

THIRD DAY

Thursday 27 June 2019

DRAFT HANSARD

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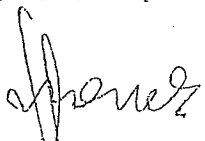
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HARRY MOMOS

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

THIRD DAY

Thursday 27 June 2019

The Acting Speaker (**Mr 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 10.38 a.m., and invited the Member for Jimi and Minister for Community Development, Youth and Religion, **Honourable Wake Goi**, to say Prayers:

'Papa God mipla tentim yu. Yu maiti God, yu pawaful God yu bin stap bifo, yu stap tete na oltaim. Mipla tenkim yu na liptimapim nem blo yu. After all we acknowledge you as the supreme God. Yu stat na yu pinis na mipla liptimapim nem blo yu. Out of many yu bin makim mipla long makim ol pipol blong yu long dispela kantri. At some point mipela go aut na ino bihainim rot yu laikim long em. Mipela ipren osem yes mipela istap long graun na rong iken kam tasol mipela mas noken larim em igo nating. Mipela imas luksave long ol rong blo mipela na stretim na muv on. God Papa, tenkiu long yu givim nupela Praim Minista na mipela isave yu istap waintaim na bai yu kontiniu long usim em. Givim em gutpla tingting na save, wainkain long Deputi Praim Minista na ol ministas, vais ministas na olgeta lidas. Mipela ol lidas itok tenkiu long yu bikos dispela opotuniti iken kam wans tasol. Kainkain rot mipela ikam long em tasol yu yet iluk save na putim mipela long hia. Halpim mipela long ronim dispela kantri bilong mipela. God yu blesim PNG na ol lidas bilong PNG na ol narapela manmeri husait itingim yu. Helpim mipela long tingting fowed long bringim senis na kantri igo forwad. Tingim ol narapela pastaim na mipela yet last. Tenkiu long Jisas husait ibin lusim laip long mipela na tingim mipela long olgeta raun bilong mipela. Yu stil stap wantaim mipela na putim kantri bek long rot na yu ken stap baksait long halpim mipela ikarim dispela kantri igo fowad. Halpim mipela long winim olgeta gols na ol gutpla samting bilong ol pipol bilong mipela. Mipela itingim na prei long ol narapela manmeri husait ino save long yu bai iken save long yu. Mipela iprei long yu long halpim ol narapela kantri husait ino save long yu bai ken kisim blessing na save long yu tu. Bai ol iken lotu long yu na liptimapim nem blong yu. Mipela itok tenkiu na givim dispela taim igo long yu na tok dispela preia yu ilainim mipela. Amen'.

**DEATH OF FORMER MEMBER (Mr John Kanadi) –
STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament of the death on 29 March, 2019 of Mr John Kanadi, a former Member for the Esa'ala Open Electorate.

02/03

He was first elected to the Fifth National Parliament from 1992 to 1997 and was re-elected to the Sixth National Parliament for the same seat from 1997 to 2002. During those terms, he has served as Vice Minister for Finance from 1994 to 1997, and Vice Minister for Correctional Institution Service and Police from 1998 to 1999. He also served as Chairman of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Works from March to December of 1998, Appointments Committee from May to June 2000, and Culture and Tourism in December 2000, Chairman of the Referral Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Minerals and Energy from July 1997 to July 1998. He served as the Assistant Speaker, Chairman of Special Committee on Foreign Affairs and Donor Agency from November 1999 to May 2000. He was a member of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Appointments, Broadcasting of Parliament Proceedings and Public Accounts from July 1997 to March 1998.

He was a member of the National Parliament Committee in March 1998 and Public Accounts and Public Works in November 1999.

As a mark of respect in the memory of the late Honorable Gentleman, I invite all Honorable Members to rise in their places.

(All Honourable Members stood in their places as a mark of respect to the late gentleman)

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – I thank the Parliament.

QUESTIONS

ENB - Delayed Funding for Flood-stricken Roads

Mr NAKIKUS KONGA –Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I would like to raise my question to the Minister for Finance and I want the Prime Minister to take note.

In February this year, we had a disaster in East New Britain. There was flooding, heavy rain affected my Province. So, we called-up the Disaster Committee of the Province who prepared a proper submission through the PEC. It was approved and sent to the former Prime Minister and also to the National Disaster Committee and today we are waiting for our money to fix our roads.

03/03

At this point in time Mr Acting Speaker, all our roads in the province are covered with potholes and affected by erosion. And one more heavy rain will bring the province to a halt. Kokopo is about 18 kilometres away from Rabaul and the survival of Kokopo depends on the port in Rabaul.

Today as I speak, we are still facing major problems with the road leading from Kerevat which is the alternative link to Kokopo. This road was also cut off and likewise the Burma Road linking Rabaul to Kokopo.

Mr Acting Speaker, we have now furnished our submission totalling K17.8 million and of that amount K97 million was supposed to be approved for the first phase but unfortunately up till today we are still waiting. A month ago, we received a cheque of K5 million and unfortunately when the cheque was presented to BSP Bank by Gazelle Restoration Authority (GRA) the cheque was dishonoured.

Minister for Finance, my province is not crying for K97 million but we only want the first phase of the K17.8 million.

When will you give us this money?

Mr CHARLES ABEL – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Governor of East New Britain Province for highlighting those concerns and issues regarding his province relating to the flooding in February and reminding us that the PEC submission has been submitted to the National Disaster Committee and the fact that the process has been stalled. He did receive a K5 million cheque for the Gazelle Restoration Authority. However, the Governor has claimed that the cheque had bounced, so I need to verify this.

Mr Acting Speaker, our country is always faced with a lot of natural disasters and it's been highlighted many times in Parliament probably because of our location, I suppose within the 'ring of fire.' Just recently we have faced another natural disaster. Mount Ulawun in West New Britain has erupted and in fact it's very serious. A similar natural disaster also affected East Sepik Province and of course continually in Madang Province. And not only volcano related disasters but flooding issues and last year, we had the most devastating earthquake in our country's history.

