

SIXTH DAY

Tuesday 10 April 2018

DRAFT HANSARD

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SIXTH DAY

Tuesday 10 April 2018

The Acting Speaker (**Mr Pesab Jeffery Komal**) 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 11 a.m., and invited the Member for Chuave and Minister for Commerce and Industry, **Honourable Wera Mori** to say Prayers:

‘Papa God, we thank you that we are able to assemble before you this morning. Thank you for the calling that you have made for us, under your wisdom, leadership and guidance to lead your people.

O God we come before you and do admit, just as we are, that we cannot be able to do what we want to do except for the fact that you will guide and lead us.

Lord we pray and commit everything in this country into your hands because you have made this country.

We pray for the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, Lord and I pray also for the other Ministers, I do pray for the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy and all Members of this Parliament, O God that we may be able to deliberate in the wisdom that you have given us so that we may be able to deliver your people.

On this note, Lord, we come before you now to say the very prayer that your Son and our Lord and King and Saviour Jesus Christ taught us. Amen.’

QUESTIONS

Authentication or Accreditation Process of Foreign Doctors

Dr LINO TOM – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Thank you for this opportunity.

Mr Acting Speaker, my question goes to the Health Minister and it is a follow through question from the series of questions asked by the Member for Maprik, honourable John Simon,

in one of the last Parliament Meetings. It is in regard to the authentication process or the accreditation process of foreign doctors who are practicing mostly in the private sector.

Mr Acting Speaker, our good Health Minister has extensive experience in the health sector and I am pretty sure he will acknowledge that there is growing concerns among the medical fraternity of the level and the quality of foreign doctors who are actually working in this country.

Mr Acting Speaker, lately a lot of complaints of malpractices and poor patient management has surfaced from a lot of people including medical professionals, especially about the quality or calibre of doctors who are practicing, mostly in the private health sector in our country.

Mr Acting Speaker, it is a strict requirement elsewhere in the world for doctors to be properly accredited to be able to work in foreign countries. The only accreditation process being used now is our medical school exams and the residential programmes we have in our country for our own doctors because currently we just have one medical school. But with Divine Word coming on board and with lots of our students actually going overseas to do medical studies, soon we will have a lot of doctors who are trained in other countries coming into our country in numbers and we need to have a standard.

In other countries they have this medical board exams that are set for students who are graduating from all the other medical universities to sit before they actually go out to practice but in this country we don't have any medical board exams.

02/06

My questions are;

(1) Can the Minister come up with a program for a medical board accreditation process that will accredit foreign doctors, PNG doctors or PNG doctors doing medicine overseas to come and accredit themselves before they start practising medicine in this country?

(2) Can the Health Department start a process of independent accreditation of all the foreign doctors who are already working here? Because right now they just come and present their credentials to the Medical Board and we don't know if they are real doctors or pretenders. With the advance technologies that are available now, a lot of other people can actually produce documents that seem genuine.

Here are we are dealing with our people's lives, so I'm asking the good Health Minister if he can start a process of independent accreditation so that we can ask all the foreign trained

doctors to go through that accreditation process and be properly accredited before they start practising in this country. Thank you Mr Acting Speaker.

Sir PUKA TEMU – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the honourable Member for Wabag for these important questions. In fact, I have just heard from one of our journalist complaining about the qualification of some of the foreign practitioners in some of the private clinics throughout the country. The questions raised by the Member are very important as we are both aware that our country only goes through the Papua New Guinea Medical Board. I have informed the Parliament in the last session that we are now finalising the complete review of the Medical Board Registration Act. So that's now with the State Solicitor for assessment and clearance and hoping that in the next sitting of Parliament, I will be able to bring this completely reviewed medical registration law which will include what many countries are practising throughout the world and this is that; foreigners sit for a board exam before they are given the license to practise in the country.

I also want to agree with the Member that Papua New Guinea Doctors cannot go anywhere without sitting for those countries exam. So it's one of the areas that I am already seriously looking at to protect our people.

Just presenting CVs before the Medical Board now a days is not good enough. We have had many experiences of doctors that Medical Board has cleared but in the operating theatre, they don't know what to do and we have deported many of those. But unfortunately, the identification is late so definitely there is genuine need and the Member is absolutely right in calling for a review of the *Medical Registration Act*, which is in the finally stage to be brought to the Floor.

The request for the Department to under-take accreditation on those who have already, I would approach it a little bit differently because we have received a couple of complains so we will try and investigate those individual complaints. We will highlight this and that we will establish a program in order for us to look at who is in the country at the moment, how did they register and whether they are qualified. That means communicating through the universities that they have graduated from and whether these are genuine certificates that they have come through.

The last issue I want to raise in supporting the honourable Member's question is, we also call upon the public to continue to lay complaints directly either to myself as Minister or the Department because these are genuine issues. I'm calling up on the public if you know that a practitioner from outside has seen you and you know that you are not getting better or getting

the wrong medicine, we would want to know because we don't want a non-qualified medical practitioners practising in this country.

03/06

A practitioner from outside has seen you and either your illness is not getting better and you know that he is giving you the wrong medicine or we will want to know because we do not want an unqualified medical workers to be working in the country. That is why through the wisdom of our leaders the medical board was established. Also today there are many medical defence cases (litigations) coming on board, so this is for both our national doctors and those from overseas. So proper practice and maintaining high quality medical care particularly through processes of diagnosis and treatment, those are set procedures that we really need to go through.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I welcome the recommendations and I can assure the honourable leader and this honourable House that I will undertake those ones but please support me when I bring the completed Medical Registration Bill when it is presented to the Floor.

Upgrade Gaubin Health Centre

Mr CHRIS NANGOI –Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker , for giving me this opportunity but before I ask my question; I would like to take this time on behalf of my people of Sumkar, share our great sorrow and condolences to the provinces that recently experienced the earthquake.

My question is directed to the Minister for Health and HIV in relation to problems associated with the rural hospital of Gaubin. Gaubin is a rural hospital on Karkar Island in Madang province. This hospital was built 70 years ago by a Mr Edwin Sake, a German. It is currently recognised as a level three facility which means it is only a major health centre. It has a catchment of 70 -80 000 population on the island. It provides basic health services which also include a minor operating theatre, obstetrics and gynaecology room, ultra sound scanner, x-ray and specialised TB and HIV wards and 7 different wards totalling 130 beds. There are three doctors of whom one provides his serving on a part-time basis, an HEO and three mid-wives.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Gaubin is recognised as a level three facility or major health centre. It however provides much needed services likened to Modilion. Level four would be needed to avoid too many referrals to Modilion which costs money, time and sometimes life. To get a level four status there needs to be a major rehabilitation of the health centre. There needs to be new infrastructure built with essential hospital parts; such as operating theatre, and others.

There is a need for a boat to be used as a marine ambulance for referrals to Madang's Modilong hospital as all health centres on the island are closed or have seen a major scale down due to lack of supplies and Gaubin is the only one in operation.

Do you have any plans to assist and upgrade this health centre?

04/06

Sir PUKA TEMU – I thank the Member for Sumkar for his question regarding one of the health facilities that has been in this country for a long time.

I must say that when I was a young graduate, I had the privilege of working in that beautiful facility which was then the district hospital. It is sad to hear that over the years it has downgraded itself, due to lack of support, to a major health centre rather than a district hospital. I want to assure the honourable Member that under the current policy of Government, it aims to make sure that every district in the country must have a level four facility which is a district hospital. Under that policy, we passed the Budget and K50 million is earmarked for district hospitals for this year and it will be an ongoing program for the term of this Parliament. Having known this facility, I know that right now it works as a level four facility rather than level three because of the infrastructure that is already there. The first thing I will do immediately, is to send my standard officers to visit the health centre and they will put a report to me to make sure that we immediately upgrade it to a level four hospital supporting it through the Budget that we have at the moment because I think it deserves that attention. It is a big facility, it serves a big population and has a good history, so I can assure the honourable leader from Sumkar that both of us will work together. The standard officers will visit and give us reports and both of us will then discuss on how to restore it to its former glory days.

Medical Supplies

Mr RICHARD MASERE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Health. Mr Acting Speaker, last year, I raised a question on the Floor of Parliament to the Minister regarding the hospital status to be raised from a health centre to a district hospital and I would like to thank the good Minister because within two weeks from the time the question was raised, the hospital was given its district status. This goes to show that when important questions are raised on the Floor of Parliament, there is action taken by respective Ministers and those concerned. Thank you Mr Minister for Health for ensuring that my people are now able to access a district hospital.

I also raised couple of questions and I feel that I must continue to raise them as they are very important. This is regarding medical supply. We are still having problems of not being able to access basic medical supply. I do understand that medicines have arrived in Papua New Guinea and I understand that the Central Supply and Tender Board processes have been completed and contracts have been awarded to the logistics company.

Mr Acting Speaker, since then, our district hospital and our provincial hospital in Popondetta are yet to receive any of those medical supplies.

(1) Can the Minister assure us or give us a status update of where these supplies are now so that we can be able to advice our hospitals?

Is our supply chain system robust? Meaning, are we going to supply medicine and not have this problem again. Are we going to have this issue again when being supplied with medicine in the future?

(2) Can the Minister assure us that our supply chain system is robust to ensure that we do not face any shortages in our hospitals?

(3) Can the Minister look at the possibility of delegating the responsibility of procurement back to the provincial hospitals?

