear the air on where the actual status of the projects is.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL – Thank you Deputy Speaker and I also take this time to thank the Member for Kairuku-Hiri for this very important question for the people in his electorate. It has both impact in his electorate and also in Central Province and Papua New Guinea as well will be affected by rice because we all eat rice for dinner, breakfast and during lunch. So rice is a very important commodity in Papua New Guinea. It is the only and most critical stable diet for many families not only in Papua New Guinea but across Asia and the world too.

We will also note that the rice forecast for this year will fall by sixty million because of drought and problems elsewhere in the total overall production so we are expecting a downturn in rice which means we should also be expecting an increase in rice price towards the end of the year or next year.

But coming back to this rice project, it is a proposed large scale farming of rice to be undertaken in Papua New Guinea for the first time and on behalf of the Government, the Governor-General signed an agreement with the proponent of the project. This program is at the moment at a stage where it has gone back to the Government Rice Committee and it is currently negotiating and trying to sort out the issues of allocations of import quota. The meeting was held last Thursday and I have not been briefed of the outcome but I have asked the Department Secretary to provide me a brief of the meeting chaired by the Deputy Secretary of DAL. Also at the meeting was the State Solicitor-General of Papua New Guinea.

So hopefully, they will give me a brief on the outcome of that meeting. Nonetheless, I want to assure the Member that the project will continue. However, it is subject to social mapping, land demarcation, land marking and identification. We cannot just allow the company to walk in without proper social mapping, identifying who the landowners are and without setting out the benefits that would also flow. This is being undertaken and once it is completed and the State and the landowners are satisfied then the actual project will commence. The project is subject to the requirement of those laws to be fulfilled. I am in favour of it.

The project basically wants to bring Papua New Guinea from an import dependent country on rice to an export dependent country. At the moment, Papua New Guinea is importing almost 350 thousand tonnes of rice per annum which equates to about K700 million being sent out of the country annually. This is expected to increase because the population continues to increase and the drought and land issues elsewhere will have an impact on rice production.

Only five per cent of the total rice grown on the globe today is tradable in the world market. Many countries will produce rice –

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Minister, please answer the question.

10/01

Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL – Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, there's only seven minutes left so I hope I can waste them.

Supplementary Question

Land Lease for Rice Project Questionable

Mr KERENGA KUA – I have no issue with the rice project per se. I think the country looks forward to such a project and hopefully one day we can move forward to becoming self-sufficient. However, my understanding may be wrong and that needs to be clarified.

I understand that in that same agreement, the State's rights in (1) forestry, (2) minerals, (3) oil and Gas, on that land and under that same land which is the subject for the lease for the rice project has been given away to same developer. If that is so then it will be wrong under our laws. There is a separate act to deal with forestry on that land. It has got separate procedures that you have to follow to get to harvesting, processing, marketing and selling of rice. The same will apply to minerals and oil and gas which have separate acts that governs the interest in minerals and oil and gas to be given away and exploited.

Therefore, could the minister for agriculture admit or deny that the State's interest in these three commodities on that subject land have been given away simultaneously under the same agreement or not?

Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL – I will have to qualify myself by saying that I will answer in the best and what I do on the stand.

From my own understanding that is not the case. When the company intends to go in and do farming it carryout a forestry inventory as per according to the Forest Act, it must also carryout ILGs studies as per according to the ILG Act and likewise to the Customary Act and the Land Act.

I repeat what I said earlier on that this project is going to be qualified only after it meets all the requirements of all those acts then it will happen. If it does not comply then it cannot happen and fail at that point.

Having said that, I am not aware that in that agreement the State has given away its mining rights or the oil and gas rights. I am sure that the State will not extinguish its rights. It is too intelligent to allow that.

(Members interjecting)

Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL – The State knows very well any issues relating to oil and gas is a different law and will have to be dealt with according to that law per se. Any issues relating to mining is also covered under its own law. The agreement does not extend to these other laws.

Mr DAVID ARORE – I direct my question to the Minister for Environment and Conservation.

11/01

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

Motion (by **Mr David Arore**) put –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent the time for Questions being extended by 20 minutes.

Motion negatived.

Alternate Plan for Afore LLG

Mr DAVID ARORE – The Managalas Plateau in the Afore Local Level Government in my place, we have about 20 000 people there with about 355 000 hectares of land. From very reliable sources which I have not been briefed I am aware that the department of environment and conservation are trying to declare the entire Managalas Plateau with the 355 000 hectares as a national conservation area.

Now, Mr Deputy Speaker, we depend on land in that part of the Province where we depend mostly on Arabica Coffee and we are into extending and expanding of our coffee plantations as a source of income for our local people there.

So my question to the Minister is that I want to know what your motive is for my people in the Managalas Plateau in the event you declare that area a conservation zone. What is the alternative income revenue for our people up there, if our people would like to extend their coffee, cocoa and rice plantations up there?

Does your department have any alternative plans for the Managalas Plateau for their generation, in the event that whole 365 000 hectares is declared a conservation zone?

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr JOHN PUNDARI – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker and I realize that question time is over and I am the last one to answer a question on the Floor of Parliament so maybe I have the privilege now to take all the time that I want.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr JOHN PUNDARI – Mr Deputy Speaker, I will be short with the answer. Where else will you find the Bird Wing Butterfly, except in the plateaus of Managalas which is endemic to that area. We have a lot of endangered species that are found in Papua New Guinea, our country is so unique, very peculiar, very blessed with our biodiversity and conservation is very important and the question of alternative income measures that our people can be able to earn their living and be able to participate in some form of economic activities will always be a challenge for us to conserve and try to protect our unique bio-diversity.

The Managalas Plateau is a unique area that is considered for conservation and I am really not sure as to the progress made by my organisation and I assure the Member that I will check that out with the department and get back to him. But the question of an alternative as a way forward that our people to ensuring that they maintain their livelihood going forward is a very important question.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we talk about eco-tourism etcetera. Trying to economize on conservation or protected areas is an important challenge for us that our good friends of our international community, as well as our government will have to innovate on as we try to partner with our people who are the custodians of our environment, land and seas.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will get to the Member with details, thank you.

12/01

**OMBUDSMAN COMMISSION OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA – INVESTIGATION
INTO THE ALLEGED INHUMAN TREATMENT OF PRISONER STEVEN
TABOGANI AND OTHER PRISONERS BY OFFICERS OF THE CORRECTIONAL
SERVICES OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA AT GILE GILE CORRECTIONAL
INSTITUTION, MILNE BAY PROVINCE – FINAL REPORT –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Pursuant to Statute, I present the Final Report of the Ombudsman Commission of Papua New Guinea into the investigation of the alleged inhuman treatment of prisoner Steven Tabogani and other prisoners by officers of the Correctional Services of Papua New Guinea at Gile Gile Correctional Institution, Milne Bay Province.

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

That the Report and its recommendations be adopted and the debate be adjourned to a later date.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.30 p.m..