In addition to that are the effects of climate change which have been highlighted many times by former Minister for Environment and Conservation. One of the issues we are faced with is that the budgeting process must be properly captured by an amount that is sufficient to deal with these natural disasters. We also need to consider how we structure the government mechanism in place for proper natural disaster coordination in the bureaucracy and place appropriate people so that they are able to respond to these disasters.

Mr Acting Speaker, the other issue is the funding and budgetary aspect which we have been alluding to in the last few days, and the Treasurer yesterday presented a statement about that. When you have appropriation in the Budget against natural disasters even if its insufficient for instance; we allocated K20 million in the current Budget for natural disasters and now we have a request amounting to K17.8 million then it will immediately consume that whole appropriation.

The appropriation is there but the issue is whether the funding has come through, and again we highlight the fact that there is some K2 billion for the first six months of this year of the funding gap in the Budget; a billion in financing that is imminent and about to be delivered. We mentioned about the dividend issue on the other side as well which is where the primary shortfalls are coming from. This is not on the taxation side but dividend related side and I want to elaborate again here that there are significant revenues going to structures like Kumul Petroleum in particular that have not handed over these dividends.

So I repeat, you need revenue coming through in order to fulfil the expenditure commitment. That of course doesn't help the Governor's position at this point in time but I want to say that there are other disasters that are occurring around the country as well relating to flooding in places like Goodenough and Esa'ala and also in my own district where I assisted during the flooding in the Matamata Local-level Government along the Rabaraba Coast.

04/03

But I will look into the particular issue of the dishonoured cheque and ensure that it is honoured as soon as possible. We will fit in the balance of the K17.8 million in the context of all the other pressing issues around disasters while we look at fulfilling the Budget in 2019 so that the rest of the disaster money can be met. There are the long term issues that I have already mentioned, about how we go forward as a Government in dealing with natural disasters.

Supplementary Questions

Central – Delayed Release of Disaster Funds

Mr ROBERT AGOROBÉ – Last year, when there was flooding, we experienced a disaster in the Central province. The Provincial Government allocated K1 million to have a contingent plan in place. We actually did what we could to manage the disaster and gave a report back to the Provincial Affairs.

The Disaster Report was presented here in Parliament by the former Minister for Provincial Affairs and they made a commitment of K5 million to Central Province, to assist with the disaster.

To this day, we have not received those funds. Since you have K7 million in your account, we are facing a similar disaster due to the heavy rains for the last two weeks and therefore appeal for some more funds to assist us in dealing with the disaster at hand.

Mr CHARLES ABEL – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker and I thank the Governor of Central Province.

I do not want to repeat what I have just said. I will say that we note your concerns regarding the outstanding request that he has put. I did not say that we have K7 million with Finance. I said, here is an appropriation of K20 million in the National Budget. The relevant agency is the Department of Inter-Government Relations or the Provincial Affairs department and no doubt, they are considering all these matters.

But, if the Governor can give me a copy of his request, that he gave last year, I can do my best to look into how I can through my department support him together with the Governor for East New Britain and the other outstanding disaster related requests.

Investigate Madang Police Commander

Mr ROBERT NAGURI – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for Police, and this is in relation to the issues I raised on Tuesday, regarding funds allocated for my people of Manam.

On 6 April 2019, the final K6 million was removed from the Madang Provincial Treasury account to the Ramu Development Foundation Limited, which is an entity set up by the Madang Provincial Government to oversee major projects in Madang province.

There was a complaint laid with the fraud squad in Madang to carry out investigations into the removal of funds. Mr Paul Akuram, who is the man in charge of the resettlement authority on the ground as the project manager laid the complaint, together with some leaders of Manam Island.

Mr Acting Speaker, the OIC in Madang, started the preliminary investigations but a few days into the investigations, the Acting Provincial Police Commander wrote a letter to stop this investigation.

This is not the only case. There were two fraud-related cases into Madang Provincial Government. The PPC of Madang stopped these investigations from being carried forward. I would like to the Police Minister to investigate this.

- (1) Is the Minister is aware is aware of this, as the local Member for Madang?
- (2) What are the Minister's plans to address this issue?
- (3) What actions will the Minister take against the PPC in relation to him stopping investigations into these three fraud cases?

Mr BRYAN KRAMER –Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I thank the Member for Bogia for his questions.

In relation to his question, in terms of whether I will investigate, I think I have made it clear on Tuesday's Sitting, as to the powers of the Minister but I was preparing a statement to make either tomorrow or Tuesday.

05/03

Mr Ben Naguri – Point of Order! I think the Minister is not being asked to investigate this matter. We all know he does not have the power to investigate and make arrests. The question is whether he is going to give an undertaking to take this matter up with the Police

Commissioner's office and ask them to investigate this issue that is raised by a Member of this Honourable House.

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

Mr BRYAN KRAMER – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. To be more accurate, the question was, 'will I investigate?' That was the question so my response is in relation to the question.

I haven't completed my answer yet. I will address your second issue of the point of order. The first question requests for an investigation. I made it clear, I don't have the powers. But I do have the powers to be able to elicit discussions with the Commissioner and raise it to him. But there is a process before I, as the Minister, can get involved.

As I explained, my function is to depoliticise the force. So, if the complainant can issue a letter or in this case, the Member for Bogia can write a letter to my office as the Minister for Police then I can request a meeting with the Commissioner and ask him what he will do in relation to this issue. The Commissioner can provide a response to me so I can see that he is carrying out his functions provided under 197 of the *Constitution*.

I will prepare a statement tomorrow or on Tuesday for the benefit of Members of Parliament to understand the process in relation to the powers of the Minister, functions and responsibilities of the Commissioner and what actions I will take as the Minister and also the actions of the Marape-Steven government to address this issue of political interferences into police investigations.

