

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 24 January 2017

DRAFT HANSARD

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FIRST DAY

The Parliament met at 2.pm, according to the terms of the Resolution of 8 November 2016.

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

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

Sitting suspended.

Mr Speaker again took the Chair at 2.45pm., and invited the Member for Mendi, **Honourable De Kewanu**, to say Prayers:

'Mipela tok tenkyu long lukaut bilong yu long 2016. Mipela tok tenkyu long yu provайд long mipela, yu protektim mipela during christmas and the new year. We thank you for the first session of Parliament and the second last for this ninth parliament.

I thank you for your protection and your wisdom and understanding that you provided to this Parliament. We commit our Prime Minister. We commit our Speaker before you and our Ministers and the Members of this Parliament. The Leaders of the Opposition and the Members of the Opposition, we commit them to you this afternoon.

I pray Lord for your direction for this session as we discuss matters of importance blong dispela kantri, that you will give us the wisdom and understanding that we will design what you have planned for this country through us, the leaders that are standing before you.

I pray Lord that you will lead us through this session and the remaining days and the weeks. Father, I thank you for all that you provided for us. I thank you for this afternoon's session that God you will lead us through.

I pray Lord that you will lead us in every aspect and I thank you for your love and your care that you send your son Jesus Christ to die on the cross of Calvary for our sins.

Father we are not worthy before you, mipela kam sot long glory bilong yu. Papa mipela askim yu long fogivim mipela na givim mipela gutpela tingting det mipela ken sanap na toktok on behalf of our people whom we are representing long dispela floor. As we stand together mipela laik pray dispela prea you taught us. Amen'

**BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament that the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings had met today and resolved that –

- (a) *The National Broadcasting Corporation* (NBC) Television and Radio will be allowed to broadcast and telecast live Question Time;
- (a) *EMTV* will be allowed to broadcast live Question Time; and
- (b) *TVWAN* will be allowed to broadcast Question Time for news purposes for the duration of this meeting.

**FIXING OF TIME AND DATE FOR THE CONDUCT OF A SECRET BALLOT –
PROPOSALS FOR NOMINATIONS – REJECTION OF PROPOSALS –
FUNCTIONS OF THE ACTING CLERK PRIOR TO SECRET BALLOT –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I wish to inform the Parliament that the term of office of the present Governor-General, Sir Michael Ogio expires on 24 February 2017. He assumed official duty on 25 February 2011, the date on which he took the Oath of allegiance, made his Declaration of Loyalty and the Declaration of Office before the Chief Justice and in the presence of Parliament.

In accordance with Section 88(3) of the *Constitution*, the Parliament may elect a nominee at any time within the period of 3 months before the completion of the normal term of Office of the Governor-General.

Therefore, pursuant to the requirements of the Organic Law on the Nomination of the Governor General, I now fix Thursday, 9 February 2017 for the conduct of an exhaustive secret ballot to decide a person to be nominated by Parliament to fill the imminent vacancy.

02/01

Honourable Members, under the Organic Law, in order to nominate, a nomination must be in the prescribed form and these forms can be obtained from the Acting Clerk's Office. The

nomination form must contain the signature or mark of, firstly a proposer who shall be a Member of Parliament and secondly, the person proposed as accepting the nomination and thirdly, not less than 15 other Members of Parliament.

A Member of Parliament can only propose one candidate as nominee for the Governor General's post, cannot support any other candidate or be a proposer for any other candidate. The completed forms must be handed to the Acting Clerk of Parliament no later than 12:30 p.m. on January 30th 2017.

Under *Section 5* of the *Organic Law*, the Acting Clerk may reject a proposal for nomination where; firstly the proposal is not in the prescribed form or the proposal is not signed by at least 15 members of the Parliament or he has reasonable cause to believe and thus believe the person nominated is not qualified for appointment as Governor General.

Honourable members there are a number of decided cases in the Supreme Court has clearly defined the roles and functions of the Clerk in conducting the election process for the Governor General and the specific requirements under the law in relation to the proposal forms.

In view of the Supreme Court's decision the requirements I referred to above a clearly clarified as follows:

(a) A member must correctly name his or her electorate and also sign on the appropriate column in the proposal form. A list of Members electorate will be circulated for the benefit of Members and Members will note that they are required to insert the proper name of the electorate. For example; Northern Provincial is not Oro Provincial, West Sepik province is not Sandaun Provincial.

(b) A Member cannot propose more than one candidate and

(c) A proposer of a candidate cannot also sign as a supporter of that candidate or another candidate.

(d) No Member is allowed to support more than one candidate.