This is so that they can procure medicine rather than waiting for the National health supply system to be able to supply these because one of the biggest issue we have is, every hospital runs of supply at different times and if they are able to procure them at their discretion this might help alleviate some of the issues we have such as shortages of medical drugs in the hospital.

05/06

Sir PUKA TEMU – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I thank the honourable Member for Ijivitari for complimenting my efforts on the district hospital and also the questions on medical supplies.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the leaders will remember that in the Supplementary Budget, we had an increase in the Budget for Medical Supplies so I got on top of that immediately making sure that the contracts awarded for the 100 per cent kit was delivered.

Unfortunately, my efforts to get the logistics contracts awarded before they arrived failed. The Technical Evaluation Committee is established by the Central Supply Tenders Board and is chaired by my department. Because of the delay from the CSTB the supplies arrived before the awarding of contracts, I have always wanted that approved before the supplies arrived.

Now, the four logistic companies that bid for the distribution of the 100 per cent medical kits, CSTB has already approved and signed their contracts and the system is we will not pay until they deliver. So, when the companies don't have logistical support they will delay their delivery because our policy is that we only pay you after the kits have been delivered so that is the challenge that many of our national companies part of our SEM Support Policy.

But, specifically in response to the honourable Member's question, the specific logistic company project was signed in late February, but there is no direct shipment from Port Moresby to Popondetta, they have to go to Lae and so the supplies are right now sitting in Lae.

I would like to thank the Honourable Leader for raising the question last week to me so I instructed my secretary to find out where they are and they are now in Lae, and though we have instructed the company that won the bid they have assured us that this week they will move them from Lae to Popondetta. We will monitor them similar to all the other companies that have been awarded to make sure that they perform because there has been a shortage of supplies in many of our aid posts and health centres so as Minister responsible, I will ensure to monitor those who are awarded contracts to perform as well as making sure that every facility has the right number of kits. Aid posts should have 11 boxes and health centres must have 22 boxes for three months' supply.

We are now managing the next phase to make sure that the contracts that were awarded are for two years and their job is to make sure that they work with my team in the Department in our Area Medical Stores to make sure that these companies are delivering all the time.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you have also seen the Tenders already out for logistic distribution of general supply and also the purchase of new medical supplies. I am making sure that we are moving onto this policy that has been in the department but has never been delivered and that is six months buffer all the time. There must be enough drugs in every facility and in the Area Medical Stores that should last for six months for the country.

We have now got the funds and we are very thankful to the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister who have released enough funds to deliver the right amount of supplies in the country. I can assure the honourable leaders including the Honourable Member for Ijivitari that my job as the Minister is to make sure that no patient is turned away because there is no medical supplies.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

06/06

Delayed TFFE Funds - Morobe

Mr GINSON SAONU – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

I direct my questions to the Minister for Education and want the Prime Minister and other concerned Ministers to take note.

The Government's TFFE Policy with an allocation of K600 million plus yearly is a way forward for provision of equitable quality education throughout the country.

However, the implementation of the policy to acquire quality output still lacks the efficiency of each service delivery to schools in the province.

My province is victimised as a result of this inefficiency.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my questions are as follows:

(1) Can the honourable Minister confirm or deny that the schools in Morobe Province have not received their TFFE allocations in cash, commodity and infrastructure components since its incisions in 2012?

A report compiled from the recent TSFE review following my direction for six schools out of all schools in Morobe Province revealed some K6 million in outstanding payments yet to be paid.

(2) When will this outstanding fund be paid to these schools?

(3) If only six schools are owed K6 million, how much is owed to the rest of my schools in Morobe Province?

(4) Why are inexperienced companies without track records of door-deliveries of basic school materials being awarded contracts resulting in materials not reaching the door steps of all schools, especially rural schools in Morobe Province?

(5) Why were school materials being dropped off at respective district headquarters and not delivered straight to schools for the benefit of every child?

In so far as equitable education is concerned, what we need is the proof of the actual receiving of materials by every child in every school in Morobe Province.

(6) Can the honourable Minister tell the parents in Morobe Province, why there was a lengthy delay in supplying of materials for 2016 and 2017 school year?

(7) And if the tender is yet to be finalised for Morobe schools or the region as a whole, can the honourable Minister decentralise TFFE commodity component for Morobe Province now to ensure immediate orders are done for third and fourth quarters this year and similarly for commencement of every school year?

Mr Deputy Speaker, every year more than K600 million is allocated for the TFFE policy

(8) Can the Minister table a yearly report in Parliament on the expenditure of these funds as the people of PNG especially the parents have the right to know how the funds were spent for the benefit of our children?

(9) Due to these experiences, can the honourable Minister and the Prime Minister consider decentralising the full TFFE funding to Morobe Provincial Government to administer to all the schools in Morobe Province now following Enga and New Ireland Provinces?

07/06

Mr NICK KUMAN – I thank the Member for his questions. For questions one to three, I want to inform the Parliament that the only issues that I am aware of in terms of funding was the last quota of 2017. We owe the schools in outstanding amounts of K97 million which are yet to be paid.

For the first quota of 2018, we were able to pay up to K100 million and we are yet to dispatch K50 million for the first quota of 2018. We are now into the first week of term one holidays so we will make sure that we will catch up with the first quota of this term.

I am not aware of the K6 million that you referred to. I am fully aware of some reports that came out from Morobe. It is one of those provinces that continue to go to EM TV and the media outlets in terms of TFF and all other issues relating to education.

I want to encourage you that the Department of Education are the ones managing the TFF in the country. It will be better for our officers to sit down together find out about where the short falls are. But according to my understanding, we do not hold back any funding for any schools in the country. This goes to show that we have done really well as a Government since 2012. We have retired every single TFF funding at the end of every fiscal year. The only outstanding that I am aware of is the last quota of 2017 and the first quota of 2018.

I encourage the officers under your leadership to come sit with my officers and find out exactly where the shortfalls are that you are referring to. The monies are paid based on the enrolment. We don't depend on that is flagged out. There are flagging systems within our payment system that we found out that there are fake enrolment in certain areas. We therefore, allocate money on the actual enrolment.

With regard to the third question, I do agree that the delivery of the school materials or teaching and learning materials supposed to reach the schools in Momase Region beginning of 2018 school year. Unfortunately, there are couple of issues that confronted the country and I think you are fully aware of that. The supplier for that particular region was not able to get the

supplies into the country on time have those materials delivered to the schools. And Morobe being part of the Momase Region was also affected.

In relation to the same issue, the company contracted to deliver the materials is only required to deliver to the district headquarters of a particular district. Therefore I want to make it very clear that we take some responsibility as leaders to get the schools to come and pick up the materials from the district headquarters.

You will note that there is a 20 or 40 foot container that comes with the school materials which is delivered to the district and remains the property of the district. Future supplies will be stored in those containers for schools to come and pick up. I do appreciate the concerns raised. I do have the same issues with contractor so this is where the problem is.

With regard to the fifth question, decentralisation of commodity component are some of the decisions that the Cabinet has got an oversight over it. They will make a decision in due course. I say this in respect to the last question regarding TFF decentralisation.

Recently, we signed an MOU with New Ireland Provincial Government to roll

08/06

With respect to the last question on TFF decentralisation, yes, very recently we signed an MOU with the New Ireland Provincial Government to roll out TFF to the province. And we've trialled out with Enga for the duration of TFF since its inception as a government policy in 2012. It worked really well and I am pretty sure that with good leadership at the provincial and district levels we can be able to roll out this. Cabinet has not made a decision yet but Cabinet will make a decision on this issue.

I took note of the Governor's comments, not only today but during the National Planning Summit in Lae also. He made those comments and I took note of it. The Prime Minister was there and also took note of it.

As soon as Cabinet makes a decision I will make a formal announcement in the June Meeting.

On the question of reporting, yes, during the last term of Parliament we made reports to the Members of Parliament who wanted to get reports of how much money has being paid to individual schools in districts and provinces.

And therefore I now that this is your second term as a Member of Parliament but the TFF policy came into existence in 2012. So, the report on this year's funding will be made available and you will have the chance to read it.

Mining Pollution – Amend Legislation

Mr SEKIE AGISA – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for recognising me and my people of South Fly.

My question are directed to the Prime Minister and Ministers for Environment and Conservation, Mining, Health and Justice to take note.

Before I go onto the question, I would like to make a few remarks. The South Fly electorate has the worst mining pollution impact for over 34 years continuously. The largely unregulated and man-made disaster has gain a reputation of being the worst in the whole world and the neighbouring big brother, Australia.

Australian companies encompassing PNG legislation are creating now an unmanageable environmental emergency. Mine chemicals causing exotic diseases are widespread comprising of human immunity, the bodies ability to fight off diseases, early aging, infertility, increasing cancer incidences, and worst of all is childhood intellectual impairment to mention a few.

The genetic mutation are inheritable and therefore the future generation are now affected under the environmental disaster or rather referred to as the mine genocide as advised by the experts.

As a rural health worker myself having worked for years with them, the health burden is an everyday catastrophe whereby unexpected deaths are frequent, poorer general health of the people are obvious and fewer diseases and infections including the multi-resistant tuberculosis bacteria are emerging from Daru Island to Torres Strait Islands and impacting the Australian health care system. No doubt the environment including, tourists hotspot of the Great Barrier Reef, the Stanley Gas LG development and other exploration downstream in the Western Province must have their baseline environment impact assessment specifying their industry specific chemicals and environmental pollution done so that impacts –

09/06

Since 2002 when the then Prime Minister Sir Mekere Morauta established PNGSDP, one of the prime aim of PNGSDP was to do mitigation. Since Government took over OK Tedi is it still doing that mitigation now or is it still dumping waste that will have a negative impact on the lives of our people and dying slowly from the effects of OK Tedi and Porgera?