I have put all the members and divisional commanders on notice when I had a debriefing from all ACPs from around the country and the Commissioner was there. I put them all on notice and I made it very clear to them that they serve the *Constitution*. Their powers come from the *Constitution*. In the event that they fail to uphold the office and the powers provided by the *Constitution* then I will take appropriate measures against them to bring matters directly before the courts against them. So, there are provisions in our *Criminal Code* against individuals perverting the course of justice or attempting to defeat the course of justice. Those are issues that I plan to address in my statement.

In response to your question, yes, I will raise this issue directly with the Minister. The question asked previously on Tuesday by the Governor was in relation to another matter. I have a file; a debriefing by the Commissioner. So after the question was raised, I went to the

Commissioner's office and asked for a debriefing and he provided a debriefing in relation to the situation. That was my response, thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Supplementary Questions

Politicising the Police Force

Mr ALLAN BIRD –Mr Acting Speaker, whilst I note the response of the Minister to the Member for Bogia, he still did not respond to the pertinent point which was that you are having bad behaviour within the Police Force as we hide behind rules and regulations.

I want to stress a point here. In East Sepik earlier this year a new PPC was appointed and there was almost a gun fight between two factions of the Police Force. I tried to get it resolved with the previous Police Minister.

It seems to me that the problem that has occurred in Madang is a common problem within the Police Force. There are Ministers politicising the Police Force and you are giving us excuses about how to deal with it. When the people come to us with issues and we raise them up with Ministers, we want solutions, not excuses.

Mr Bryan Kramer – Point of Order!

Mr ALLAN BIRD – You can't raise a point of order, Minister. Read your *Standing Orders*.

Mr Acting Speaker, with respect to the Minister, we don't need excuses and we don't need people to hide behind regulations. We need him to answer like a Minister, not like a policeman. Thank you.

Mr BRYAN KRAMER – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. For the benefit of Parliament I ask you to read the *Standing Orders*. If a question is out of order, I can raise a point of order.

06/03

I will now provide a response to the question, thank you. I think the good Governor needs to understand the issue of excuses. There is a process. If we do not follow the process and law, then we end up in long protracted court battles. Then we start blaming the Judiciary, but the problem was, we never followed the process.

The question was put to me, what I would do? I said, the process is, I will raise it with the Commissioner. I cannot direct him, otherwise they will then turn around and say that I am directing a police officer. So I ask that when you come to Parliament with your questions, understand the law and the process.

I put all the Divisional Commanders on notice and it goes down to the PPC level. If you do not uphold the law and the process of the powers of arrest that you were supposed to do it in the interest of the law and not in the interest of Ministers or Members of Parliament

Thank you.

Goroka Airport – Public Car Park

Mr HENRY AME – I would like to direct my question to the Minister for Civil Aviation.

Mr Acting Speaker, whilst we enjoy the benefits of the new terminal, runway and F70 Jet service into Goroka, I think that there is still a need for improvement in the terminal and car park space in Goroka.

At the moment, the general public is using the main road at the side of the terminal to park and it is becoming a traffic hazard, and dangerous to the public.

I would like to ask the Minister, is there any plan for the Goroka terminal to establish a public car space for the people to use while accessing the terminal?

Thank you, Acting Speaker.

Mr LEKWA GURE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I thank the Member for Goroka for asking a very important and relevant question.

Before I answer his question, firstly, let us acknowledge the fact that the building of this brand new Airport terminal at Goroka, is being enjoyed by the general public and the travelling public, especially the introduction of the bigger domestic jets, the F70 into Goroka; this has made traveling in and out of Goroka a lot more enjoyable with the jet service.

I think we need to recognise that the Airports has three important users. They are the Airlines with all their staffs, the travelling public and of course wherever appropriate, we have the retail outlets like the duty free shops, coffee, food and beverages. Those are the groups of people that use Airport Terminal facilities.

And therefore, that requires those people to travel to Airport precincts in vehicles. I understand through the caddie program, these improvements are going on in Madang, Wewak and Vanimo and other areas as well. When these improvements are made to Airport Facilities, a very important element of that is car parking.

I understand from the Members question that the general public and travelling public are using the main road to park their cars which cause traffic congestion. So car parking is also a very important consideration as well.

I understand from National Airports Corporation (NAC), that there is a vacant spot within the Airport precincts which is owned by NAC. They are going to make that land available with the help of a local business man and property developer, to improve that vacant lot into a car park and a bus-stop for the travelling public.

There are other vacant spots nearby which is opposite to the main road from the terminal which is also an alternative side.

07/03

But the first preference is to develop the land within the precincts itself which is owned by National Airports Corporation. So that plan is underway from what I understand from National Airport Corporations to develop that piece of land in conjunction with this local businessman and the property developer.

Oil Palm – Share Transfer to Provinces

Mr GARY JUFFA – Mr Acting Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister and they are in relation to an issue that has been a problem for Oro Province for some time. We tried to resolve it with the previous government of which the Prime Minister was a part of. We have hope that this Government will be able to resolve this issue once and for all.

This is in relation to shares that were held by IPBC on behalf of Oro Province, Milne Bay Province and New Ireland Province in oil palm companies that operated in our provinces. The dividends were paid to IPBC for the last 35 years and none of them were remitted to these provinces. It was an undertaking of the Skate government that these shares would be transferred to these provinces.

The government of Peter O'Neill took up that undertaking and promised to transfer those shares but it never happened. Moneys due to these provinces in hundreds of millions

has never been remitted to these provinces, causing significant problems to the oil palm grower in these provinces and provincial governments who had to maintain the feeder roads.

We have found out lately that the shares were sold to Sime Darby in an opportunity that was presented to this country whereby this country could have purchased companies and own the oil palm facilities and the productions means and the benefits therefore.