(e) A proposal can only be made only with the consent of that person proposed and that person proposed must consent to have his name put before the Parliament for voting. He does this by affixing his/her name, signature or mark on the proposal form in the designated place or space, he/she must not write his/her name.

(f) A supporter of a proposer cannot withdraw their support or proposal and a Member who has supported a candidate cannot later withdraw their support or proposal.

In view of the Supreme Court decision, the equivalent of making a mockery of the process and demeaning the high office of the Governor General. The Acting Clerk has no

powers to entertain such a withdrawal and failure to follow these specific requirements will invalidate all proposal forms. And the *Organic Law* also makes provisions for proposal forms to be handed to the Acting Clerk at any time before the commencement of voting.

However, as a matter of good administrative practice and taking into account the Court's interpretation of the *Organic Law*, proposal forms should be submitted to the Acting Clerk in sufficient time to allow him to scrutinise the forms and make informed decisions on some of the requirements under the Organic Law.

Should the Acting Clerk decide to reject a proposal for nomination, such a time frame also allows for an aggrieved person sufficient time to appeal to the National Court against that decision. If we all comply with these requirements, I expect no more than six proposals to be in the Acting Clerk's Office by 12:30 p.m on Monday January 30 2017, which will be the closing date for nominations.

03/01

**CERTIFICATION OF ACTS AND A LAW –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER - Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament that the Acting Speaker and I have in accordance with *Section 110* of the *Constitution* certified 49 Acts and a Law made by the National Parliament:

1. *Appropriation (General Public Expenditure 2017) Act 2016*
2. *Appropriation (Judiciary Services 2017) Act 2016*
3. *Appropriation (National Parliament 2017) Act 2016*
4. *Building (Amendment) Act 2016*
5. *Central Depository Act 2015*
6. *Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2016*
7. *Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2016*
8. *Civil Aviation (Amendment) Act 2015*
9. *Civil Registration (Amendment) Act 2016*
10. *Classification of Publication (Censorship) (Amendment) Act 2016*
11. *Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2016*
12. *Cybercrime Code Act 2016*
13. *Customs Tariff (2017 Budget) (Amendment) Act 2016*
14. *Defamation (Amendment) Act 2016*
15. *Departure Tax (2017 Budget) (Amendment) Act 2016*
16. *District Development Authority (Amendment) Act 2016*
17. *Employment of Non-Citizens (Amendment) Act 2016*
18. *Evidence (Amendment) Act 2016*

19. *Excise Tariff (2017 Budget) (Amendment) Act 2016*
20. *Firearms (Amendment) Act 2016*
21. *Gaming Control (2017 Budget) (Amendment) Act 2016*
22. *Income Tax (2017 Budget) (Amendment) Act 2016*
23. *Income Tax, Dividend (Withholding) Tax and Interest (Withholding) Tax Rates (2017 Budget) (Amendment) Act 2016*
24. *Industrial Organizations (Amendment) Act 2016*
25. *Industrial Safety, Health and Welfare (Amendment) Act 2016*
26. *Inflammable Liquid (Amendment) Act 2016*
27. *Insurance (Amendment) Act 2016*
28. *Inter-Governmental Relations (Functions and Funding) (2017 Budget) (Amendment) Act 2016*
29. *Land (Amendment) Act 2016*
30. *Medical Registration (Amendment) Act 2016*
31. *Medicines and Cosmetics (Amendment) Act 2016*
32. *Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Act 2016*
33. *Migration (Amendment) Act 2016*
34. *Motor Car Dealers (Amendment) Act 2016*
35. *National Information and Communication Technology (Amendment) Act 2016*
36. *National Roads Authority (2017 Budget Provisions) (Amendment) Act 2016*
37. *Oaths, Affirmations and Statutory Declarations (Amendment) Act 2016*
38. *Oil and Gas (Amendment) Act 2016*
39. *Passports (Amendment) Act 2016*
40. *Physical Planning (Amendment) Act 2016*
41. *Public Finance (Management) (Amendment) Act 2016*
42. *Stamp Duties (2017 Budget) (Amendment) Act 2016*
43. *Securities Commission Act 2015*
44. *Supplementary (Appropriation Reduction) Act 2016*
45. *Survey (Amendment) Act 2016*
46. *Trade Licensing (Amendment) Act 2016*
47. *Trading (Amendment) Act 2016*
48. *Unclaimed Moneys (Amendment) Act 2016*
49. *Valuation (Amendment) Act 2016*

50. *Constitutional Amendment (Dual Citizenship) No. 43 Law 2016*

QUESTIONS

Lae District – Youth Submission Status

Ms LOUJAYA KOUZA – I'd like to direct these questions to the honourable Minister for Community Development.

