

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 25 June 2019

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD

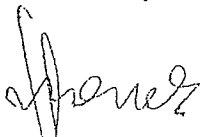
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Corrections should be authorised by signature and contain the name, office and telephone number of the person transmitting/making corrections.

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



HARRY MOMOS

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 25 June 2019

The Parliament met at 2 p.m., according to the terms of its Resolution of 30 May 2019.

The Clerk – I have to inform the Parliament that the Speaker is unavoidably absent because he is currently Acting Governor-General. Mr Deputy Speaker will take his place as Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (**Mr Jeffrey Komal**) took the Chair and invited the Member for Nawae, **Honourable Kennedy Wenge**, to say Prayers:

‘Papa God, God bilong stap ol taim ol taim. Nogat senis bilong yu, nogat lapun bilong yu, God bilong laip long nem bilong Jisas Christ mi beten long dispela Palamen bilong Papua New Guinea.

Taim mipela man ino save yet, yu makim mipela insait long bel bilong mama yet, na dispela same spirit i save givim kainkain wok.

Nau dispela Palamen namba ten na mipela kam stap insait. Yu makim mipela olsem memba blong Palamen na mipela stap long hia. Senis mipela save mekim Yu I save blesim tasol.

Lord mipela beten long yu long dispela avinun, dispela Gavman em i niupela gavman, na niupela Praitim Minista, yu blesim em. Opposition Lida yu blessim, ol minista i senis, yu blessim ol, ol memba blong Palamen, leader blong Komiti yu blessim mipela long dispela avinun.

Papa long Heven, morning mipela bel isi na avinun mipela save kamapim belhat na namel taim save kamap belhat tu, tasol bel isi bilong yu save stap ol taim ol taim olsem na larim dispela bel is i pulap long dispela Palamen.

Mipela mekim law bilong helpim Papua New Guinea. Mipela i stap aninit long law. Bihain mipela i kisim maus na pasin, yu bai blessim olgeta taim. Mi beten long dispela avinun long nem bilong pikinini bilong yu bikpela bilong mipela, bikpela bilong dispela Parliament. Mipela beten lon nem bilong en, long nem bilong Jisas mi beten. Amen.’

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

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

- (a) *National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC)* television and radio will be allowed to telecast and broadcast live Question Time; and
- (b) *EMTV* and *TVWAN* will also be allowed to telecast live, Question Time for news purposes for the duration of this meeting of 25 June 2019.

**DEATH OF FORMER MEMBER (Mr Kuk Kuli) –
STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament of the death on 30 February 2019 of Mr Kuk Kuli, a former member for the Anglimp-South Waghi open electorate in the sixth National Parliament from 1997 to 2002.

02/01

During that Term he served as the Chairman of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Primary Resources, Deputy Chairman of the Parliamentary Legislative Committee and Referral Committee on Finance. He also served as a member of the Private Business Committee and a member of the Public Works Committee from 1997 to 1998. He was the Government whip in 1998, the Assistant Speaker from 1998 to 1999, and a member of the Legislating Committee from 1999 to 2000. He was the Vice Minister for State in 2000 and he resigned as a Member of Parliament in 2002.

As a mark of respect I invite all honourable Members to rise in their places.

(All honourable Members stood in their places as a mark of respect in memory of the late gentleman).

QUESTIONS

Fiscal Responsibility

Mr IAN LING-STUCKEY – Mr Acting Speaker, my questions refers to the announcement of a new economic team that the country has been eagerly awaiting, to solve the economic crisis that is causing very deep and even extreme hardships for our people.

It also refers to the recently gazetted Ministerial determinations which has been creating confusion as to who really is in charge and vested with powers to conduct the Fiscal Policy for this Government.

My questions are directed to the new Treasurer.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Minister for Treasury has always been in charge of the *Papua New Guinea Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2016* and therefore is in charge of the Fiscal policy from day one.

According to the official Ministry responsibility set out in in the National Gazette G498 on the 13 June, Treasurer Basil is not responsible for PNG's *Fiscal Responsibility Act*. Unbelievable!

Mr Acting Speaker, this key piece of legislation that guides PNGs Budget and debt strategy. The *Act* that sets limit on debt and Budget deficits.