We were then informed that the shares sold to the value of between K90 million to K120 million were used to offset Bemobile debt. I made a point in a press release some time ago that the previous government was a vindictive government; a government that if anyone opposed any of its policies they will punish those persons, especially those on this side by withholding funds and deliberately avoiding them thus making it difficult for them to operate.

I have hope that this new government is not going to behave in that manner. We want to know if this new government will honour the commitment to these provinces and remit or pay the dues to these Provinces and confirm whether or not those sales of oil palm shares were used to offset Bemobile debts.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker

Mr JAMES MARAPE –Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Governor of Oro for asking this question. I am not privy to the full information behind these issues of shares. I will get the full information and if it is true that the National Government or IPBC has sold the shares which rightfully belong to three provincial governments then and we take corrective measures to ensure that rightful dues are addressed. But in the first instance, let me obtain full information on this matter and will inform Parliament. I will also inform the three provincial governments concerned in writing.

Buka Airport – Outstanding Projects

Mr JOE LERA – Mr Acting Speaker, I was to ask this question as a supplementary but I will raise it as a new question to the Civil Aviation Minister.

In 2015 a contract was awarded to an outside company to fence the Buka airport. The outside company gave a subcontract to the local company and it is now taken three years for the fencing to be completed. And also at the same time the Buka terminal was to be upgraded, that has also not taken place.

Can the good Minister investigate and find out and tell Parliament the people of Bougainville, why these projects have been delayed?

08/03

Mr LEKWA GURE – I would like to thank the Governor of Bougainville on the question that is relating to Airports. I previously answered a question in relation to Goroka airport terminal carpark issues.

On this particular issue, I am not privilege to any information regarding the contract given to an outside company and subsequent subcontracts to do the fencing around the Buka Airport and the upgrade of the Buka Airport terminal. This would come under the jurisdiction of the National Airports Corporation so I will give an undertaking to be fully briefed and will most preferably get back to him sometime next week.

Kairuku-Hiri – Re-imbusement of DSIP Cheque

Mr PETER ISOAIMO – Mr Acting Speaker, I direct my questions to the Minister for Finance but before I do so, I take this time to also congratulate the Prime Minister on his elevation to be the Executive Officer of this country, also the Deputy Prime Minister for his appointment and the various Ministers and Vice Ministers who have taken office thus far.

Mr Acting Speaker, I also ask that our good Prime Minister also take note, being the former Finance Minister.

Mr Acting Speaker, my question is in reference to a K1.95 million DSIP funds belonging to Kairuku-Hiri District which was erroneously paid to the Komo-Magarima District Treasury account on 4 January 2016.

When I first raised this issue with the former Finance Minister who is the current Prime Minister, he assured me that the issue will be looked into and rectified. In his response back then, he also advised me to prepare documentation on this issue and submit to his office to assist with the reimbursement of the said fund. To-date we have not even seen a single toea.

Mr Acting Speaker, in our endeavour to have the funds recovered, we discovered a cheque No.062667 amounting to K2 million as DSIP Funds for Kairuku Hiri District in Finance office.

The cheque was given priority clearance by the Department of Finance for disbursement on the 30 October 2018. This cheque now is nowhere to be found.

Mr Acting Speaker, it seems that the lives of the Kairiuku-Hiri people are less significant nowadays. We have continuously been marginalized and we have not only been starved of funding but have been ripped off funding as well.

Mr Acting Speaker, with due respect to my good Central Governor, Kairuku-Hiri is the only electorate that surrounds Port Moresby and supplies it with vital necessities such as

water and electricity. It would only be fair that we be treated equally if not with the respect it deserves the most.

Mr Acting Speaker, as I speak, my people like all other people living around the country in rural areas, are crying for basic services which are readily available in major towns and cities.

09/03

Unfortunately, I am unable to deliver because of dire financial situations I find myself in. Please give us back the K1.95 million of what was already ours and give us also the K2 million of which is also ours.

Mr Acting Speaker, in light of the issues that I have raised, my questions are:

(1) Can the Minister for Finance inform my people of Kairuku-Hiri and this House when the K1.95 million that was recalled back to Waigani Public Accounts on 8 June, 2018 be reimbursed to my people as promised?

(2) Can the Minister also inform my people on the status of Cheque No. 062667 amounting to K2 million for the DSIP which was given priority clearance by the Department of Finance on 30 October 2018 but somehow went missing?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr CHARLES ABEL – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for Kairuku-Hiri for his important questions. At the outset, Kairuku-Hiri District is one of the biggest districts in Papua New Guinea and indeed based on its Geography and the population it is one of the districts that no doubt the Boundaries Commission needs to consider in the review of the National Boundaries of districts such as Talasea, Ijivitari and Kerema. These electorates are very big and need to be considered in that exercise.

I note the question in relation to the outstanding K1.95 million DSIP that the Member refers to where he claims that it was raised to the Koma-Magarima District. I also note he mentioned about the K2 million Cheque No. 062667 that was reportedly raised with the Department of Finance and has seem to have gone missing.

I can undertake to look into each and every one of these queries and I will give the specifics back to the Member. Of course everybody knows. Again, we come back to the situation and the fact is that the previous government or the current government is committed to these district programmes. We have indeed spent billions in funding through DSIP and

PSIP to districts and there has been no deliberate attempts to starve any particular district or victimise any particular district or province.

You know that I encourage everyone to bring those facts to the Floor if indeed you say there are issues there, let us bring them to the Floor and we can highlight them because hundreds and millions have gone down to individual districts across the country and there is no attempt to withhold money from anybody. We are just working on the usual bureaucratic and funding constraints.