Mr Speaker, the department that the Minister for Community Development heads is one of great importance in addressing the needs in line with Vision 2050, especially pertaining to youth.

First and foremost, it was in Lae District that a submission was made from the Lae District Administration and the SYS through the National Youth Development Programme.

(1) What is the state of progress with the NEC submission that was asked of the Minister by the Lae based NGOs and Lae District Administration titled, 'Stretim Yut, Stretim PNG'. This is a detailed submission to harness the human capital of 71 per cent or four million youths in this country.

(2) Can the honourable Minister, in this very short time frame before the writs are issued, endorse and push through this submission for our youths?

Mrs DELILAH GORE – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for Lae for these very important questions regarding the youths.

Yes, Mr Speaker, the Youth Commission has two submissions to the NEC and that they have been referred back for the Commission to include some more information that they needed before it returns to the NEC.

So, yes, there is a submission that came to NEC and has been referred back so the Youth Commission is now adding some relevant information to the previous submission.

Mr SPEAKER – Minister there are two parts to the question. The Member is actually asking if you would have the time to facilitate that in NEC.

Mrs DELILAH GORE – Yes, Mr Speaker. As soon as that NEC submission comes in then we still have one more session to go and we still have more NEC meetings. So, I think it will be pushed through and NEC will consider it.

04/01

Status of Refugees Processing Facility – Manus Province

Dr ALLAN MARAT – Thank you, Mr Speaker, my questions are directed to the Minister for Foreign and Affairs and Immigration.

Mr Speaker, the current status and the administration of the Manus refugee processing facilities appears to be in a total mess and confusion. Couple of years ago, the Minister assured this Parliament that no refugee will be resettled in the Manus community. But now the refugees are freely roaming around Lorengau town and the surrounding villages creating a lot of social problems. For example, last week, one of them has raped a young girl doing Grade 8 in high school. All criminal offences involving the refugees or the foreign administrators have not been properly processed under the Papua New Guinea laws. Papua New Guinea wants to help, but does not want to be taken advantage of nor bullied.

My questions are:

- (1) What is the current legal status, if any, of the refugees processing facility in Manus?
- (2) What are the legal consequences of the Supreme Court ruling that the facility is unconstitutional and illegal nearly a year ago?
- (3) If the facility is illegal, why are you still operating the facility? Is your continued operations of the facility a direct contempt of the Supreme Court ruling?
- (4) What is the legal status of the refugees under the *Migration Act*? What sort of visa do they currently hold to continue to remain in Papua New Guinea?
- (5) If they do not have the valid visa, why are they being allowed to freely roam around on the island of Manus?
- (6) Consequently, does your Department, have a plan to round them up as illegal aliens and place them under the custody of the police and the CIS forthwith until they are deported?
- (7) How many refugees have already been resettled in Papua New Guinea?
- (8) What is the success rate of that resettlement?
- (9) It is true that many of those resettled refugees are already actively seeking means and ways to enter into a third country, such as the United States?
- (10) If so, does that make the entire proposal to resettle refugees in Papua New Guinea a fuss and unnecessary?
- (11) What are your plans, Mr Minister, to bring the Australians and the New Zealanders who are allegedly involved in the murder of a refugee, when the Papua New

Guineans who have been involved who have already been dismissed from their jobs, arrested, charged and brought before the Courts?

(12) How would you describe the level of legal compliance of the Australian Authorities, when it comes to bringing their citizens before the Papua New Guinea Courts on matters of criminal offences, committed in this country by their citizens, or are you suggesting that there are two sets of Laws, one for Papua New Guineans and one for Australians?

(13) Finally, when are you going to act decisively on these questions and impose leadership on your people of Manus and Papua New Guinea, or are you and your government going to procrastinate and defeat the interest of your own people. Are you going to continue to allow your people and your country to be taken advantage of and bullied?

Mr RIMBINK PATO (Minister for Foreign and Affairs) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Honourable Member for Rabaul for these serious of very important questions concerning a very complex issue.

05/01

Mr Speaker, I have the opportunity to explain on a number of the occasions in this Parliament and to the media as to what the true circumstances are as they prevail on Manus Island and in relation to the arrangements that the Papua New Guinea Government has signed with the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia regarding the asylum seekers.

Due to the series of questions asked and how they relate to so many other issues as well, and that, there is also a court ruling on it. I will therefore make a detailed statement on all of these during this week either tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. As long as, Mr Speaker, you can give me the opportunity to do so.

Nevertheless, let me say in summary, that, the management of the refugee resettlement facility on Manus Island is not in a mess. It is being professionally managed by competent people within our Immigration and Citizenship Services Authority as well as receiving support from the Australian Government who clearly have an interest, as well as other agencies of the United Nations including the International Office of Migration, which is also seeking the repatriation and resettlement of a number of asylum seekers who now have refugee status and those who voluntarily want to leave our country and the facility.