Secondly, Mr Prime Minister, many affected river lying communities have come to an utmost relief in Constitution and Law Reform Commission issue Number 6 issued by then the Justice Minister Mr Bire Kimisopa in 2017. After Dr Sylvester Katatu study revealed of gloss

pollution of Angabanga River, study countered James Cooke University assisted by now Member for Tewai Siassi, Chairman of Disaster and Emergency.

The CLRC, after seven years, searched the globe for the best industrial practise and proactive regulation by 2015 made 19 pieces of submission to the Attorney General's office to take to NEC, The question is, why is NEC not bringing this submission to the Floor of Parliament to debate, to pass amendment of Environment Act 2000?

I believe resources including millions of kina put by some of the best brains in Papua New Guinea includes Dr Eric Kwa, PHD in Environment Law have put together safety brackets for people of Papua New Guinea for extractive industry pollution. Thank you.

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you Deputy Speaker and I want to thank the Member for South Fly on his questions. The issue on environmental damage to Western province has been well publicised, well debated and documented.

It is certainly a sad story which successive Government had no due care for the welfare of its own people and protected the interest of big mining giants and given protection under legislation passed on the Floor of this Parliament.

This saga is still ongoing as the Member has correctly stated that PNGSDP program was established as part of that compensation program by the then Morauta Government whilst given indemnity and legislative protection to BHP. BHP walked away unchallenged for their responsibilities they added to the people of Western province and the people of Papua New Guinea on the massive environmental damage that they have conducted while they were managing OK Tedi. That is the proven fact.

Mr Speaker, our people have now taken over the mine and I know that there is certain improvement in the way they manage their waste at OK Tedi. But I feel that, that is the question that is still lingering the minds of our people.

Now, PNG Sustainable Development Program is now a subject of a court case in Singapore between the State and the Directors

10/06

I feel that this is the question that is lingering in the minds of our people. The PNG Sustainable Development Programme is now the subject of a court case in Singapore between the state and directors of the PNG Sustainable Development Programme, who have hijacked and virtually taken over the entire organisation and the company has been taken over by few individuals. This particular programme is for the benefit of the people of western province.

Why are they allowed to continue to suffer when their funds are being locked away in Singapore? I think there are a lot of questions that need to be answered and a lot of people who have made those decisions need to answer those questions.

Mr Deputy Speaker, so within the next few weeks I will be announcing an independent royal commission of inquiry to start from the day when OK Tedi mine started to the day we took over and the issues surrounding the PNGSDP. Papua New Guineans deserve to know the truth, not just colouring of the truth so it suits somebody's interests. I will possibly get an Australian judge or someone to come and independently carry out these investigations.

The second issue is that I have already requested Slater & Gordon, one of Australia's leading environmental firm to review the case that was done by Rex Dagi.

So that the PNG government itself takes out the court case against BHP. We have to sue this company for the substantial environmental damage that they have caused to our people. They cannot simply waive this PNGSDP which they control with the few friends of theirs, just camouflaging the fact that it is for the benefit of our people, when it is not. But just satisfying a few consultants and people.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I want the commission of inquiry to cover all these issues so that it is taken away from politics. And people do not use it as a political game that is going on.

Mr Patrick Pruaitch – Point Of Order! We appreciate the fact that the Prime Minister has taken the trouble to explain the legacy issues that we all understand. I think the Member's question was directed for him to answer. Because PNG Government has taken over Ok Tedi, what is the Government doing in terms of environment issues affecting the region?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – The environment pollution done to the Fly River system was not because we took over the mine recently. It was done since the mine was established and BHP is largely responsible for that, because they refused to build a tailings dam. That is the case in point but who is protecting BHP needs to be established. The inquiry will look into this.

Sir Mekere Morauta – Point Of Order! I think it is unfair for the Prime Minister to blame PNGSDP or BHP. The state from the outset was a 30 per cent shareholder from day one, until BHP tried to walk away in 2002.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER –Honourable Member, what is your point of Order? You've gone on to debate.

Sir Mekere Morauta –The Prime Minister does not understand these issues, he was never there. In 2000, BHP came and told my Government they wanted to close the mine. At that time OK Tedi was producing 30 per cent of the nations’ GDP so we couldn’t close it.

11/06

We could not close it so I said you could walk away, but the mine was to remain open because it was so important to the nation. But your 30 per cent or 52 percent instead of the Government getting it, I established the SDP to compensate for the people of Western Province. That is what it is there for!

(Members interjecting)

Sir Mekere Morauta – and in 1999, he wanted to put his pushy, gluey fingers like an octopus.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr PETER O’NEILL – Mr Acting Speaker, he knows that I have my fingers in Ok Tedi so I don’t need his permission.

Mr Acting Speaker, today it is a well-managed company declaring over K600 million in profit. That is what my fingers can do; making profits for the people of Papua New Guinea.

And not trying to control it behind the scenes in a sneaky way for self-interest, paying huge hundreds of millions of dollars of consultancy fees. I will now be putting a commission of inquiry so he can go and explain himself. In 1999, I was not on the Floor of Parliament so, Mr Acting Speaker, tell the honourable Member for Moresby North West, get your facts right. He is clouded by greed.

(Laughter- in - the-Chamber)

Mr PETER O’NEILL – Creating a job for himself after retirement. Shame on you!

(Members interjecting)

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Mr Acting Speaker, I will be establishing a commission of inquiry.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr Sekie Agisa – Point of Order! My question is; what is government doing about mitigation. Removing chemicals and mercury out of the river that is my question because PNGSDP has spent over K4 billion on mitigation in that river system. What is the government doing?

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, I am very interested to know where PNGSDP has spent that K4 billion that he is talking about. It is very interesting because certainly, they have achieved nothing after spending that much money. The river remains polluted. But, Mr Acting Speaker, I will get the managing director and the Chairman of Ok Tedi to write to the Member directly informing him of the actions they have taken over so far since taking over the mine on the mitigation issues and managing the waste from the Ok Tedi mine so that the Member can be satisfied.

The second issue is on the Reports of the pollution at Angabanga river systems. Mr Acting Speaker, I have not received that report that the Member is referring to but, as soon as I get a hold of it, we will table it in Parliament for public interest. Thank you.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance) – 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 suspended as would prevent Government Business Notice. 36, 37, 37 being called on forthwith.

12/06

VILLAGE COURT (AMMENDMENT) BILL 2017

First Reading

Bill presented by **Mr Davis Steven** and read a first time.

Second Reading

Leave granted to move the Second Reading forthwith.

Mr DAVIS STEVEN (Esa'ala – Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) – I move

–

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr Acting Speaker and honourable Members of this House, it is with pleasure that I inform Parliament of the decision of the Cabinet to introduce the *Village Courts (Amendment) Bill 2017* that seeks primarily to centralise the appointment and reallocation forces of the village court officials which makes it consistent with the centralisation of village Courts allowances now vested in the National Government.

Mr Acting Speaker, the purpose of introducing this Bill is to get Parliament to address and deal with the urgent need to control and monitor the appointment and reallocation process of village court officials at the local level.

Mr Acting Speaker, in 2014, the Parliament passed the Village Court Act 1989 which is now referred to as the *Village Court (Amendment) Act of 2014*. That Act is in force, however cannot be implemented at the present moment due to inconsistencies in the appointment and reallocation process. That now hinders and obstructs the effective management of this important Court system in our country today. That process by this amendment will now

returned to the village courts and land mediation secretariat in my department to monitor and asses.

Mr Acting Speaker, the *Village Courts (Amendment) Act 2014* vested powers to provincial administrators and the provincial senior magistrates to appoint and revoke village court officials in their respective areas and province. However experience now shows that when appointing village court officials, most appointments were not adhering to process and following procedures. The intention of this legislation is that the village court and land mediation secretariat an independent body will now be responsible for the appointment and reallocation of these officials this time onwards. .

Mr Acting Speaker, with great respect, it is our position in Government that this change is now necessary to ensure integrity and a culture of transparency and fairness in the appointment and reallocation process of the village court officials.

Mr Acting Speaker, with that, I now commend the *Village Court (Amendment) Bill 2017* to this House for its consideration.

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

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

Bill read a second time.

13/06

Third Reading

Leave granted to move the third reading forthwith.

Motion (by **Mr Davis Steven**) proposed –

That the Bill be now read a third time.

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

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

Bill read a third time.

SUMMARY OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill presented by **Mr Davis Steven** and read a first time.

Second Reading

Leave granted to move the second reading forthwith.

Mr DAVIS STEVEN (Esa'ala – Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) – I move

—
That the Bill be now read a second time.

Thankyou Mr Acting Speaker and Members of this honourable House. I am duty bound to introduce the Summary of Offences Amendment Bill 2017, which amends its *Summary Offences Act of 1977*. The Amendment seeks to strengthen part of the legislative reform intended to deter law and order problems experienced in all levels of our society.

Mr Acting Speaker, this Bill is designed to achieve three outcomes;

- (1) Is intended to increase the prescribed penalties under the *Act*,
- (2) To repeal and omit certain provisions or words and references that have become redundant in the old *Act*;
- (3) To increase the time limit of bringing a charge under the Summary of *Offences Act* against an offender.