03/01

It is the *Act*, amended in 2017 by the former Treasurer when he was unable to control the level of debt, so they cheated and increased the debt-to-GDP limit to 35 per cent – they changed the rules. It was the *Act* amended by the former Treasurer, Honourable Charles Abel to include a new fiscal anchor for the budget, promised to the World Bank as part of their Budget support – a new anchor that was exceeded and smashed by K1.3 billion in the 2019 Budget.

Mr Acting Speaker, unbelievably, no-one in our new government, the Treasurer, the Finance Minister and the National Planning Minister is listed or gazetted as having responsibility for these absolutely key piece of legislation.

Therefore my questions are:

(1) Is this a simple typographical error? If it is a typing error, “Why didn’t the Treasurer, Honourable Sam Basil correct this crucial error.

(2) Why didn't the former Treasurer, Charles Abel, cooperate with the new Treasurer Basil, and bring it to his attention. "Why did the Planning Minister not do the same? "Are the three economic Ministers working as a team? Or, are they still jealous of each other and fighting for power?

(3) If Treasurer Basil or his economic team cannot or does not correct such errors, how can we customize producing a credible economic update? An update that we still have not seen. A credible rescue plan that we still have not seen, a credible budget that we will never see.

(4) If Treasurer Basil or his economic team cannot or does not correct such errors, how can they possibly and genuinely support the Prime Minister's vision of becoming 'the richest Black Christian Nation in 10 years?

(5) If this was a very simple typing error which could have been corrected immediately, but it was not, it would seem that there are sinister motives at play, either by the economic team or perhaps their former boss, lurking in the back ground. Purposely undermining Prime Minister Marape's vision and quite frankly embarrassing the new Government.

Thank you Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr SAM BASIL – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I think the Shadow Treasury Minister has answered himself and I will not waste the Honourable House's time to explain.

There may have been an oversight and I think it has been addressed and we will inform this Honourable House when re-gazetted and of course, I will reserve my presentation for tomorrow. I will not answer any questions raised today, until I make my presentation on the state of the economy to Parliament tomorrow.

While I have the floor, Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to talk a little on the Shadow Treasurer's conduct.

Mr Acting Speaker, in recent times the Shadow Treasurer has gone public in naming us, as the crown of clown. Mr Shadow Treasurer, the Prime Minister has made it clear, when he took office that all of us here are equals. We were elected by our people into this Parliament to represent in any capacity that we may represent in Parliament.

To go below and name members of Parliament, I do not think that is very proper. I think that you should stick to numbers and we will answer your questions and we will deal with the economy in a way that we should be dealing with.

04/01

Mr Ian Ling-Stuckey – Point of Order! The phrase that the new Treasurer refers to is merely myself repeating a phrase that was coined by the Prime Minister himself. Therefore, if the Treasurer is concerned then perhaps he could just direct his question to his boss sitting next to him.

Mr SAM BASIL – Mr Acting Speaker, he should be ruled out of order because his statement is from himself. I want all of us to respect each other in Parliament and make sure that we address each other properly. I believe that you are a leader of New Ireland Province so if you respect us then we will respect you.

Mr Patrick Pruaitch – Point of Order! We are not here to be lectured. The Shadow Treasurer asked a series of questions so if the Treasurer would like to answer them then he should do so. If he wishes to reserve his right to answer through an economic update tomorrow, then so be it. He cannot be lecturing Members of Parliament.

Mr SAM BASIL – I am sure the shadow Treasurer can defend himself.

Mr Acting Speaker, I reserve my rights to present my state of the economy address to the Parliament tomorrow.

LLG Elections

Mr JOHN KULI – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for recognising the people of Anglimp-South Wahgi.

I wish to direct my question to the Minister for Inter-Government Relation. But, firstly, I would like to congratulate the Prime Minister and the Member for Tari-Pori for his election to the highest post as the Eighth Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

On behalf of the people of Jiwaka and Anglimp-South Wahgi, I thank the people of Papua New Guinea in electing you as the Prime Minister since we are from the two newly created provinces of this country. I would also like to congratulate the newly elected ministers and their vice ministers for being elected as ministers in the new regime.

My question is in relation to the LLG Elections that will be taking place on Thursday, 25 June 2019.

Can the Minister confirm the issuance of writs on this date?