Apart from that, there are refugees who have left the facility and are clearly moving about freely on Manus Island. This is not our intention but we are a law abiding country and we

work within the framework of our *Constitution* and the international frameworks which are administered by the UN.

Also, there is a ruling of the Supreme Court on these issues which required that we must allow the refugees the freedom to leave the facility. In doing so we are therefore, not in contempt of the Supreme Court or its orders. Therefore, we are complying with the court orders and working through the process to ensure the human rights of the individual refugees and those who are very few in number and still remain as asylum seekers. We are also working through the process to ensure that the full effect of the Supreme Court Order is complied with so that these people will be treated properly. They will be resettled if there is a need. There are a whole range of issues to be addressed as well like the financing obligation and our obligations to the UN and our own conditions under the agreement with the Australian Government.

Therefore, I will make a detailed statement on this so that the whole of Parliament is fully informed on an answer to each of those questions and because our people have the right to know what is happening. We are not hiding anything and the true facts must be revealed and I will undertake to do that in this Parliament.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Heavy Equipment and Vehicles must be monitored

Mr DAVID ARORE – Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, my questions are directed to the Minister for Transport and infrastructure.

Mr Speaker, before I ask my questions I would like to convey my condolences to my people in Oro Province for the thirteen people who lost their lives in the recent accident and at this time also remember them.

Mr Speaker, in the 80s and the 90s we had weighing stations built under the Transport Department throughout the whole country. Also, I understand that there has been no monitoring of very huge vehicles operated by big companies in the country which have resulted in the death of 13 innocent lives in my province.

My questions are:

- (1) What is your department doing about monitoring of heavy equipment in this country, especially big vehicles that run on public roads?
- (2) What mechanisms does the Minister and his department have in place?

06/01

The MVIL, I understand is in your department, and there is a case that I have been following in the last two years of an accident in the Northern Highway and it has taken almost three years for the innocent village people to claim their MVIL Third Party Insurance.

(3) Can the Minister assure the people of Oro and the families of the thirteen deceased that his department through MVIL will liaise closely with Higaturu Oil Palm to ensure that the relatives of the deceased will get their Third Party Insurance from MVIL as soon as possible?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr MALAKAI TABAR – Thank you, Mr Speaker, allow me to say thank you to the Member for Ijivitari and also I would like to express my people's deepest sympathy to the people of Northern Province and the families that have lost relatives from this tragic accident.

Last week Tuesday, I was driving along one road in my Electorate when I heard on the radio of the accident and I was really upset. Even last week there was an accident on Lawes Road, just opposite the Hubert Murray Stadium.

I came to the department last week and I asked for the reports of the two accidents and I have already received a brief report for the Port Moresby accident but I am still awaiting the report from Oro.

Now, allow me to try answer those two questions;

Yes, these has been an uncoordinated approach to the situation that we have in this country especially with heavy vehicles. There used to be weighing stations and there was one just outside of Lae which was never monitored and effective processes of looking after the use of heavy vehicles and our roads not being properly addressed

As you have heard from the Acting Clerk, I have got a few Amendments to areas that I will be bringing to this Parliament and I expect all Members of Parliament and Parliament generally to accept and pass all these Amendments.

We have a responsibility towards our people and especially the use of roads. Allow me to say that there will be a heavy vehicle and truck inspection station. Up to now there has never been an inspection station.

I have ordered my department and as for now we need to organise ourselves and put through to Parliament a responsibility to make sure that every heavy vehicle that is given a license to be operated on our roads is properly inspected and must have a mandatory log book

so we must know when it was last serviced, what has happened to it and when it will be due for the next service.

We also would like to make sure that the weights of the vehicle especially heavy vehicles, the weight of sand or stone at the back trailer of the vehicle is such that is conforming to the weight limit of the vehicle.

Previously, there would be a gross weight and net weight written on the side of the vehicle but now a lot of these big vehicles have been seen on the road have no indication or no written weight limit written on the side of the vehicle.

So, we would like to effectively organise ourselves as department and as a government organisation to make sure that every owner and driver of a big vehicle knows their limits of how much they can carry on the back trailer of the vehicle.

07/01

We are also working through the APEC preparations where we would like to conduct some in-house training to ensure that companies help to sponsor and check their drivers to see that they are qualified to be driving those sort of vehicles. Thank you for the question raised. I have personally made visits to the units within the Department and we will come back to this Parliament especially on what we would like to do to improve the situation from what it is and what has been.