You all know that even this year only K1 million has gone out in DSIP and PSIP. So there are current commitments that are also outstanding as well as some of the historical ones but there is no attempt to withhold funding. We are totally committed to this particular programme but we are working within these constraints. These are existing commitments to the Kairuku-Hiri District and so we will look into and find out exactly where these moneys are and we will do our best to honour those commitments. I will give feedbacks on the Floor of Parliament together with some of the questions asked next week.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Oro Disaster Funds – Outstanding K5 million

Mr GARY JUFFA –Mr Acting Speaker, while we are on the subject of outstanding matters, can the Minister also make an undertaking to look into a K5 million allocation that was made to Northern Province in 2012 for a disaster-like situation that occurred of which only K2 million was paid. The former Prime Minister promised several times to honour that commitment and to date it is still outstanding. We needed that funding to be ready so that we can build a provincial disaster management centre and to date it has not been remitted to us.

I was sent to the Inter-Government Relations office and they said this matter is not in our hands, it is with the Prime Minister's Office. I then went to the Prime Minister's Office, he said no, it is with the Secretary for Treasury. I saw the Secretary for Treasury and he promised me by saying 'your cheque has been printed, today, tomorrow or next week'. It does not happen!

So while you are in the business of checking what has been paid and what has not, can you add this to the list as well?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr CHARLES ABEL –Mr Acting Speaker, I am sure we can sit here all day and raise all the particular bits and pieces that are outstanding. And you know these are all valid claims but I repeat once again and this is including Oro Province. There has been no particular attempt of vindictiveness against Oro Province, there is many infrastructure that has been delivered there -

10/03

Mr Garry Juffa – Point of Order! How do you know this? I can come up with quantified evidence that there has been an effort. That was the last Government's posture – vindictiveness. It is true and for a fact.

For instance, the Minister is responsible for having handed a cheque that was supposed to come directly to the provincial government but he instead decided to hand it to the Open Member at that time. The cheque was for K100,000 for coffee growers in Afore.

Do you remember this? That cheque went missing and to date they have not gotten that K100,000. Don't talk about things you don't know!

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Continue, Mr Minister!

Mr CHARLES ABEL – I accept all these issues and claims but again I repeat that not in my knowledge has there been an attempt to be vindictive to Northern Province. There is a new airport, a hydro scheme, the development of a hospital, bridges have been built. The DSIP has gone down. Surely, there are particular issues here and there, but in general I do not accept it.

Mr Garry Juffa – Point of Order! Those things that he is referring to were done by previous Governments and donor agencies et cetera. Not one cent came from the PNC Government.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, the good Minister is trying to respond. There are too many Points of Orders raised. Mr Minister, please continue!

Mr CHARLES ABEL – I stand by the comments that I have made. Again, let us present the facts and the figures. However, in relation to the particular issue that he is talking

about, I will certainly look into the K3 million outstanding that he is talking about. I acknowledge that particular issue and I will work with the Governor to see how we can resolve it.

Enga – Porgera Mine Negotiations

Sir PETER IPATAS – I wish to direct my question to the Prime Minister since the Minister for Mining is not available.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Porgera Mine has contributed to the economy of this country for about 30 years now. Since 1989, the people of Enga have given a firm security to this country with regard to the Porgera Mine. There has not been one time where the people of Enga have blocked the highway or done anything to jeopardise the operations of the Mine.

On 16 August, the SML will expire and our Prime Minister has made a very significant stand in taking back PNG, particularly what is rightfully ours. The Porgera Mine must be a priority when attempt these ideas. Unlike many other projects in the country, where landowners are given free handouts, we in Porgera are waiting for this time.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to inform the Prime Minister that the landowners and the Engan Provincial Government knowing that this SML will expire have been working tirelessly on trying to come up with a very good deal for our people and this country.

But for some reason, the Government and our public servants are not helping at all. They do not want to look outside of the box and think of our country. Thank you, to the landowners and the Engan Provincial Government for putting up a very hard court battle with the operator. If we did not then, Barrick would have lodged renewal applications and would have already succeeded in achieving it. It would have been the failure of us as leaders and our public servants.

11/03

Our leadership, country and public servants need to wake up. Today I ask the Prime Minister to please take the agencies, negotiate and sit with the landowners and provincial government representatives and work out the way forward to find the best solution to improve the country's revenue. At the same time, Mr Prime Minister, I want to emphasise that all our resources are found in bushland that are close to villages and that is a blessing for our people from God. When we extract the resource, a lot of times we forget those people when the resources are depleted.

For the next 20 years in Pogera, I want to see a program that is going to work towards restoring what has been lost. We can't restore those resources one hundred percent but we want lasting benefits from those resources. Going forward to the next 20 years, there must be sustainable projects so that we can have a place that is not going to be a ghost town or ghost province.

With this in mind, Mr Prime Minister, I think it is appropriate that the landowners and the provincial government after six years of doing hard work are privy to information that the Government office don't have, so I want to ask the Prime Minister to ask the state negotiating team to seriously sit down and involve our landowner representatives and the provincial government so that we can have a good revenue base for our country, thank you.

Mr JAMES MARPE - Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Governor of Enga, Honourable Sir Grand Chief Peter Ipatas for raising this very important question pertaining to Pogera. As he correctly said, SML is expiring on 16 August to be exact and we are very mindful of this one. In fact, one of the first business I undertook as Prime Minister was to call all our key sectors together and we issued instruction to the Mining Department to come up with a clear game plan as to how we will migrate from the current lease into a new lease environment.

Mr Acting Speaker, that information has been conveyed. By the second week of July our stage position would be coming to clear lights and we will be consulting the Enga Provincial Government and key stakeholders in that regard so that every one of us are in one accord or one page as we go down towards the expiry of the present lease.

Mr Acting Speaker, for the benefit of this House as well as the country, Pogera and Ramu Nickel gives us an opportunity to consolidate on our revenue stream as a country going forward.

Many observers including our investors are quite sensitive to some of the catch-cries and phrases that we've made lately especially in our pursuit to take back the economy and in our pursuit to ensure that we gain more from our resources. I like to believe that we meet all our investors in a place where we have a mutual understanding of our laws. I have made indications on many instances that concessions in my view is far from my mind. What our law says and what the law provides for the investors as well as the country is our first reference point of meeting ground. In the instance of Pogera, we will be looking into what our law says and what we can pick off from. And I am inclined to place my appreciation for

the Pogera landowners as well as the Enga Provincial Government for continually ensuring that the Mine is given support until this point in time.