Mr PILA NININGI – I thank the Member for his question. It is an important question that Papua New Guinea wants to know about. I want to inform the Parliament and the people of Papua New Guinea that the elections will take place as scheduled.

There will not be any delays in the elections. There are things that we still need to sort out, but the elections will still take place. Of the total funds needed, we have received some and I thank the Government and the Prime Minister for allocating these funds.

Australian Government Security Contract

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Mr Acting Speaker, before I ask my series of questions, I wish to congratulate the Member for Tari-Pori, Honourable James Marape for his election as the Eighth Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

I want to make a point that I have sat in a number of chairs here but the earphones are designed for people less than five foot tall.

Mr Acting Speaker, can you speak to your Parliament staff so that they can fix this problem?

My questions are directed to the Prime Minister and the Ministers for Police, Migration and Boarder Security and Foreign Affairs to take note.

05/01

My questions are in relation to a security contract awarded to a foreign company that is currently embroiled in controversial circumstances and is a subject of senate inquiry in Australia. That company was awarded a \$423 million contract under very strange circumstances and with absolutely no input whatsoever from PNG Authorities, the PNG Government etcetera. It's about to renewed.

I would like to know,

(1) What is the PNG Government position in relation to this particular matter? Are we going to sit by and let foreign Governments come and dictate what their companies will do in this country? How are we going to handle this situation, now that we have come up with this phrase of 'Taking back PNG'. How are we going to manage this particular situation, especially now that it is been revealed by the Australian Media that the awarding of this contract has some very strange circumstances surrounding it, where by, a foreign affairs employee in the Australian Government is said to have

manipulated or in some way influenced the awarding of this contract and is now working for this very company.

(2) Why can't the PNG Immigration Department be responsible for any such contract?

Thank you.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Acting Speaker. I thank the Governor of Northern Province for raising this question on the security contract awarded to this particular company.

He hasn't named the company or the contract, but I would presume, it's a well-known case that has been in the public space for some time. For this response I will ask the Australian Head of Mission here – the Australian High Commission to furnish us a report the earliest. We don't intend for foreign contractors to operate here in business like security. It is a business that local companies can be engaged in and I asked the Australian Government to stop this contract forthwith.

I ask the Immigration Minister and the Foreign Affairs Minister to convoy this at the earliest to Canberra that we will not tolerate foreign companies engaged in businesses like security where national companies can be engaged in. This arrangement will be reviewed in its fullest and that where ever this contract is heading to, that it be terminated as far as the PNG Government is concern.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Elementary Schools

Mr KONI IGUAN – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr Acting Speaker, before I ask questions, I want to take this time to speak on behalf of the people of Markham to congratulate Honourable James Marape, the Member for Tari-Pori for the seat he has been awarded, as a Prime Minister. I also want to congratulate the Deputy Prime Minister who sits next to him as well as all the Ministers of this Government.

I also wish to extend my gratitude including that of the people of Markham by thanking the former Prime Minister, Honorable Peter O'Neill, for the job well done in his term as the Prime Minister.

I also want to thank him for recognizing the people of Markham through the appointment of their elected MP as a minister for the last two month before his resignation

as the Prime Minister I want to say thank y for the opportunity in appointing me as the Minister in his regime.

I want to raise a question towards the Minister for Education, but before I do, I want to congratulate him for his new Ministerial Portfolio and also say thank the former Education Minister for what he did.

Mr Speaker, my question is in relation to the former Minister's policies in changing the education system through the 166 program which will do away with elementary schools.

Mr Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of the new Education Minister that the since the inception of the elementary schools system thorough the changes in the Education System, a lot of Members and parents have spent a lot of funds on this system.

06/01

Mr Acting Speaker, may I bring to the new Minister's attention that to support the implementation of the current educations system, many Members of Parliament and lot of parents had contributed huge sums of money towards establishing elementary schools simply because many of the primary schools are stationed far away from most villages and therefore, elementary schools were established within villages so that children won't walk far distances. Furthermore, the standard of buildings in these elementary schools is no different from primary schools simply because most parents have invested a lot in infrastructure development of establishing elementary schools. But unfortunately, under this new system, we will be doing away with elementary schools and revert to the old system of starting with prep.