14/06

Mr Acting Speaker, the Act was enacted in 1977 during the post-independence period. The penalties prescribed at that time were determined according to the socio-economic situation then. The penalty fees and the term of imprisonment that are currently being imposed are not supported by the country's contemporary socio-economic state of affairs. The prevailing circumstances have changed. The need for this amendment is therefore obvious.

The Act was last amended in 1993. It has penalties that range from as low as K10, K20, K50, and so on. As a result most cases that appear before the District Courts have been dismissed due to the very nature of the outdated penalties. Most offenders are released from

their charges with their bail monies refunded and they pay these penalties without any difficulties. This does not deter the offender from recommitting the same offence.

Mr Acting Speaker, the District Court Magistrates and Police have raised growing concerns of increased violence and disorderly behaviours of summary offences escalating into indictable offences. This has prompted the Department of Justice & Attorney General to carry out the appropriate course of legislative reform to amend the Act.

Mr Acting Speaker, the penalties of the Act are categorized into four (4) different levels ranging from trivial summary offences to very serious summary offences. Honourable Members, when you look at the explanation notes, you will find that these are the behaviour that affect our streets. It talks about graffiti, inciting trouble, carrying of offensive weapons in public places, and others.

The amendment provides for new minimum penalty to be a fine of K1000 and/or 3 months imprisonment. The maximum penalty to be a fine of K4000 fine and/or 2 years imprisonment. The time limitation of 'six months' will be repealed and replaced with 'one year' period. That is important because the current practice of bringing a charge against a person within six months is insufficient and does not allow ample time for the complainant to lay a complaint with the police to conduct investigations.

Mr Acting Speaker, the proposed penalties are more stringent and the prescribed time period is sufficient for police investigations. These changes to the Act that this honourable Parliament will hopefully pass will assist the District Courts and the Police to charge offenders accordingly and curb the increase crime rates in the country.

The amendment will re-enforce law and order in the country, restore police confidence, deter offenders and encourage the general public to formally lay their complaints to the relevant law enforcement authorities who will respond accordingly.

Mr Acting Speaker, the amendment will ensure that the work and decisions of the law enforcement agencies do not infringe on the basic rights or freedoms of citizens in accordance with the *Constitution*. However, it will promote and encourage access to justice where justice must not only be done but seem to be done.

Mr Acting Speaker, I commend the Bill to Parliament.

Mr NICK KUMAN (Gumine – Minister for Education) – Mr Acting Speaker, last week we had a very good report from the Minister for Religion, Youth and Community Development.

15/06

I debated on a couple of issues but I want to reiterate my position on our responsibility as a government and our responsibility to our people in this nation insofar as managing the welfare of our society.

I was particularly critical of the manner in which sorcery related issues have been managed and I said with specific issues in relation to the criminality that involves sorcery or 'sanguma' or black power and the same issue is accompanied by gender based violence.

We have evidence and time and again we have seen gender violence problems in this country hit the front page in the print media, electronic media and social media and a host of other problems that suggest that we have serious problems in our society.

Not only those but the petty crimes that continue to be committed in our main cities and towns and the continuous tribal warfare right throughout this country, and particularly in areas hosting huge projects that this country depend upon.

Not only that, about nine months ago we completed the General Elections in 2017. I can tell you that in my own province I've experienced the gun rules of election in 2017. It is a serious problem.

Only last week the former Commander of the Defence Force came out on the report that was commissioned in 2005 with recommendations ways forward on how we can manage the guns on the streets of this country.

Mr Acting Speaker, the law is a deterrent. We have our policemen and women in this country, we have our court system in this country to effectively manage the petty crimes and the sorcery related crimes and the gender based violence that we are continuously face on a regular basis. And petty crimes are only experienced in the main cities. It's like an everyday nightmare for our citizens who are living in our main cities and towns of this country.

In everything they do, one is simply to make ends meet from the petty crimes but serious crimes like break and enter, carjacking, holdups, and bank robberies are all related to crimes that are perpetrated by people that own guns or are living with guns in their bedrooms.

So, what do we do as a government? What do we do as a government is a serious question and I thank the Minister for this report since he took up the ministry I think he has done a lot more work on the laws that we have in this country. He has been in the office for only nine months but I have seen some really good work that comes out from the ministry.

This is one of those things that come out and I want to see that the penalties that are being proposed now are at the top level. And I want to see that those penalties must be enforced by our justice system in the country. And that will become a deterrent.

If a policemen can continuously stand up and bash the law breaking members of the society than you will see that the law and order problems in that city or town will go down. Then you will see that we will have some normalcy in our country.

16/06

If we don't do that than there's only one way. One person is found to break the law, the policemen and the informant must take that person to the law to be prosecuted and dealt with by the law. Unless the penalties are a deterrent and the proposed law is now increasing on penalties of all the summary offences that has been committed in this country, then I think it's a deterrent that we all have to work together.

Mr Acting Speaker, my discussion this morning is very much on the debate that hit the print media last week and also the electronic media.

The gun issue has compounded since the Government has embarked on the strategy on gun and violence, and this Government will have to continue making sure that it takes control of all the gun issues in this country. There is overwhelming evidence to show that majority of the crimes in the last 15 years has escalated by the use of illegal guns for tribal fights, robberies, break and enters and murders. These are punishable by law and people who are in possession of those illegal guns must be punished.

The Somare Government in 2005 commissioned a report, led by the former Commander of PNG Defence Force, Mr Jerry Singirok under the Parliamentary Committee chaired by the former Member for Goroka, Mr Bire Kimisopa. The Committee travelled right throughout the country and came back with a report now called, Kimisopa Report. That report made series of recommendations and has not been implemented since 2005, collecting dust somewhere.

As leaders of this beautiful country, we have a responsibility to our people. That report is a very important report. If you look at it seriously, that report is not about legalising the ownership of gun, it is about disarming of people from owning a gun. The legislation that has been tabled is about increasing penalties so whoever that possess guns in this country must start surrendering their guns to the police. If the Opposition leader has guns, he must surrender them to the police. I also have a licence gun but if I have an unlicensed gun, I have a responsibility as a –

Mr Patrick Pruaitch – Point of Order! The Minister can debate if there is an amendment to the *Firearms Act*. This must be restricted only to the *Summary Offences Act*. Thank you Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr NICK KUMAN – We are talking about gun. If you are carrying gun illegally on the street, you have no right. In the *Post Courier* report last week, a man in the picture was directing others running and armed with guns during the fight in Tari town. The leader was telling his people to go and die and every single men in the photo had a gun in his hands. What do you do as a leader? Will you just let them go and kill themselves followed by compensation and properties destroyed? What else do you do as a leader? We must impose high penalties. These are deterrent to the people because they that when they are arrested by the police, they must go straight to prison. Don't play around.

17/06

I know that when I am caught with a gun I have to be taken to the cells. That is how we ensure that we stop people. W in the highlands carry guns and five –ninety. Do you know what five-ninety is? This is the bush knife.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

Mr NICK KUMAN – Carrying these weapons is a norm but this has to stop because as leaders we are responsible towards the wellbeing and safety of the people in our country. We must stop this mentality, if you own a gun and you know it is illegal hand it over to the authorities. That is the reason why as a good government we have a responsibility to our people and we have to make sure that all forms of law and order issues must stop. It requires collective effort of all of us here in Parliament. We must have a bi-partisan approach to all these things, so that we reduce petty crimes, gender violence, sorcery related crimes and other forms of violence. It is only through introducing tougher penalties. I want to reiterate here that we should not discretionary powers to the courts. Apply the minimum penalty so that those who are caught breaking the laws, they must be apprehended and locked up.

I am happy with the Prime Minister's move to stop (LOA) Leave of Absence for prisoners. For them to leave the prison precincts, come out and do normal business and return is not good enough. We are allowing criminals to come out to the society and return back to prison again is not ok. Those who are meant to be behind bars have to remain behind bars. We

have a responsibility towards our people. We do not know what they may do when they are out of Bomana. And I commend the Minister for a job well done and I fully support what he is doing.

Mr ALLAN BIRD (East Sepik) – I would like to join the debate and would like to commend the Minister. I think the changes that are being brought before the House now are very long overdue and I am happy to see that we have finally brought these issues before the House. I want to say that the Minister has my full support, and one of the things that I have realised in our society in recent times is that there has been a complete loss of confidence by our people in towards our systems.

Mr Acting Speaker, I think they have lost confidence in our government systems, systems of administration. Whether it be to do with land or any other thing. They have lost confidence in our ability to provide services and they have lost confidence and trust in our police force and our judicial system.

18/06

They have lost confidence in our Judicial system and all of these things are working together to undermine our ability to provide services and to drive development in all of our respective districts and provinces.

Mr Acting Speaker, when you try to bring some of these disciplinary actions by increasing the measures of deterrence that is when you begin to have an impact on society. Many of our people, and I have even heard this from the foreigners that operate in our province, they say our Government is powerless, our systems are powerless. That is the reason why, they can build buildings to any standard they like because they feel that we will not have the powers to respond as a government and poor systems are not able to respond. They know this so they take advantage of it.

Mr Acting Speaker, for us as people, it starts with our lack of discipline. Young children are already making their own alcoholic drinks, when they are supposed to be in school. You find them drinking and having parties. This is a sign of people who don't have any hope over the distant future for themselves and the children are demonstrating that, unfortunately.

I am very happy to see that in parts 4 and five, it is dealing with drunkards. I see the penalty fee increases there and I am very happy.