Allow me to answer the question regarding MVIL, yes, it is a third party insurance organisation that is responsible for looking after claims on losses from road accidents.

Mr Speaker, I will come back within this week with the proper answer to this question on the processes and the arrangement that is going to happen between NBPOL and MVIL and the affected people from Oro Province.

Trump Abandons Trans-Pacific Partnership Deal

Mr DON POLYE – Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is directed to the Prime Minister.

My questions relate to the President of the United States Donald Trump's decision to terminate the transpacific free trade partnership. My questions are,

(1) Is the Prime Minister aware that President Trump's first policy action on assuming Office was to take executive action to terminate the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement and that this partnership includes the key members of the APEC?

(2) Is the Prime Minister aware that abandoning the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement was core policy for President Trump since the early days of the USA General Elections campaign?

(3) Is the Prime Minister aware that the Prime Minister of Australia has stated that Trump's abandonment of the Pacific Partnership agreement is a great shame and is concerned about what Trump's decision means for Australia and other Pacific economies like Papua New Guinea?

Mr Speaker, President Trump's decision will have huge implications for the success and attendance of the APEC meeting scheduled for Port Moresby in 2018.

(4) How does the Prime Minister plan to adjust the massive investment your Government has been planning for the meeting next year?

(5) The Prime Minister has decided to invite President Donald Trump to the APEC Summit. What trade and investment agreement does the Prime Minister intend to submit or discuss with the President for consideration that attracts Papua New Guinea and other Pacific economies?

Finally, the Members of the Opposition have taken pro-active resolutions on this position by the world's number one economy that affects the rest of the world when a decision is made or when a situation arises in the United States, being the world's leading economy.

From the Opposition bench, we have decided that Papua New Guinea should strongly consider adopting a policy position of protectionism. We protect Papua New Guinea business, Papua New Guinea interest, Papua New Guinea manufacturers and SME's, like the printing of Ballot Papers, et cetera by Papua New Guinean owned businesses and protecting Papua New Guinea interest like the timbers produced in Papua New Guinea to build infrastructure and buildings whilst at the same time, maintaining those very important free trade agreements we have with the European Union where we are selling tuna.

08/01

The Opposition has taken a very proactive stance in response to what the number one economy is doing that might affect this country when absorbing the shock that might come on board.

What is the Government's position and do you agree or don't agree with the position of the Opposition on protectionism?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Speaker, thank you and I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I think he is not surprised as I am that the President of the United States has taken a decision that he promised at the elections that he will take, that is that he will cancel the TPP arrangements between some of the economies around the world. The TPP arrangement is not a APEC arrangement. Of course there are some members of APEC who participate in that partnership arrangement for trade between their countries but it is not exclusive to APEC countries at all.

Mr Speaker, there are countries in the APEC like Papua New Guinea and China for instance, the second biggest economy in the world, are not signatories to the arrangements that were made by United States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and all the traditional partners that we know. So it is no surprise to us that the TPP arrangement has been cancelled and it does not affect PNG in its ability to trade internationally in any way, shape or form because we are not signatories to these arrangements.

Mr Speaker, as many of you know, recently the announcement by the Minister for Trade, Commerce and Industry about our own bilateral arrangements with the countries in the region that we trade with. This includes the recent proposal on Placer Plus which we felt that it is not going to help the economy of our country and protect our jobs and that is why we refused to sign up to such an arrangement.

Mr Speaker, today, our officials are embarking on discussions with our major trading partners like China, Australia and others about entering into bilateral trade arrangements between these countries. Again, it is aimed to protecting jobs and businesses for Papua New Guineans and ensuring that economy continues to prosper.

So, Mr Speaker, when we talk about APEC and how it is going to affect the economy of Papua New Guinea, let me give an example of some of the investments that the APEC member countries make in Papua New Guinea. By making such big investments, they are creating jobs for Papua New Guinea. The recent example is the LNG led by ExxonMobil, one of the biggest American company in the world who have had the confidence to invest in Papua New Guinea because they believe in us.

Of course we do trade with other companies like Bechtel, GE and other countries who are continuing to do business in Papua New Guinea. Australia is by far one of our single biggest

investor in Papua New Guinea. So relationships between these countries is very important, it is important that it is above politics because it protects jobs, provides income for families and ensures that we continue to develop our country in the way we want to develop it.

Mr Speaker, it is easy to say we don't want foreign investment in the country but where are you going to raise capital in order for you to develop our country. So we must be balance in our thinking in what we do and manage our country. While we want foreign investment in our country, it must suit our needs and that is ensuring job protection and creation of new businesses in the country.