We are mindful that they have issues on ground that they would like to submit to us and so within the next two weeks we will sit with the Enga Provincial Government and probably landowners and tidy up on issues we feel must be addressed.

12/03

Together as the Government and country, we have a clear position as far as renewal of the lease or seeking for a new operator of the mine or whatever arrangement we enter into post 16 August 2019.

Yesterday, in one of my remarks, I mentioned (not a government policy position) but my personal observation on auctioning, it was not limited to mining sectors but more towards government-owned assets. I personally consider auctioning and in that same remarks made reference to portion of land or disposal of land and State assets. That is something that is a personal preference, it has nothing to do with Government policy today, as we speak. Being in office now, we are considering policies that can greatly harness the resources that we have in the country by adding value to them, and Pogera presents a best opportunity to look into it.

First opportunity will be given to present operators. We appreciate that they have been in operating this Mine for a long time. Therefore, genuine operators will be given first opportunity to discuss the best deals they can give back to this country. And the discussion of auction comes from that perspective. Laws that governs resources harvest in our country are clearly placed that this is what we take as a country but if you can add on more then we appreciate that so discussions on auction comes in that context.

Therefore, resource developers in the country must be mindful that we as a country carry the serious burden of the price we pay in terms of environment, social stress and lifting the rest of the country up including people in the affected areas. Such places like Pogera per se has poor social indicators, as we speak.

Just like many of our mining areas, they are directly affected by the consequences of the mine. Their social structure has been affected and the environmental effects has been felt severely and we are mindful of these issues on the ground today.

Pogera for instances, the landowners living conditions can be likened to those living in squatter settlements. These issues will be addressed in totally and as a government we have already shifted towards greater ownership of resources, but we are mindful that we

don't chase our investors; renewal leases or discussions of new lease gives us an opportunity to really take greater for our people.

For the investors out there, their reference point is what is stated in the law right now. These are indications that this Parliament or subsequent Parliaments are looking into amending resource laws and we are looking for best models out there in the world. Starting with economist in the region and many of the big global operators who know the stance by resource regime around the world. Many of our resource laws today are legacy issues we are carrying into the future.

So, I will make it no secret that my Government or my generation of leadership are all about harvesting more from my resources. But, we will not give a shock to the industry, but will discuss with them and warn them and put them on notice to move towards a regime shift that is of greater empowerment to our local economy. We will do it in a responsible manner, where by you win – we win.

You got your shareholders to report to, I have my eight million shareholders to report to also in this country. And so we will accept honest discussions on the table and I appeal to the concerns of this Parliament. As we sit and look into resource laws, not only in the mining sector but every other resources in our country, the investors coming into this country, we welcome you with good hands. Come in and participate and win for your shareholders and we must win for our greater shareholders, which are the eight million people.

Therefore, Pogera presents us with fairest opportunity. We will be giving our best treatment to existing lease holders to see whether they can improve on from the current arrangements they have and that includes the response to the taxes paid.

13/03

I will be establishing a forensic audit team to look into what we have taken from Pogera until this point in time and what have we taken from Lihir. It is a fair go for me as Prime Minister and the new Treasurer to look into what we have collected thus far. Also we must look into what is collected for Ok Tedi and all our resources collectively. We are not being vindictive but we are trying to appraise as to how we summed up as well and putting our revenue and our asset base in the clearest possible exposure. And mapping out a way going forward so that our investors are not harmed but to make sure that we win for our country.

Our investors must not forget, lest we forget, a safer stronger PNG is also good for them because their business assets will be safe. A weaker and hungrier PNG, including

landowners is not safe for our investors, so we are all about creating a safe PNG and Pogera gives us a first opportunity. We pay respect to our landowners up in Pogera, we pay respect to Enga Provincial Government. We will hear you clearly but within the context of national equitable sharing of resources for our country.

**REPAIR AND RESTORATION OF TOTEM POLE AND ARTEFACTS –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, during yesterday’s sitting the Chair was asked a question from the Honourable Member for Nawaeb, regarding the repair and restoration of the totem poles and artefacts of the National Parliament Building.

Honourable Theo Zurenuoc, as the Speaker of the Ninth Parliament, in his application of his vision of restoration, reformation and modernisation of the Parliament House in 2013, resulted in the removal of 19 masks on the lintel above the main entrance of Parliament and caused considerable damage to the totem pole in the Grand Hall. After the lengthy court proceedings the National Court declared on May 30, 2016 that the removal of the masks and the damage done to the totem poles was unlawful and infringed upon *Section 45* of the *Constitution*, the *National Cultural Property Preservation Act* of 1995 and the *Copyright and Neighbourhood Right Act* 2000.

The National Court also ordered the National Parliament to repair, return or replace the 19 masks and totem poles in consultation with the persons who created and install the object of cultural decoration at the Parliament House.

Honourable Members, the Chair is pleased to inform the House that the Speaker of the Tenth Parliament, the Honourable Job Pomat, declared that he will carry out the orders of the National Court from 2016 and repair, return and replace these cultural artefacts. This is the declaration by the Speaker to restore the totem pole and masks on the lintel at the National Parliament and consultation commenced with some of the original carvers at the National Arts School of the University of Papua New Guinea.

14/03

The working team within the Parliamentary Service has been established to prepare the required documentation for the scope of works, costings and ascertain the time frame in

which to restore the totem pole and the lintel to the original state in compliance with the National Court Order.

Preliminary preparations have commenced on the design and construction phase to try and replicate as much as possible the original structure of the totem pole and the masks on the lintel.

Honourable Members, the National Parliament originally required funding assistance through the APEC Office in preparation for APEC as part of the APEC readiness project. Unfortunately the National Parliament was unable to be given the funding and so it had to source the funding elsewhere as the budgetary appropriations of the Parliamentary Service cannot accommodate the costs of the repair and restoration.