The Minister should reconsider this policy and give more attention on the establishment of the elementary schools and try to strengthen its progress. This system has eased a lot of burden from most parents simply because most kids from ages 6 to 7 are kept close to their parents by attending elementary schools in their areas which prepares them immensely in their early learning and also builds their confidence to attend primary schools.

Mr Minister, other than implementing a new structure, can we strengthen the current structure because elected Members and parents have contributed immensely in establishing these elementary schools?

If we do away with elementary schools then it will really affect the elementary teachers because they have spent a lot in equipping themselves in training to teach in elementary schools and it will be a big problem if we do away with this system.

Mr JOSEPH YOPYYOPY – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for Markham for his question. Education is now considering reverting to the old system of education that most of us went through where we completed Grades 1 to 6 as primary education and then went onto Grades 7 to 10 in high school and Grade 11 and 12 in National High Schools, as they were called. This is the Standard Base Education system.

Unfortunately, in the early 80s the system was changed to Outcome Base Education. And one of the problem that we encountered in the Outcome Base Education system was that; lessons prepared by a teacher differed from another teacher in the same grade. It is totally different. And that really affected the students study during examination time.

But in the Standard Base Education system the lessons prepared by one teacher is uniform with the other teachers. With this in mind, this Government is emphasising more on quality education. We will also look at the TFF policy which a lot of money has been injected into and the result now is an influx of students enrolling each year thus more emphasis is put on quantity and not quality. So we will be emphasising more on quality and one part of it is to do away with the Outcome Base Education and concentrate on the Standard Base Education. This means that all the teachers will prepare and teach the same lessons across the board to our children.

With that, coming back to your question on elementary schools, yes, a lot has been invested by both parents and teachers especially in infrastructure development in elementary schools and also time and resources spent by individual teachers to equip themselves to teach in elementary schools. This issue will be looked at by introducing preparatory classes to be established and we will liaise closely with Community Development to consider avenues available to consider keeping preparatory education to be maintained back in each community but we will go back to the old system that was used before.

07/01

There will be a deadline set but as this is only my second week in the office, I will be setting the deadline for Education to meet the target so that by end of 2020, we might look at more than 60 per cent of the country to start implementing the 1-6-6 system.

I will be presenting a report that was done by the former Minister; it is from a constructive work that was done in 2015.

Supplementary Question

Retain Current Education System.

Mr MICHAEL BAGIA DUA – My question relates to what has already been mentioned by the Member for Markham. We started off with the 6-4-1 education structure then went on to 3-6-4 and now we are talking about changing to 1-6-6. These are all donor funded programs, but what has our government done? It has only provided the TFF. The current 3-6-4 structure is okay and should not be replaced.

This education structure is right at our doorstep, it is providing employment for our people and educating children in our communities. Our people who are Grade 10 and 12 leavers have been given the opportunity to teach in our communities. If we continue to change the structure, we will create confusion in our education system and the community, therefore we won't be able to achieve our desired goals and outcomes.

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order! Can the Governor of Chimbu just ask his question and not waste time?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, please continue.

Mr MICHAEL BAGIA DUA –Can I ask the Education Minister not to make any policy changes to our education system as we might cause chaos in the remote areas.

Mr JOSEPH YOPYYOPY – Mr Acting Speaker, to answer the Governor's question, I want to say here that this is not a new system. It is the one that we all have gone through during our time. We started school with Grade 1 and completed Primary at Grade 6. We continued with high school from Grade 7-10, and secondary began thereafter. What we are going back to is the Standard Based Education. We are going back to this because currently we feel that the quality of education has really dropped.

Many who have passed through the OBE cannot even read or let alone speak good English. I am proud to say that we all who passed through the old system can even write and speak simple English from Grade 6 or after completing Grade 8 or 10. This therefore is not a new system that we are trying to introduce.

Mr JAMES DONALD – Before I ask my questions, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of my fellow Members from Western Province to thank the Prime Minister who led a delegation to our province.

My question is directed to the Minister responsible for APEC and could the Prime Minister, please take note.

08/01

Mr Solan Mirisim – Point of Order! There is no Minister for APEC on the Floor, so who is he referring to as Minister for APEC?

Is he referring to the former Minister or the Prime Minister?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER - Your Point of Order is in order.

Mr JAMES DONALD – My questions are directed to the Minister for Housing and I ask the Prime Minister to take note.