Number 12, about carrying offensive weapons, Mr Acting Speaker, in East Sepik, young men have now resolved to carrying bush knives and grass knives in their trousers, as

almost an accessory. If you check our hospital records, you will find that more than 50 per cent of the cases presented at Boram Hospital are due to drinking and the majority of them are injuries caused by bush knives and grass knives. I am happy that there is a proposal to increase the fine to K4000.

I note that section 19, talks about loitering, and I hope we will give more powers to the police to enforce this. Or at least to make them aware that they have the power to enforce it. I think that is an important amendment there.

Section 29 and 31, deals with missiles and firearms, but particularly 31. Mr Acting Speaker, my people are very innovative people, we smuggle firearms from Indonesia amongst other things into the province and every Christmas and New Year, the most colourful fireworks in the country is displayed in East and West Sepik. But lately, we have become more creative. In December, there was a fight amongst our youth and our weapons of choice were fire crackers. They light the fire crackers, point it at each other and let it go off. I am happy to see its fine now increase up to K3000.

Burning of rubbish, I'm not sure if it is just East Sepik, but even the town council is guilty of this. They cut the grass and set fire to it, right there in public. We are making fires in town all over the place. I am happy to see that the fine has increased to K1000.

Mr Acting Speaker, as I said earlier, this is long overdue. One of the things, I would like to suggest is, could the Minister for Justice, institute reviews at a regular interval. Don't just leave it up to chance and when the issues of society begin to weigh heavy on us, then we decide to do the reviews. I think the reviews need to be regular, for every five years and then you bring these changes to Parliament, let us not wait for 20 years.

Finally, Mr Acting Speaker, one of the most important reasons we are elected to the House is to make legislative changes that are beneficial to our people. Sometimes, I get disappointed because we seem to be here talking about how to deliver cargo to our people. We are talking about schools, bridges, and roads, all of which are very important, but fundamentally, our people need to have confidence in the system. They need to have confidence that if a person commits a crime, he shall be punished and the punishment needs to come swiftly and it needs to be commensurate to the crime that is committed.

19/06

These are important things for all our systems of Government. Now that the first step has been taken by the Minister for Justice and Attorney, I hope the Police will start to educate our people once this law has been signed by the Governor-General. I hope that the Police will

start to enforce it so that we can go further and all of our magistrates and all of the people that are responsible for dispensing justice to our society will begin to lift their game so that all our people can have the confidence that you will not be rewarded for doing the wrong thing, that Parliament is finally standing up and is going to make sure that this country is conducive for good people to do business.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr POWES PARKOP (National Capital District) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for giving me the chance to contribute in this debate.

I do not have much to say but I want to say thank you to the Minister for Justice and Attorney for bringing the amendments to the *Summary Offences Act* and I support him. It is important that we review it all the time so when the law is not proper or needs improvement or especially where we have to increase the penalty to serve as a deterrent, we must do it and Parliament must take the lead.

The Governor of East Sepik and the Minister for Education have mentioned a lot of good points but I have only two points to add on.

Firstly, drinking in public areas should be amended in the Constitution where it says that we can only detain a person and charge him but we must make some acceptance on drunkards. It is a waste of time to charge them and send them to Bomana. And then because it is a waste of time we do not arrest them, they decide to go and cause more problems like what the Governor of East Sepik just said.

So, a best solution is to arrest them and detain them until they sober up and then we can release them instead of wasting time by sending them to Court, then prison and we feed them because of a minor offence which causes a big problem.

I think in other countries they lock them up until they sober up and then they let them go. But, for us we have to process them all the way to prison and the magistrate or prosecutors are given more tasks and they forget about these law offenders.

Mr Acting Speaker, the biggest problem we have is the enforcement although we have many good laws that we have passed in the past and exist today. Even for us in the city we have good laws on physical planning, building board, liquor licensing, littering and et cetera but we do not enforce it and we do not have the capacity to enforce it and the police too is not helping us enforce it.

So, when this little offenders get away with it they think that they are unstoppable and they keep on breaking the same laws and when it becomes difficult for us to contain things

then it becomes a very expensive exercise to go after them, arrest them, detain them, charge them. And then go to court and dispense justice upon them to go to jail.

So if we start doing the enforcement right then this small-time perpetrators won't act and think like Rambo and be gang leaders or criminals.

So, in Port Moresby I want the police to be visible at the bus stops or shopping centres or market to stop petty criminals or wannabe perpetrators of crime.

20/06

They are human beings and they plan their moves on how they will escape before they engage themselves in these illegal activities such as holdups in shops and cars and pick-pocketing et cetera. These perpetrators start small before they engage themselves in big crimes. But if there are police personnel present than they might get scared and won't carry out their crime activities.

So it's good that we passed this law and I am glad that the Minister for Justice and Attorney General has increased the penalties on summary offences. And it's a very important bill and we have to deal with summary offences first and then later consider criminal offences. We must deal with minor offences first because this small minor offenders will become big time criminals.

As a matter of prevention and deterrence we deal with it to give enough time for the courts and police to deal with petty criminals and in that way we contain it and make the summary offences work. That's my second point and I don't want to elaborate on it further because much have been said already by my colleague members.

And my third point is in relation to our culture, behaviour and attitude of our people in different levels of societies. Here in PNG we are known for using violence as a first instances of dispute settlement. For instances some of the violence are; adult children argue with parents for something and not long start fighting with them to get what they want, or even in games such as rugby league the losing team starts to fight with the winning team because they don't want to be considered as losers and likewise to gambling, drinking beer and too unemployed youths blame the elected members for not being employed and et cetera.

It's very sad to see that the mindset of most of our people is fixed on violence and they use their force to gain something against other people. We seriously need to change our culture, behaviour and attitude of our people.

Here we can pass laws but if we don't change the behaviour and attitude of our people then we will still have these problems. That's why here in the city we are starting to invest in

behaviour change. Our police personnel here in the city is still at 800 men and women. The Prime Minister mentioned the ratio set by the United Nations is that 1 policeman is to 400 men and women. And when will this happen?

In the Government caucus Governor Peter Ipatas and I mentioned many times that if it doesn't work out well then why not engage the police personnel from Australia or if not for whatever reason engage the Singaporean police or even China for that matter.

I don't care whether you are Acting Speaker, Prime Minister or Minister for Police. Our people here are in dire need of security and we cannot compromise security.

I waited long enough and nothing has happened so I have decided to engage private security guards to assist our police personnel to build up reserve police capacity. And also invested in behaviour change and assisting in scholarship and urban youth employment program in trying to reach out and curb this culture of violence in the community.

But we have to start somewhere and it's good to see the Minister starting it by introducing new laws and with that I appeal to the Minister for Police to do his part and even Prime Minister please find some solutions to engage more police men and women quickly.

I am ever ready to welcome them from wherever to come and support our police personnel here and I am sure they will understand.

That's the only three points I wanted to contribute to this very important debate. Thankyou.

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

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

Bill read a second time.

21/06

Third Reading

Leave granted to move the third reading forthwith.

Motion (by **Mr Davis Steven**) proposed –

That the Bill be now read a third time.

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

The Bill requiring an absolute majority of 56 members as required by the *Constitution*, Mr Acting Speaker ordered that the Bells be rung.

22/06

The Parliament voted (the Acting Speaker, **Mr Pesab Jeffery Komal** in the Chair) –

AYES – 67

NOES – 0

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

Bill read a third time.

FIREARMS (MENDMENT) BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill presented by **Mr Jelta Wong** and read a first time.

Second Reading

Leave granted to move the second reading forthwith.

Mr JELTA WONG (Kokopo – Minister for Police) – I move –

That the Bill be now read a second time.

23/06

It gives me great pleasure to table before this House the *Firearms (Amendment) Bill 2018*.

Mr Acting Speaker after almost 43 years of independence, the appropriateness of many laws and practices stand to be reviewed and tested under current circumstances. *The Firearms Act (Chapter 130)* is one such piece of legislation that has undergone review and amendment. Cabinet through NEC Decision 42 of 2018 approved a submission I made to review and make amendments to the prescribed penalties for offences committed under the *Firearms Act (Chapter No. 310)*. The same decision directed for the First Legislative Counsel to draft the amendments.

Mr Acting Speaker, amendments to the *Firearms Act (Chapter No 310)* have been done, and together with the Certificate of Compliance issued by the First Legislative Counsel, the National Executive Council approved for tabling of the *Firearms (Amendment) Bill 2018* in this session of Parliament.

Mr Acting Speaker the *Firearms Act (Chapter No. 310)* was enacted to regulate and control the licensing and use of firearms. Firearms include machine guns, rifles of any kind, guns, pistols and high-powered firearms.

The Act provides that a person cannot own a firearm or carry or use a firearm unless he/she is the holder of a firearm license. The *Act* also restricts the use of certain firearms.

Mr Acting Speaker, penalties for offences are also prescribed in the *Act*. Prescribed punitive measures in law under any jurisdiction are designed to deter people from committing offences. However, in this case, the escalation of law and order problems across the country indicates ineffectiveness of the prescribed penalties for offences committed against the *Firearms Act (Chapter 130)*. The primary cause of law and order problems is in one way or another, directly or indirectly motivated and triggered by the presence and use of licensed and unlicensed firearms.

Mr Acting Speaker, fast changing social, economic and political landscape coupled with the influence of information technology has aided the rise in serious and organised crimes in the country. Prescribed penalties designed to deter perpetrators 40 years aren't appropriate under the changing circumstances. Thus, the need for review and amendment to the penalty clause for crimes committed against the *Firearms Act*.