Mr Speaker that is why APEC is very important. After the elections, the incoming Government must take ownership of the APEC issues because it is a unique opportunity where fortune 500 plus investors globally will be here in Papua New Guinea; they are CEOs and Chairmen of some of the biggest companies in the world and they will see some investment opportunities in our country. When they invest a single dollar in our economy, it creates more jobs for our country. We, ourselves, do not have enough money to continue to develop our country in the manner that we want to.

09/01

When you look at our annual budgets from independence till today, you will find that half of our budget is simply caught up in funding our public service machinery. A billion kina may sound as if it is a big money but in terms of trying to develop a challenging country like Papua New Guinea, it is not enough. It is therefore important that we have better trade arrangements with countries that are willing to invest in our country and making sure that they create jobs for our people. That is the only way that we can make sure to develop our country and have a better standard of living for our people.

Mr Speaker, I urge all Members of Parliament to support 2018. We have heard stories about people thinking that we are going to spend millions and billions of kina but we don't have that money to spend on one programme.

We are very innovative in the way that we are trying to provide this particular forum an opportunity to host this programme in Papua New Guinea in the most cost effective way. We have already built all the infrastructures in Port Moresby. All hotels and roads have been built and we are now looking at security arrangements for the leaders who are coming. It will be a very good opportunity for all Papua New Guineans and I urge all our people to embrace it with a lot of enthusiasm. It is too important a programme to miss out on.

We have been a member of the APEC community for over 20 years and our leaders have attended those meetings. They have seen the importance of these meetings and it is important that we take advantage of the opportunity of hosting our first one in 2018.

Gazettal of Teachers (East New Britain)

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE – I direct my questions to the Minister for Education.

Primary and Secondary schools in the East New Britain province have raised concerns of their lack of gazettal in the past three years.

The non-gazettal prohibited and limited the promotions of teachers and their postings. This means some unproductive and undisciplined teachers cannot be replaced in some of the schools while the good performing teachers are not recognized for their performance. This results in poor academic performance in some of our schools.

Mr Speaker, while this Government has committed a lot of funds to our education system, the non-gazettal of teachers can defeat our purpose in some of these things.

My questions are:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the non-gazettal of teachers for the past three years?
- (2) Can the Minister assure our hard working teachers in our country of their gazettal that must happen very soon?

Mr NICK KUMAN – I thank the Member for Pomio for his questions. These were some of questions that were asked in the latter part of 2016. My response was that the gazettal positions throughout the country are normally being done by the Teachers Services Commission provided that the provincial educational board provide the details of vacant positions in the province.

You are right in saying that for about three years we have not had any gazettal in our system to allow qualified teachers throughout the country to apply for those positions. Some are attributed to decisions made by the provincial education board in its province. Appointments for teachers to all the schools are done by the provincial education board. We only endorse them and put them on the payroll.

I totally agree with the Member for Pomio and I will do my best to ensure that those gazettal must be done for all the vacant positions. That is a reminder to all the provincial education advisors in the province to ensure that before April each year, you must make

available all the vacant positions to the Teachers Service Commission so that they can advertise those vacant positions through the gazettal.

10/01

Protect Papua New Guinean Jobs

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Thank you Mr Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister for Labour and Industrial Relations. Just a brief background, it is good to see that the government has indicated its interest in creating jobs for Papua New Guineans. Perhaps it can step up and provide or make an effort to protect Papua New Guinean jobs. Most recently in Oro Province, the Provincial Administration stopped work on a portion of land that had been illegally acquired and on that portion of land were couple of foreigners performing duties of building maintenance who could not speak a word of English.

My question is:

(1) Is not English a very important requirement before a work permit is issued?

We are seeing instances like this not only in Oro Province but throughout the entire country. The drivers, shop keepers, security guards and all type of workers who cannot speak a word of English are working in these positions, so what is your department doing about it?

(2) Does your department carry out regular inspections? Does it have the capacity to do this? Does it have an investigative and prosecution capacity within your department? You will not find a Papua New Guinean who can speak only *Tokpisin* operating in Australia, New Zealand, China or Vietnam and working there happily without any one questioning him, why?

Increase of Illegal Work Permits

(3) Are you aware that there is a Bangladesh syndicate who has facilitated for a lot of people from that particular country to enter into this country and illegally obtain work permits and they are now proliferating the entire nation setting up tucker box shops and supermarkets and any little business they can get their hands on.

That syndicate is operating within your department with the blessing of corrupt officers within your department. This is hypocritical for us to claim that we are concerned about Papua New Guinean jobs and yet allow this to happen? We cannot continue to turn a blind eye. Thank you very much.