Mr Acting Speaker, the much publicised and celebrated APEC is now over and it is no secret that the country is trying to recover from the impact that this event has had on the economic fortunes of the country.

The country deserves to be informed about the positive and negative impacts of APEC –

Mr Richard Masere – Point of Order! I think it is appropriate that the Member for North Fly direct his questions to the Prime Minister because there is no APEC Minister under this current government.

Present Finance Report on APEC

Mr JAMES DONALD – Mr Acting Speaker, in my view I would rather ask the Housing Minister because he was the former APEC Minister.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are:

I ask the Minister to explain to this Parliament and the people of Papua New Guinea what has happened to the following three issues.

- (1) Can the Minister explain why the financial report on APEC has not been prepared and presented to this Parliament and when will it be ready?

The Minister advised this Parliament in an earlier Meeting that the Maserati vehicles were presold.

- (2) Can he now explain why the expensive vehicles have not been bought as claimed by the Minister but are still parked and waiting for buyers?

- (3) Can the Minister explain why many service providers are still waiting for their services to be financially compensated?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JUSTIN TKATCHENKO – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for his questions.

On Sunday I put out a lengthy press statement after a press conference on this issue which was covered extensively in the papers and other media. The APEC Report will be tabled on this Floor of Parliament in the coming months after it has been approved and vetted by the Auditor-General. This is a process under the Act which it must go through so all finances and expenditure and everything can be vetted correctly and properly as per the proper procurement process that is ordered by the Department of Finance. We look forward to that audited report coming to me so I can present it on the Floor of Parliament as part of the APEC Report.

When it comes to the vehicles, the vehicles were tendered but unfortunately it was under an expression of interest which didn't allow for the cost of the vehicles to be covered and recouped. And with that, the Department of Finance who is in charge of all of the vehicles and assets of APEC under the Act will dispose of all vehicles through the proper process which is required and re-tender or go through a dealer to ensure that all moneys are recouped from the vehicles that were purchased by the APEC Authority for APEC last year. This is very, very important.

09/01

Those outstanding services providers that have been listed and put together will also go through the Department of Finance to be vetted and to be paid. And that's what is happening as we speak and I look forward to presenting the APEC Report on this Floor

of Parliament once I have the Auditor-General's clearance of all the financial transactions and procurements are done correctly.

Thank you Mr Acting Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Donate APEC Vehicles to Schools

Mr MICHAEL BAGIA DUA – Mr Acting Speaker, a lot of public moneys were spent to purchase these vehicles. Can they be given to schools and hospitals because these institutions need these vehicles to provide much needed services?

Mr JUSTIN TKATCHENKO – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Governor of Chimbu for this very important question. There is a NEC paper in place to ensure that all donated vehicles like the buses, fire engines, ambulances and those that were donated are properly distributed throughout the districts and provinces of Papua New Guinea so that our people can benefit from these vehicles that were used during the APEC Meeting as well as those that were purchased for Police, Defence and other sectors.

As you know, the Ombudsman Commission has delayed this process as well because of the information that went to them on these vehicles. These vehicles are now being cleared so we can move on and finally allocate them to proper use as a lasting legacy to APEC.

Honourable Governor, yes, we have many requests from different community representatives like schools, provincial governments and district Members to acquire these vehicles and they have all been taken into consideration, and we will be putting in a Report for NEC approval for distribution.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Release Payment for Functional Grants

Mr ALLAN BIRD – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Before I ask my questions, I take a moment to congratulate the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister on the high honour and elevation you have been given and empowered by the people of Papua New Guinea.

Mr Acting Speaker, I direct my questions to the Minister for Finance and I may sound like a broken record on this but again it is in relation to functional grants.

Functional grants are important for service delivery by the provinces to the people and trickles down to the local-level governments.

Mr Acting Speaker, this year my province under last year's National Budget is supposed to receive K58 million in functional grants. If you divide that by half - now that six months is almost over - my province should have received K29 million. But to date, we have only received K3 million which is just 10 per cent. I will repeat what I have said many times in the House, this is not unusual; that was the practice of government from 2012 to 2017. Last year was the only year that functional grants were paid in full.

Secondly, Mr Acting Speaker, while I am on this subject of payments, for DSIP and PSIP, we were supposed to receive K5 million by now but we have only received K1 million.