There is overwhelming general consensus among Papua New Guineans that prescribed penalties for offences committed under the *Firearms Act (Chapter 130)* are very shallow and is of no effect with offenders getting away with little or no remorse. Penalties imposed should deter offenders to shun committing offences.

In jurisdictions like Japan, Singapore and a few others, it is practically impossible to obtain and own firearms, let alone the discharge and shooting. The penalty in Singapore is death for possession.

Mr Acting Speaker, the rise in crime and social disorders are inevitable by-products of change and development, hence must be mitigated, managed and impacts cushioned. It is important, gaps are recognized and interventions such as this through reviews and amendments designed to improve effectiveness.

24/06

Mr Deputy Speaker, the proliferation of illegal firearm, ammunitions and increased production of homemade guns poses threat to national security. The smuggling of factory made firearms into the country makes it incredibly difficult for the Police Department as the regulator to take stock and control availability and locations of the firearms.

Across the country in many communities the use of illegal firearms has displaced hundreds and thousands of people homeless, entire villages razed down to nothing, businesses closed, and women and children traumatized. Use of firearms in tribal fights result in atrocious massacres.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the *Firearms Act (Chapter 130)* was intended to deter perpetrators but it has over time lost its purpose. Its ineffectiveness provides leeway for perpetrators to indulge in crime of all kinds. The Firearms (Amendment) Bill 2018 is intended to restore noble intention of the Firearms Act (Chapter 130) and that is to deter perpetrators.

Mr Deputy Speaker, having said that I take this moment to commend my department and other stakeholders especially the Department of Prime Minister & NEC who have contributed in one way or another in the preparatory work culminating to drafting of this Bill. I now call upon all Honourable Members of this House to support the Firearms (Amendment) 2018 Bill.

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance) – Mr Deputy Speaker, let me firstly commend the Minister for coming up with this important Bill before the House. The firearm in my view is a very dangerous item in societies. I know as I speak, the Members of our own Government caucus as well as the Opposition may have different views as far as firearms are concerned. But let me speak to the House as the Member from a constituent that

is currently facing serious law and order issues as a result of guns in the hands of both the police and the hands of citizens.

A gun is a weapon to kill whether it is in self-defence, or recreational purposes. The ultimate result of having a gun is you either kill an animal for game sake or kill or injure someone in an intended manner. I am an advocate for complete ban on firearms in our country. I am taking the cue from the amendment that are before us. And as we journey into the future of our country as legislators and policy makers; I wish to place on record in the Hansard as the Member for Tari Pori, my view and advocacy for our nation to completely eradicate guns. To take guns away from our citizens, including our disciplinary forces. I ask this honest question; I may be directing the question to the Police Minister who is proposing the legislation. Guns without ammunitions are often useless. And in my electorate today there is continuous outbursts of guns with bullets. Outbursts means the bullets are all exhausted but the same persons has enough supply of bullets in the afternoon to give another round of outburst.

25/06

Mr Acting Speaker, I think it is about time we look and we phase out and ensure that total presence of gun, whether in the hands of disciplinary forces or owned by civilians, is totally outlawed.

I recommend to the Police Minister and I know I can speak in the confines of Cabinet but for public record, so it is recorded in the *Hansard*, it is about time that we take stock of the whole Police Armoury, Defence Armoury and CS Armoury on the stock of guns and ammunitions we have. There seems to be a consistent supply and I live in the fringes of our border country and whilst there are indications of people travelling back and forth and there's assumptions of exchange of marijuana for guns and bullets. They are not doing that in loads of hundreds or thousands, maybe one or two happenings.

On record, Mr Acting Speaker, I don't have numbers to confirm this. But, speaking from the experience in electorate, every afternoon, there is a new supply of machine guns, bullets and semi-automatic rifles which are used in tribal warfare.

Mr Acting Speaker, if our nation does not rise up to make serious a call on this gun issue, the cost of delivering service in this country will escalate. Law and order has a direct cause on goods and services in this country, it must also be seen in this context. The cost of every security guard we put on the streets to guard the shop, to guard the airports, to guard every point in this country is directly passed back to the individual buyer of goods and services. Whether its security guards in the hotels, security guards, manning contractors who build roads, manning sport fields, the cost of that security guard is

passed back to the individual spender of money who buys goods and services. The use of firearm is a major source of law and order concern.

Mr Acting Speaker, whilst supporting the Minister in ensuring that we make a turn in the right direction in increasing penalties for those who commit offences using firearms, I think in this term, the journey must be complete, in terms of us deciding whether we need guns or not. I do not think Police Officer in a normal daily operation needs a M16 firearm to be at his side all the time. We don't need M16 in Port Moresby right now. Unless there is a heavy exchange then you can go to your Police Armoury and take it out. All guns in Military, Police and CIS must be properly registered, kept and accounted for and locked up. Police right now should be using weapons that are friendly to the people, and on need basis only. They should use weapons that are required for that particular circumstance or particular operation.

I am making this comment in light of the experience I have in my own electorate. Seeing the high prevalence of guns in a society that is destroying our district that has a great potential for advancement. Guns cause destruction in our society.

Mr Acting Speaker, some of us have licensed firearms, I don't carry one, and I don't own a licenced fire arm and I don't intend to carry one. I tell my people, you can shoot me.

Last time, unarmed, I visited the *Haus Krai* of the councillor who was murdered in my own town.

26/06

I told them of the consciences of using a gun and I have been speaking to them for the last ten years.

So, Mr Acting Speaker, there is evidence now that people carrying licensed arms are the carriers of ammunitions into various parts of the country. The intelligence now is pointing that security force members are carry of ammunitions into battle grounds and are the possible suppliers.

If we are serious about the issue of guns, us we either have complete ban on firearms in this country. If there is evidence of use of guns or sounds of gunshots in a particular village or area, police can investigate and impose the penalties.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am pointing this out to our consciences today as leaders to make a call to increase penalties or impose a complete ban of guns in our country. If someone owns a gun in our society then we will deal with that person later. But, as a blanket ban, I am sure many of us have our own view in this discussion there is emerging evidence that guns amongst us can cause destruction and havoc. Some indication that I am receiving from my own electorate is that those who carry guns in the society are HIV Positive.

They know they are already HIV Positive and have five or six years to live so it is bordering on local terrorism here. They have five years to live so they shoot to kill and enjoy the money from the sponsors of those criminal activities.

Mr Acting Speaker, the issue is before the entire country and this epidemic is spreading as far as the use of firearms is concerned and I think we need to support the Minister for Police, in making the right turn but I am putting into public conversation the need for us as a nation to one day discuss whether we put a complete ban to firearms. And we ensure that our police, army, CS and security guard armoury and those who have licenses are totally accountable in the manner in which they purchase bullets or firearms and the manner in which they keep them.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like the Minister for Police to also look at if we are to go down this path of having a dual system to ban illegal arms and allow for legal firearms but maintain penalties for those who legally own firearms and are reckless. But for now let me commend the Minister for Police for bringing in a timely amendment.

I do not intend to speak for the Governor but my province will fully embrace this law and we rally the support of the Government to ensure that this law is fully implemented.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

27/06

Mr PILA NININGI (Imbonggu – Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and technology) – Mr Acting Speaker I thank you for recognising me to contribute to this good bill introduced by the Minister for Police.

One point that I want to elaborate on is for us to implement tougher laws and it is either you take it left or take it right. If we want to stop guns then we have to use money to buy guns and that's a reality. People spend K40 000, K50 000 or even K80 000 just to buy back the guns and they won't give it to us easily.

So Government has to be prepared to buy guns and if we don't buy guns back then we should issue them with licenses and everybody can buy guns like buying a tin fish. You can laugh at it but it's a serious matter. For example, if he has a gun then the people will be scared to go to his house. I think we must seriously consider giving licences to everybody to have a gun.

From practical experience up in the Highlands if one village has guns and one doesn't have a gun they simply surrender in any conflicts but if they also have gun then they will try to defend it.

It's better for us to issue licences to people who have illegal guns but if we tell them to surrender their illegal guns for free then they won't bring it in. But if they register their guns then in any situation like tribal fights the police would know who actually owns a gun and the police can intervene quickly to stop them from using their guns.

One of the best option available is for us to buy those illegal guns or support them to register their guns. Thankyou.

Mr MICHAEL NALI (Mendi – Minister for Works and Implementation) – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker, looks like we members of Hela and Southern Highlands are taking the lead in this debate.

Mr Acting Speaker, firstly, I commend the Minister for Police for introducing a good bill.

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Mr Acting Speaker, it seems the Hela Province and the Southern Highlands leaders are taking the lead in this debate. Firstly, I would like to commend the Minister for Police for the Bill he has brought before Parliament.

Mr Acting Speaker, with regard to this gun issue, I personally think that there is no point in keeping guns. Let us ban guns. What is a gun? I do not need a gun. I have two licenced firearms but listen here, if you go to JD Industries where they buy bullets, you will not find a record entering that shop. This means that I have bought a single bullet. For about 10 years or so I have not spent a kina to buy bullets because I do not have a need to buy bullets.