Honourable Members, last week the National Parliament forwarded a letter to the Secretary for National Planning with copies to Treasury, Finance and the APEC Office for funding to complete the documentation, completion and restoration of the totem pole and the masks on the lintel.

A follow up late last week gave some indication of receptiveness to the request from funding from these relevant government agencies but as to the actual date when assistance will be provided for this is a different story.

We await funding to come forth from these relevant agencies in order for the full restoration of the artefacts to be done.

Honourable Members, the chair resolves to ensure that as much as possible that the original artefacts that were removed and damaged are restored to their original state.

The work can only be done by Papua New Guinea traditional craftsmen who will provide the expertise required as such is a prestigious national cultural treasure.

Thank you.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS

LLG Elections Nomination Fee

Mr PILA NININGI (Imbonggu – Minister for Inter-Government Relations) – Mr Speaker, I ask leave of the Parliament to answer questions raised yesterday.

Leave granted.

Mr PILA NININGI – Mr Acting Speaker, yesterday the Member for Ijivitari asked me a series of questions in relation to collection of fees.

The Member stated that in one of his wards, the council candidates would have difficulties paying their nomination fees and the Electoral Commission has issued an instruction that fees be paid directly into the banks.

15/03

We must consider the law and order situation which does not warrant us to collect in different council areas. So the rule is, they have to pay into the bank and that is the standing policy. It may cost candidates a little bit of extra money, but they have to go to the bank

Mr Richard Masere – Point of Order! I appreciate the answer from the Minister for Inter-Government Relations.

My concern was purely to do with the people in the rural communities who are unable to travel to the capital to pay their nomination fee. And the Electoral Commission must accept some responsibilities because of the court case that was put three months ago that election was deferred. Many of these people in the rural communities are not on pay rolls and they do not receive any income. They could be fishermen or subsistence farmers who are intending to demonstrate their rights as citizens to participate in the elections. And my concern is that, the Electoral Commission is not making this election very friendly for this rural communities to participate meaningfully, and express their democratic right to be able to be candidates in this LLG elections.

My question was if they are unable to make those differences now going forward, what are they going to put in place to ensure that these type of issues that the country faces in terms of his point of law and order, how are they going to address this concern going forward if they are unable to make those changes for this election?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr PILA NININGI – Yes, those are some relevant considerations that we can give, but again is a law and order problem where the Electoral Commission is put in a situation where they cannot collect fees at different council area levels. So we must also take responsibility. I believe they are all leaders, but if the law and order situation is okay, then we can collect fees there. Let us face the situation as it is and pay the fees at the banks.

If they pay early, the Commission will accept the nomination. It does not matter where they pay but if they pay before the writs are issued it is still valid and nominations can be accepted.

Writs for 6,300 council wards have been issued, so they will go out and all nominations will open at 4 p.m, this afternoon. So councils can go in and nominate where writs have been issued and all their materials are prepared ready to shift within two weeks. One week is for them to nominate and on the other week, if they need to, they can campaign, but I think they are leaders and already campaigned so there is no need for them to do so. If they have to campaign then they can go ahead but otherwise, they are already leaders in their communities.

16/03

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr RAINBO PAITA (Finschaffen-Minister for Communication and Energy) – I ask leave of the Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

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

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent Order of the Day No. 48 Private Business being called on forthwith.

BIPARTISAN COMMITTEE ON BOUGAINVILLE MATTERS – IMPLEMENTING THE BOUGAINVILLE PEACE AGREEMENT – PERTINENT ISSUES AND CHALLENGES – PAPER AND STATEMENT – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER

Debate resumed from 12 April 2018 (see page...)

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Bougainville Affairs) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I thanked the Leader of Government Business for calling upon this important subject on Notice No. 48.

As the newly appointed Minister for Bougainville Affairs, I wish to continue and contribute to this important subject and initiate this debate today.

But firstly before I do, I wish to thank our Prime Minister that Honourable James Marape for appointing me as the Minister for Bougainville Affairs after the good work that was done by my predecessor Honourable Samb.

I want to express my sincere thank you to the Member for taking up the challenge, particularly providing a very strong and new leadership style with a lot of energy and vigour.

He went on the Island of Bougainville and communicated with the leaders and also for providing the leadership on the Joint awareness program between him and his counterparts from Bougainville.

Since I have been appointed Minister, I have consulted him and taken up some of the strong recommendations that he wanted me to follow through and this morning I want to acknowledge his contributions over a very short period of time.

As all the Honourable Members of this Parliament are aware, of the two biggest event in our calendar for 2019;

1) The Local Level Government Election, which is now taking place ,and

2) The Referendum that was guaranteed under the Bougainville Peace Agreement on the 30 August 2001 when the Bougainville peace agreement was signed.

So, standing here this morning I want to thank the Prime Minister for appointing me as Minister for Bougainville Affairs and also for making the commitment on behalf of the Government to ensure that the Referendum process is fully supported, fully funded and it is seen to be concluded.

That is the commitment of this Government and so I take the queue from Prime Minister and as Minister responsible, as all of you aware, after one week of my appointment, I went to Bougainville and took a one week consultations meeting with the President before he went to Manila. I also met with Speaker and I met with my counterpart on Bougainville and went on a road show in some of the places; for example, Torokina which is one of the remote parts of the Bougainville.

So, I stand up today, to share with you some information so that you will aware of the process that we will go through and on this occasion.

I would request the Leader of the Opposition and Opposition Caucus to give me sometime next week to fully brief the Opposition Caucus.

17/03

I have prepared a booklet to share with you on the history, processes details and give you at least a full awareness on what we are expected to do. So I will request the Leader of Government Business early next week, if I can come to your government caucus to present the booklet to you as well as to our own Caucus so everyone is aware of the history, process and the expectations.