Mr Acting Speaker, the trend is quite worrying because when you compare these two amounts, we have only received 10 per cent of the budgets that we were promised in the November Meeting last year.

My questions are:-

(1) Can the good Minister explain to us why these grants have not been paid, particularly to East Sepik?

(2) If there are other provinces that are in the same dilemma, could he also explain to them why?

(3) How soon do you think you can rectify these issues?

Mr CHARLES ABEL – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Governor of East Sepik for his very important questions. He said that he tends to be champion in terms of talking about functional grants for provincial governments and I myself have spoken several times on this Floor in relation to his questions and other questions on how important those functional grants are to the ability for provincial governments to get them and perform basic frontline services at districts and local-level governments down there.

10/01

Let me also say that there is an incoming Government with a new frontline and a new Treasurer and he will take the opportunity to give some of the background in relation to how the 2019 Budget is performing and he will talk about some of the revenue aspects of the Budget that are lagging behind somewhat. I will allow him to do that and it is suffice to say that there are certain elements on the revenue side of the Budget that need a lot

more work. I have alluded to some of the issues that can address those elements particularly on the dividends side of the 2019 Budget aspects in relation to a billion kina financing that is imminent. There is still a gap on the revenue side. What that is doing is really restricting the Government's ability to meet commitments on the expenditure side.

It is suffice to say that the past government and the current government will remain committed to every single element of the Budget and I demonstrated by fulfilling for the first time in a long time a 100 per cent funding of the functional grants last year. That commitment remains, however, it is up to the incoming Treasurer and the new Government just to review the Budget as to where we are now and I remain confident that the Budget can be fulfilled in totality subject to everybody putting their heads together now after the political situation that happened and get down to the hard work to making sure those revenues will come in to fulfil every element of the expenditure side of the Budget. That includes the functional grants, the DSIP and PSIP, which you have quite rightly said are lagging behind.

The Treasurer will update this Parliament tomorrow as to how we expect to fulfil that Budget and I am confident that when we work together we will be able to deliver in the remaining 6-7 months of this year.

Conduct Audit on Madang Provincial Treasury

Mr ROBERT NAGURE – Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are directed to the Finance Minister and I would like the Inter-Government Relations Minister and the Planning Minister to take note.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are in relation to the plight of my people of Manam who have been settling illegally and I should not call those places care centres anymore because it has been 15 years. I have raised this issue on the Floor of Parliament and it seems like it is getting nowhere.

Mr Acting Speaker, I have a situation now on the ground which I am trying to contain where there is a serious law and order problem between the care centres and the locals in Sumkar, which is not my electorate. but I am trying my very best to maintain the situation with the limited resources I have.

Mr Acting Speaker, over the years since 2004 there have been millions of kina allocated for my people of Manam and they haven't seen a single toea of those moneys. These funds have been parked in the Madang Provincial Treasury and have been

squandered, stolen, mismanaged, misappropriated and misapplied by the Madang Provincial Administration.

Mr Acting Speaker, I seek the intervention of the Finance Minister to immediately send an audit team to Madang and have these funds investigated that will go back to 2017 to date. My people are still suffering and I plan to visit the Prime Minister's Office when he has time for me this week and we can get this issue over and done with.

Mr Acting Speaker, it's been 15 years and some of my people have died and the host communities have suffered long enough now.

I am appealing to all the ministers to assist my people to settle them now.

Mr CHARLES ABEL – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for Bogia for expressing those concerns regarding the people of Manam and the restoration efforts on the hosting lands and care centres.

He raises concerns about significant amounts of funding allocated through the Provincial Administration and indeed the Manam Restoration Authority itself and he is claiming that to date none of those moneys have reached those people and benefitted them.

11/01

Mr Acting Speaker, I will take it upon myself to look into the situation, I believe further money has been appropriated in this year's Budget to the tune of K20 million, and K5 million warrant has been raised. I am not sure if those funds have actually hit the account of the Manam Restoration Authority yet but we will look into that in terms of the current situation but in terms of the historical expenditure, I will also make sure that the Department of Finance takes the necessary steps to travel down there as you say and to ascertain the fact and to look into what actually happened to all the funds that have been given so far whether to the Madang Provincial administration or the Manam Restoration Authority.