Mr Acting Speaker, when there are problems back home, it is the people with gun licenses that buy bullets and send home. We have Police personnel, Defence Force personnel and CS personnel sending bullets home to their people. Who else do we expect to be doing this? Obviously it cannot be aliens or people from elsewhere. If you talk about leaving behind a beautiful Papua New Guinea then we have to stop guns. Let us get tough with the penalties and raise it to higher levels. Let us raise the penalties for home brew and marijuana as well.

Mr Acting Speaker, this amendment is good because this is so that if police catch you with an illegal firearm or illegal ammunition then you must be severely penalised. I see no reason why we should keep guns in this country. I would like to support the Leader of Government Business that our police do not need to carry very high-powered weapons. A sidearm or a mace spray is good enough.

Mr Acting Speaker, we have some very big issues in this country but we are all taking them for granted. Look at our youths, this is another time-bomb waiting to explode. We have to look into how we are recruiting our young police personnel. As it is we are recruiting young police men and women from the streets. These people are not qualified to become police personnel. They grew up on the streets and have a lot of street mentality which is going to be a problem for us when they get out of Bomana Police College.

Mr Acting Speaker, tribal fighting is an industry of its own. The gun man is entitled to very young ladies as payment for his duties. He is highly paid with pigs and a lot of money. Why should he put his life in danger for nothing?

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We had a big fight in Mendi Town when the Mendi River flooded, and the people when to fight at Mendi High School area and when the other clans chased them, how many drown in Mendi River. And when they collected the dead bodies at Kiburu, it was discovered that it wasn't Mendi people only who drowned. There were bodies of people from Eastern Highlands, Chimbu and even Western Highlands. So it is an industry.

So, Mr Acting Speaker, I am happy with the bill that is brought here by the government but I wished to say that my major point of contention, and I want us leaders to support my view is, let's do away with guns. We don't need them.

Then we can talk about issues relating to machetes, bows and arrows and spears. In the past when our ancestors wished to defend themselves they used bows and arrows. With bows and arrows it is akin to them going to play football at the kaukau garden and come back. If they are wounded with spears then those who receive life threatening injuries may die.

Mr Acting Speaker, as we move around in the streets of Port Moresby, if somebody comes and threatens you with a gun to get your car keys, let the car keys go. There is no point in thinking that this guy is going to play marbles with you.

Guns are plentiful in this city and it is the same with Lae City. This country is full of illegal firearms. You assume that there are more licenced guns than illegal ones, let me tell you, there are more illegal firearms than the licenced firearms.

My call is, let's please, do away with guns, thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker I would like to say a few words, join my colleagues and commend the Minister for police.

Prime Minister, you have made a wise decisions in terms of your appointment of ministries this term I can say, with the exception of a few.

The Minister for Police has been a very active Minister along with the Minister for Justice, the Attorney-General. And it's commendable to see them hard at work and presenting bills like this which we will all support.

My comments with regard to this particular bill in regard to the issue of firearms, firstly, let's understand that guns don't kill people. People kill people. So, let's take note of this and as we debate and or as we make our points, we must remember that we all come from different aspects of the debates that we present here.

I actually agree with my colleagues that we should ban guns. But that should be a protracted effort that we arrive at over a period of time after we can guarantee the safety of our people, after we put in place necessary measures to ensure that our people in the most remote areas are protected against violent criminals.

We received reports some months ago of violence in some of the remote parts of our province where a father had to protect his children. He had four daughters and two sons and was able to do so because he had a firearm.

There was a gang of criminals moving through that area, raping and killing and doing as they please but they didn't touch him and his children because that firearm was a deterrent. He is not using his firearm to commit crimes but he is using it to protect his family because there is no police presence in there.

The ratio of policemen to citizens, as raised here in another debate by, I believe it was the Governor of NCD- United Nations recommend that it should be one to 400. In Papua New Guinea it is one to 1200. And in my province its one to 2100 and I think it's the same in some other provinces or perhaps it may be even worse.

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I think it's the same in some other province where perhaps even worse. You then have to take into consideration the border mechanisms. We have a 760 kilometres forest border with Indonesia and West Papua. The guns and all contrabands are crossing that border as we speak. You can purchase a SKS, a version of AK47 made in China for less than K200 across the border, for instance, including ammunitions. Not to mention the fact that guns are also streaming out of the discipline forces.

After the Bougainville crisis, there were M16s on sale for less than K3000 and they came from our Defence Forces, Police armouries et cetera.

I think the problem that we faced with the fire arms has to be approached with a long term, medium term, and short term strategy. The long term is, yes, we must ban firearms totally. So how do we come to that goal? Process of education, creating opportunity, enforcing the many laws we have that we don't enforce. Improving our police to the citizen ratio. Ensuring that there are police presence in all areas. Giving comfort to citizens that they are protected. These are some of the considerations that we must make.

Crime will always be part of our life, that's reality. And as long as there is crime there, there will be criminals. And criminals fall into various categories including those who use violence and intimidation, threat et cetera. They will continue to use their firearms.

Let's say, for instance, today we ban all firearms, allow all the legitimate licence holders come and surrender their firearms. Will the criminal elements surrender their firearms? No they won't, you would be giving them immediate advantage.

We have to look at all the situations and mechanisms that exist and put in place laws and policies for short term, medium term and long term. We want to arrive at a point where we don't need guns in the society and even the discipline forces don't need to carry firearms any more. Look at nations like Fiji where they don't carry firearms but they are heavily militarised nation where their police don't have firearms. But again, Fiji is a very small mon- ethnic culture in comparison to Papua New Guinea. Almost 20 different nations cramped into an island, each with their own different way of cultures and way of thinking, some are more aggressive in protecting their land and resources, etcetera.

The clans and tribes in our remote areas where they may be amassing or stocking arms, they may not be doing it for committing crimes but most times they do it to protect themselves and the land they have against attack by whoever.

Let's not call all of them criminals because how do we give them the assurance that their land and resources will be protected? Just some thoughts in regard to the gun debate but I don't think we should sweep this under the carpet. I do agree that it must be continuously, constantly and consistently spoken of and debated. New laws like this must keep coming in, we must travel places where there are firearms, Switzerland for instance. Eight million people but they have three million firearms out there and yet they have the lowest record of gun cases and shootings and so forth. Why is that, is it attitude? Is it education? So these are considerations that all of us need to make; both sides of the House, perhaps putting together a Committee that can consider this strategy rather than talking about them all the time and passing once in a while laws like this. How do we arrive at a point where we no longer have a need for firearms, where people don't need to go and get licence firearms?

My colleague Minister for Works highlighted that he has two firearms.

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And am sure that if he needed to he would have to use them to protect himself and his family. Many of us here have firearms but that does not make us to be criminals, we are just concerned for our safety. In 2012 immediately after elections, Oro province was quite a rough place and just across where I lived, there was a small compound where three women and 15 children were attacked by criminals.

It was at night and my brother and I had to intervene and we did this is because we had firearms. There was no police presence but they would have suffered some serious injuries or worse. So all of these has to be taken into consideration and I believe the effort is that we put together a committee that should continue to recur. No matter who is here, we must continue to maintain this committee and have a long term strategy as to how to come to a point where we do not need firearms in our society anymore.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we need to address those issues such as ensuring that a police man to 6 or ten ratio is enough to give our people assurance that they are protected. They are able to protect themselves because of police presence. That we have a thorough board of management system in place that we ensure that the laws that we have are actually enforced. Those are my views and I believe this committee is outstanding. There are a lot of very capable leaders here who would like to be part of this committee.

We have persons such as Jerry Singirok and Bire Kimisopa who participated in previous committees of this kind. Someone from the churches, and someone from countries where they do not have guns. Consider their views and come up with necessary policies to start up a road map as to how we get from here to there. What are the steps we need to take to get there? Thank you Minister and I look forward to other bills that you bring before this Parliament.

Dr FABIAN POK (North Waghi – Minister for Petroleum and Energy) – Thank you I want to join in this debate and wish to thank the Minister for Police for bring this most important bill. We must also thank the Prime Minister and his Government because we are now seeing that there are bills concerning our security which will be made laws to protect us.

When you look into the bill, the penalties are very hush and for the first time these penalties on guns have been heightened. Because now the government can see the problems that this country is facing. What do we do, when we talk about illegal and legal guns? But the law covers both legal and illegal guns. The next thing is once you pass the law we all have to

stand up for what we have passed. We have to make awareness in our homes communities, so that those who are holding onto firearms are made aware of the penalties and amendments to the laws. If we do not do it we are lying to ourselves, all this will be just talk and no action. We are the leaders in the communities that we represent, when we pass these laws we have to discuss with the judiciary and other stake holders to make sure these laws when passed must be enforced effectively. Once it is enforced it will deter a lot of people from doing the illegal things that they are doing. No one wants to be imprisoned for 5-10 years. That is very hush but this is to control this problem

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Nobody wants to be imprisoned for five to ten years and that is what the law says and that is very harsh. But, to stop this problem that we are facing today, when we talk about illegal arms, we cannot solve the issue of illegal arms. But we as leaders must work with Police, with the Judges and Magistrates to make sure that those who illegally use firearms or are in possession of firearms which breaches this law must be dealt with. If we can do that, we will solve the problems affecting our community. Yet, when we see people in possession of firearms whether legally or illegally harassing other people we tend to ignore them. Then we are not helping our community, this is all just talk. The most important thing is because, the Government has noticed the severity of this issue escalating therefore the penalties are very harsh. The most important thing is for us as leaders and for community leaders to work with the Police to make sure that those who are in possession of illegal firearms, manufacturing illegal firearm, and those using legal fire arm to harass and threaten others; these individuals when taken to Court, must face the full penalty of the law. Maybe when they feel the full force of the law, I think it will deter many others from committing the same crime. When we pass the laws, we all shut our eyes, the community, the police and the Judge and Magistrate, instead of imposing the maximum penalty they impose the minimum penalty making a laughing stock out of everything. The Government is serious, that is why the Police Minister has introduced the Bill that will become law and it has some of the most severe penalties that has ever happened in the last 40 years since Independence. Let us work together. We can do away with guns, but how are we going to do away with illegal guns, it is impossible. So the law itself is made to deter both legal and illegal guns from being misused and abused. So let us work together with the community, with the Police, with the magistrates and judges to ensure that we eradicate this problem through the use of severe penalties that is now before us in this Bill.