Mr BENJAMIN POPONAWA – Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me thank the Governor for Oro. I think this is the second time the Governor of Oro is asking the same questions. Let me say that English is a prerequisite. It is a must that whoever is applying for work permits must have that prerequisite before they can apply and I cannot see how this persons are coming through.

I told this Parliament some time ago, that there are foreigners who are here on different visas. Some are here on business visas and short stay visas but in terms of work permits we try our best to ensure that English is a pre-requisite that they have to meet.

I fail to understand how some people out in the provinces and districts are unable to speak English. I will try my best and send the officers out there to inspect. We have labour officers in Oro Province –

Mr Garry Juffa – Point of Order! Thank you Minister, let me point out that those labour officers have lodged in a complaint with me that Headquarters has deliberately instructed them not to pursue this inspection and investigations.

Mr BENJAMIN POPONAWA – Thank you Governor, I am not aware of these officers so if you can provide me with a name list so that we can deal with them.

Secondly, in terms of the inspection, as I said earlier we have inspection divisions and they are also located in the provinces as well. But capacity is an issue.

This is not happening in my department only but probably in other department too. Some of these government officers are probably going to bed with all this.

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There is corruption everywhere, we have inspectors out there but for the offices in the provinces are coming and telling you that the notice is coming from the head office and let me know so that I can have a word with them.

(2) The question in relation to the Bangladeshi syndicate, I am not aware so let me get some details on it and I will have some officers to look at it.

Supplementary Question Reform Law, Transfer Powers to Governors

Mr KERENGE KUA – Because it has been going on for years and years and we continue to ask about it in Parliament but we do not seem to successfully nail it so could we look at reforming the law and perhaps transfer and delegate these powers to the Governors in the provinces because the Department of Labour in Waigani might not have the capacity to deal with it throughout the country. If we look at delegating this power to the provinces and let the provincial Governors and the police deal with it and we might see some results.

Mr BENJAMIN POPONAWA –We need a holistic approach both from the Opposition and the Government as well, so I wouldn't go down that path provided we have the capacity with the provincial Governments and our districts to assist in this but we need to look at it in an holistic way.

Enga Provincial Hospital Yet To Be Built

Mr PETER IPATAS –My questions are directed to the Minister for Treasury. As we are coming to the end of this term, and the much publicized Enga Provincial hospital is yet to be built. For the sake of the people of Enga and of course the people of this country to know what stage the hospital is in. the funding was to come from the Exxim Bank of China and I just want to get an update so that our people are informed.

I have been continuously saying this here in Parliament that Enga has been contributing to the nation since 1989. We have not threatened the project in anyway but to date some of the most fundamental institutions are not built in the province and the hospital is one of them. It is important for this Government to give a clear indication when we are going to get the hospital?

Mr PATRICK PRUAITCH – Let me first of all thank the Governor in terms of his work in the province, he is one of the leading Governor in terms of performance and delivery on Government services as far as education services are concerned he is in front and I am glad that he has now taken health program head on and the Government is no doubt supporting provincial governments who are initiating programs at the provincial level. I must thank the Governor for accompanying both the Prime Minister and myself to China on the loan negotiation and I am happy to inform the Governor and the people of Enga that the loan from Exim Development Bank has been approved on the December 16, 2016.

Once the loan agreement is signed then we will inform the Governor of the drawdown of those funds and the implementation of the hospital to take place.

Supplementary Question

Status of East Sepik Provincial Hospital Allocation

Sir MICHAEL SOMARE – On behalf of the people of East Sepik I wish to ask the Treasurer since you were my Treasurer for a long time, about 10 years, what amount you have allocated for Wewak Hospital? Please, that hospital was built by the colonial government in 1962 and it has not been renovated since and has decayed. They have not done anything to it since it was built.

I want to know, the money you are talking about, are you going to allocate some to us in East Sepik or not?

Mr PATRICK PRUAITCH – In the same scenario, as the Governor for East Sepik has pointed out, I have been his Treasurer and I have worked very hard to try and develop Boram Hospital.

There are a number of proposals that has come through, including one that has been put through by the Foreign Affairs Minister in relation to the support that Boram Hospital will receive, especially Boram Hospital because of the situation and the offer was made by the Japanese Government.

Unfortunately, the East Sepik Provincial Administration did not follow through to give effect to that support but I am glad to also inform the good Governor of East Sepik that the National Government in its wisdom has approved a loan of K320 million for Boram Hospital in Wewak, East Sepik Province, with the European Union. Once we commence the loan negotiations and the loan is agreed to we will inform the governor so implementation of that hospital can come into fruition.

Supplementary Question

Debrief Anga Hospital

Mr SAM BASIL – On behalf of my governor who is not here today, we would like you to also give a brief on Morobe Province, Angau Hospital.