The Government has taken steps to the previous government to make sure that the Authority was established and the chairman and board is in place. I know there is a restoration plan there involving Police, the road and care centres and the resettlement exercise. Money has been allocated and we look into releasing those moneys but in regard to the Historical accountability of the funds that have been given before this year, I will instruct Finance Department to take it on, Mr Acting Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Mr JIMMY UGURO – My supplementary question is regard to the sentiments raised by Member for Bogia. The Madang Provincial Treasury is now in a mess, therefore, can the Minister for Finance carry out an audit into the Madang Provincial Treasury to investigate how the funds for the Manam Restoration Authority was used?

Can those who are implicated be charged and locked behind bars?

Mr CHARLES ABEL –Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for Usino-Bundi for his questions. At the risk of judging people guilty before anything has happened, I do note his comments and his concerns. I repeat once again we will organise a team from the Department of Finance to look into the allegations raised by the Member for Bogia and Member for Usino-Bundi.

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – Mr Acting Speaker, I realise and notice that the new Minister for Police has been trying to stand up for a while to ask a question. I think he has a short memory and he forgot that he is already a Minister.

(Laughter-in-the-Chamber)

Mr Bryan Kramer – Point of Order! Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, if the good Member for Vanim-Green has a question and if it is relating to my conduct and my memory, well, I have a very good memory on how I transpired on this side, thank you.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Your Point of Order is in order.

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – Mr Acting Speaker, if he wishes to ask a question, I would ask him to come across to this side.

Mr Acting Speaker, since he is eager to talk, I will ask him a question.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Member for Madang for his appointment as the Minister for Police and I hope he will live up to what he has been preaching on this side and start doing some real business of arresting people responsible for committing crimes to the people of this country.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Police Force has been heavily compromised, suppressed and under-funded to a level where they could not operate. The office of the Fraud and National Anti-Corruption Office have been somehow politicised and handicapped. My question to the Minister is specifically on an issue within the Defence Force. There is a serious allegation against the Commander of the Defence Force for stealing funds from the Officers Mess of Papua New Guineas Defence Force amounting to K1.2 million. One of the senior officers who is his accomplice has being arrested and charged, however, the Commander has not been arrested and from what I gather –

12/01

Mr Jelta Wong – Point of Order! From my previous position, this case is still under investigation, therefore, it cannot be discussed in Parliament.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Your Point of Order is in order!

Arrest Defence Force Commander

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – I do not think that point of order is in order because it is not a court order therefore it cannot prevent me from asking these questions. If it is under investigation then it must be investigated.

My questions to the Minister for Police are:

(1) Since the senior officer has been arrested and charged, what are you going to do with the Commander of the Defence Force? I understand that his charges are ready but the police have been suppressed from arresting him.

(2) Why is the Fraud Squad not allowed to conduct its business under the *Constitution*?

Mr BRYAN KRAMER – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for Vanimo-Green for his questions. I have made public on social media the powers of the Minister for Police and the main stream media have covered it sufficiently. however, I will repeat it.

In my recent appointment, I have done my research in the powers of the Police Minister and it is supported by a Supreme Court Judgement. The primary role of the Minister for Police is in policy. We have no powers or control over the Police Force and

that is also stipulated in the *Constitution*. Therefore in relation to the questions asked, I do not have the powers of arrest of those that have been accused.

The process is clear in which a complaint is filed and a matter is then in police jurisdiction. My focus since taking office will be to depoliticise the Police Force. For instance, stopping people raiding court houses and arresting chief justices. I was also a victim of arrest by 14 police officers. We are now looking at how we can depoliticise the Police Force so they can do their job according to the *Constitution*.

**SUPREME COURT AND NATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE –
JUDGES ANNUAL REPORT, 2017 – PAPER –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, pursuant to *Section 187* of the *Constitution*, I present the Judges Annual Report for the year 2017.

Motion (by **Mr Rainbo Paita**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the paper.

Debate adjourned.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA – ANNUAL REPORT,
2018 – PAPER – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, pursuant to *Section 19* of the *Organic Law on Certain Constitutional Office Holders*, I present the Annual Report of the Auditor-General for the year ending 2018.

Motion (by **Mr Rainbo Paita**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the paper.

Debate adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Rainbo Paita**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.15 p.m.