Mr LEKWA GURE (Rigo) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for the opportunity to contribute towards the debate on guns. Firstly, I lend my support to the Police Minister for bringing this Bill which is pointing the conversation in the right direction in as far as guns are concerned. Let us look at some examples worldwide. In the United States, the Constitution gives the citizens of the country to bear arms. We see in the media what has happened. There are cases of mass killings on a regular basis and other gun related violence in the US. In contrast, we see in Australia, where appropriate legislation was brought in by the Howard Government which drastically reduced those sort of mass killings in Australia. Many people, when it comes to discussing gun-related violence, they quote Australia as an example. I am not suggesting that PNG take that path, but, when we are issuing licenses, one of the issues in this gun debate is the issue of licensing, where thorough background checks must be made before gun licences are issued to the people.

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There must be also sufficient cooling-off period when the applications are filed to make sure that the guns is not purchased for other purposes apart from owning a gun for whatever reason.

At this point in time in PNG social environment, I do not think we can ban guns all together because it is irresponsible in some ways. Let me make a bold statement; I believe that it is necessary for some sectors of the community or people within our community to own guns, and those people have become successful in their own rights, whether in business or in other areas and, therefore, it is necessary for them to own guns for their own protection whether they individually own the guns or the people who mind them.

If we were to completely ban guns we would be playing into the hands of the criminals and therefore the suggestion by the Governor of Northern is the right one that we must do this on a short term solution, medium term solution and long term solution to arrive at that point in the PRR history where we do not need guns.

But, I still believe that banning guns all together is not the right way to go, it will always be necessary for the members of the Defence Force, Police, Army and CIS to own guns as a deterrent. Even if we were to ban guns for all the normal citizens, it will always be necessary for the armed Forces to own guns.

And then we need to seriously look at issues that are raised by other speakers like the sources of illegal guns and where they are coming from? They are coming from across the border and they can be also the same sources for the bullets that are coming over. So, those are the

areas that we need to tighten down as a short term solution straight away. Those are some of the issues that we must consider when we are addressing this gun issue. But for now I personally don't think that we should ban guns that must become a long term solution as we are going down this path in this conversation.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Health) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Like all of you I would like to support the Minister for Police for bringing this very important bill and I thank the Chairman of Cabinet, our Prime Minister, and the other Minister of State that have provided strong support to this serious issue and the amendments.

Mr Minister, you are a young man and you have brought the most important amendment to this debate on guns. Take this information to our people everywhere, and use mass media and social media so that everyone will know about it so that they will be informed if they break the law you will be held accountable.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we need to certify it tomorrow so it can become a law. Inform everyone that this is a new law and then we will police it.

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Secondly, there is no need to argue, let's agree that eventually we will remove guns from this country. We are elected leaders and debating amongst ourselves without making a decision is not enough.

Today on this debate let us agree that we have decided in the 10th Parliament that we, this group of leaders, agreed that no more guns is our policy then we manage it in seven years. We will celebrate our 50th anniversary as an independent state and that's one and a half terms of Parliament, this term of Parliament and mid-term of 11th Parliament in 2025.

We have our Parliamentary Committee on guns in this term of Parliament so develop the strategy to remove guns altogether by 2025. So, in the next 50 years this country will be free from guns.

Let's make a decision and not to beat around the bush because it's big issue. Unlike many of you, I personally don't have a gun and don't know the names and how to use it. Two weeks ago, I texted the Minister for Police because somebody threatened to shoot me. And I texted him by saying you can shoot me because I can't defend myself.

This is a very serious issue and it requires true leaders to make a bold decision. I will associate myself with those of you who call for banning of guns in this country and let's make it happen and no more excuse.

Don't say maybe this group of leaders will have guns and it's like not fully supporting the law and police will never implement it. When you don't introduce the law right nobody will know how to operate it and likewise to this debate. We all must move today in this 10th Parliament that one day in seven years' time this country will have no more guns.

Mr Acting Speaker, that's the most important thing that I want us to debate before we rise on Friday, let's make a decision by saying enough is enough. We shouldn't be going to other people to make decision for us. Father God is above us and below is us leaders.

Mr Acting Speaker, my suggestion is let's make a decision in this term of Parliament now and resolve as leaders that PNG will be a gun-free country. And we get the instrumentalities of State to manage it, police are here to assist.

When I came in 2002, there a lot of holdups along the Magi Highway with homemade guns so I called a rascal summit and I invited all the rascals that had guns to come to a village called Gabone, and they brought all their guns and we burnt them. Now Magi Highway is free from holdups because we don't have guns.

Mr Acting Speaker, before I sit down let me make one suggestion through this Parliamentary Committee on guns that one day we will invite the international media and our media to come and witness, the leaders in this 10th Parliament are surrendering all our guns by publicly burning them all.

In that way our people will follow us because followers are looking for leaders to follow. When we lead wrongly or rightly they will just follow us.

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When we lead wrongly they follow wrongly and when we lead rightly they follow rightly.

Mr Acting Speaker, let us organise a time and I want all Members of Parliament to come out publicly, surrender our guns and burn them publicly. Let us start this in Parliament and when you governors go back to your assemblies, you do the same. The council presidents do the same and the ward councillors do the same too. Only then can we have political leadership. It will be seen that we are serious about addressing this issue. Let us show America how to do it because they cannot. Let them come and learn from us.

Mr Acting Speaker, did you know that the world has learned from us on how to stop a civil unrest in a nation? We showed them through the Bougainville Crisis and how we managed it. There are many civil unrest that are still going on but we stopped it in Papua New Guinea. We should be proud of ourselves that we did something and showed the world how to do it.

I call upon everyone who has a gun that we come in agreement and organise a time and surrender all our guns publicly. We lead by example and watch who will follow us.

Mr WILLIAM DUMA (Hagen – Minister for State Enterprise) – I rise to make some contributions in addition to what my fellow colleagues have mentioned in this debate.

Mr Acting Speaker, I was held up twice by criminals and on both occasions my vehicles were taken away at gun point. Those criminals that held me up were not bigger and stronger than me but because they had a weapon that gave the power. Anyone that holds a gun is much more powerful than you. This has been the case for many years.

For example, Port Moresby must be the only capital city in the world where, people who work very hard, save-up, buy vehicles only be held-up by criminals with guns who are no better than them. They have not contributed a single toea to anything and we have again and again allowed it to happen. This is the only city in the world that we allow this to happen.

Mr Acting Speaker, we are all at fault. We can go on and on about the advantages and disadvantages of banning weapons but the very people who commit these crimes are our own citizens who live in our suburbs and settlements. It cannot be expatriates that fly in, commit those crimes and return. Those criminals are people that we can easily track down and apprehend but yet we cannot do that maybe because the police do not have the inability to do that or maybe they are just turning a blind eye on the issue.

Mr Acting Speaker, we should also look at how our Police Force are doing their job. These are the very people we have trained and we pay them to carry-out these duties. I would like to commend the good Minister for bringing this paper to Parliament. I know that our Prime Minister has been encouraging and supporting him. This is the way to go, Mr Prime Minister, and I commend you for providing the leadership and guidance to the young Minister as well as us in Cabinet and Parliament.

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Mr Acting Speaker, I agree firstly that we need to ban weapons and we need to phase it out over a period of time.

As we have heard from many of the speaker, if we were to simply ban weapons immediately then the question we should ask is, what happens to those others which are still obviously in the hands of wrong people.

So, it must be staged in a way where if we want to ban weapons it must be stated that eventually we want to have no more weapons in this country.

And when you look at how weapons are being allowed to come into our country As we speak, Mr Acting Speaker, weapons are being offloaded, I can imagine that so that is something that, when you talk about banning weapons we need to look at and attack those problems simultaneously so that eventually, like we did in the case of Bougainville, this Parliament in its wisdom set a date for a referendum to be held. We want to ban weapons completely then we need to set a date so that we need to tick off the box and finally we'll get there.

Mr Acting Speaker, I agree with what the other leaders have said. There must be total agreement on the part of leaders from the community level right up to the national level that these weapons must be banned.

But at the same time we must equip the Police Minister and his department. Provide them the manpower and the resources to enable them to go after those who have weapons and come up with a weapons disposal programme. That will also mean that we will also have information that will be given to us so we will know where the weapons are being held.

Of course all of us know, mostly from one part of the region where I come from, all of us know who has weapon, whether it is illegal or legal.

So, if we are fair dinkum, Mr Acting Speaker, we need to recharge ourselves as Sir Puka Temu outlined correctly.

So, Mr Acting Speaker, I think that's the way to go and we must start today and set the machinery in process and equip our young Minister for Police do what he wants us to do.

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

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

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Bill by leave, read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Douglas Tomuriesa**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 2 p.m..