Mr PATRICK PRUAITCH – Thank you, Mr Speaker, as we know, Angau Hospital is a legend. I think first of all we need to get our acts together. The provincial government must support the national government. As we all know, the national government is working together with the Australian Government to deliver A\$400 million of the hospital at Angau and I am appealing to the leaders of Morobe to work closely with the national government for us to ensure that the hospital is built on time for our people in Morobe Province.

But, of course it's not only Morobe people who will benefit from that hospital. It is more central and I think it will attract a lot of people from other parts of the country.

Government/Church Partnership Funding

Mr PETER ISOAIMO – My question is directed to the Minister for Community Development.

It is a relief to see that finally a funding of K20 million is now allocated for Government/Church Partnership, a policy that has been shelved for some time.

My question is that; does the department have an implementing mechanism to roll out this programme to benefit electorates or districts instead of us having to stretch our limited funding that we should really be using for developmental purposes in our electorates?

Ms DELILAH GORE – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Member for Kairuku-Hiri for that very important question.

Mr Speaker, towards the end of last year the Minister for Planning handed over the Church Partnership Programme to the Department of Community Development. The partnership programme has its policies to guide us in the delivery of the programme and the budget is reflecting a K20 million allocation for Church Partnerships.

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But the Department is yet to receive the funding to support the church partnership program throughout the country as per the policy that is in place. So we will be guided by the policy to deliver to the church partnership program. Thank you.

Mr SOLAN MIRISIN – Thank you Mr Speaker for recognising the people of Teleformin. I direct my question to the Prime Minister regarding the Tabubil-Teleformin road. In Tabubil, almost 40 per cent of Teleformin people live there and work for the Ok Tedi Mine

and they have contributed a lot to that mine which also contributes tax to this Government. My question is, we have launched the project in Tabubil and Teleformin but until now, nothing has happened.

Can the Prime Minister inform this Parliament and the people of Teleformin on any plans and funding on that road, and if so, can he also brief us about increasing two per cent tax from Ok Tedi so that it can fund the project if the Government cannot fund it? Thank you.

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Speaker, I thank the good Member for Teleformin for his very import question regarding the road to link Tabubil to Teleformin.

Mr Speaker, it is one of the few districts in the country that is still landlocked and it is very important that we build a road to give them access to services in that remote part of Papua New Guinea.

Mr Speaker, yesterday Cabinet approved some funding for this particular project through Tax Credit arrangements with Ok Tedi and at the same time addressing some of the maintenance programs for all the national highways throughout the country. Myself or the Minister for Works will be making a statement to this Parliament explaining NEC's decision in order for us to maintain some of continuous maintenance issues that we are having through the country and the road networks in our provinces.

Mr Speaker, it is not a new thing that is happening quite regularly. We should be now on top of it but continuous neglect by many governments including ours in the sense because of funding issues but because of lack of attention, many of these roads have not been maintained in an order that is agreeable for our people to use.

So, Mr Speaker, we are now trying to arrange for Public-Private Partnership and we have been over the past few weeks talking to some of the major investors in the country who frequently use these roads. Ok Tedi is one of them, ExxonMobil, Oil Search and the others are to put a Public-Private Partnership with the government so they can manage the continuous maintenance of this road.

Mr Speaker, for many years, we have been depending on our government employees particular from Works but their lack of capacity and of course lack of attention to immediately attend to problems that the roads are facing throughout the country has meant that the maintenance programs have been lacking. It is happening all throughout the country.

So, Mr Speaker, we have heard the concerns of the people particularly in the highways and of course in towns like Madang and Wewak, Cabinet had specific attention to them and decisions were made yesterday which I will be making the announcement very soon.

The second issue that the Member for Teleformin is alluding to is about Tax Credit Scheme. Because these companies are now going to get involved in the management of these highways for us through their management capacity, we are trying to increase the tax limits from 0.75 per cent to 2 per cent. They can use the Tax Credit funds that will be supervised by the Department of Planning so that we can be able to have regular maintenance program for year after year.

Mr Speaker, that does not mean that we abandon some of the on-going programs like the ADB or the World Bank. In fact, this morning, I met with the World bank Director who is visiting our country and they are very agreeable to the proposition that we are making in the sense that World Bank has got similar arrangements in the region where there are effective maintenance program for the roads in the long term because they are working closely with the private sector; big investors who bring in capacity and management skills.

Mr Speaker, so we are in fact re-looking at how we are going to attend to these problems immediately and then of course the long term solutions are to get sufficient funding from ADB, World Bank and other development partners so that we can have a long term solution to designing better roads with higher standards where our people can enjoy it. Thank you.

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ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.50 p.m..