The reason is because as per the bipartisan committees, and I would like to thank the Chairman of the Bipartisan Committee on Bougainville Affairs, particularly the Governor of Southern Highlands and his deputy, the Regional Member for Bougainville and the committee for taking up the leadership. When you were appointed you went onto Bougainville and participated in the awareness programme. And I would like to say thank you very much for the programme.

Before end of this session, I will be consulting with some individuals who would want to be the members of the new bipartisan committees so we will announce it before we adjourn for the combined programme to address these issues.

As far as the report is concerned it basically highlighted some of the challenges that we are facing in the country particularly in the referendum processes. I have summarised them into five categories and I want to share with you on the awareness programme on my part to inform the honourable leaders because it is this tenth Parliament that will receive the referendum result.

There is no other leader in the country except the Tenth Parliament leaders that will be receiving the result of referendum.

The first biggest challenge is categorized as the referendum must be delivered. The commitment has already been made by the Prime Minister. You will remember that we budgeted for K20 million and all that money has already been released. So I thank the Prime Minister for his leadership in this. I also acknowledge the support from the former Prime Minister for his commitment and support during his tenure as the Prime Minister.

Our commitment as a Government is that this referendum must be delivered. There are certain structures that are already in place. One of the important bodies that has been established is the Bougainville Referendum Commission. This commission is an independent body that will deliver the referendum, particularly the electoral process as we

call it. That commission is already established and they have their secretariat and it was established in June 2017.

Most important part of their work is the enrolment process. For us to deliver the referendum and making sure that the referendum is credible because the international community is watching this nation. As you know there many referendums held right around the world and we then signed the peace agreement, the international bodies were also signatories to that peace agreement and witnessed the occasion. These include the United Nations, New Zealand and Australia.

As we are concluding the Bougainville Referendum through the peace agreement this process is closely monitored by the international community.

One of the important areas in delivering this referendum is that it must be credible. That means that the role must be credible. All Bougainvilleans must enrol to vote.

18/03

I am glad that the BRC has also allowed enrolment of Bougainvilleans living outside of Papua New Guinea. Many Bougainvilleans are residing in Cairns, Brisbane and Solomon Islands. BRC will now manage the process to make sure the electoral process is provided for every Bougainvillean. The Referendum must be delivered so BRC is in place.

The second most important part of the referendum process is the definition of the two (2) options that the Bougainvilleans will vote on and that is as you and I know, Independence or Greater Autonomy. The finishing of those two options have already been formally agreed upon by the two Governments.

I just want to read the definitions and we will debate on it later when I present my formal Bougainville Statement next week, but this is in response to the Bipartisan Committee Report.

The definition for Independence is; An Independence Nation State with Sovereign Powers and Laws recognise under International Law and by other Sovereign States to be an Independent State separate from the State of Papua New Guinea. I want to share with you that the Autonomous Bougainville Government through there process of awareness and education are already doing that and we have evidence that this has been going through and they have a section called 'Referendum Readiness' at every constituency so they are using their own resources to make sure that every constituency is declared Referendum Ready.

The second definition, the option is Greater Autonomy and this is how our two (2) Governments have agreed to it. I negotiated political settlement that provides for a formal

autonomy with greater powers than those currently available under constitutional arrangements. So those further explanations have been given and I personally experienced that when I went to Torokina and they ask a question of, what is Independence and what is Greater Autonomy so as part of our commitment to deliver the referendum which as you know is the third arm of the Peace Agreement, Autonomous Government as well as Weapons Disposal are the two (2) other pillars of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and so Referendum is the final leg.

The third area that I want to give you an awareness on, is that the date has already been given, 16 August, is when the Writs will be issued, 12 October, is when the voting will take place. At the moment we have been discussing with the Bougainville Referendum Commission as to their preparedness for these two (2) dates and there are some concerns that have been given at this stage, particularly the progress of the referendum common roll so we are assessing this.

The Referendum commitment that we have made must be done under a peaceful process which is as you all know that it is the bottom line of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, Everything that we do must be done through peaceful means and committing ourselves in ensuring that peace is maintained. This is because the Bougainville crisis as you and I are aware of was the worst in the region after the World War II.

When we signed the Bougainville Peace Agreement we made a commitment, never to go allow any system to bring the crisis back again on the Island. Therefore, part of our commitment to deliver the Referendum is, how to deal with the factions within Bougainville.

19/03

I want to assure the Honourable House that I have met and spoken with the ex-combatant leaders from the various groups such as the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, the Resistance Army, the Mekamui and representatives of the so-called Kingdom of Papala, and they have now formed what they called a core group.

I had the pleasure of meeting them for two hours on the Friday I was over there. They are committed to making sure they participate and making sure that the referendum is peaceful and that it is guaranteed. I thanked them and told them that I was going back to tell our Government that you have made a commitment to the referendum. Our job is to work with everybody in Bougainville and make sure that the referendum process is concluded.

As part of the factions' commitment two big events that are going to take place very soon and I am mobilising resources. I thank our bilateral friends of the Australian

Government and the New Zealand Government with their people who have agreed to help us.

They have given their support with the National Reconciliation Program as well as the Ex-combatant Peace Program in Panguna. These events are very important because it will set the phase for guaranteeing the security of the referendum process.

Secondly, the Bougainville Referendum Commission is in a very tight time frame in terms of resources. This is because the SRC was established in June 2017 and the team that was formed have been beaten due to time constraints. They have made a commitment to make sure that they deliver everything.

The third issue is managing and implementing the referendum outcome. When I present my statement next week and when I give you the booklet on the awareness, you will find that the two options are very important. They are independence or greater autonomy.

We therefore need to manage the processes properly particularly in anticipation of whatever the outcome may be. For example, if they choose to vote for independence, under the Peace Agreement when our former leaders were negotiating an agreement, three issues came up. Firstly was the issue of Bougainville leaders who wanted independence immediately and to which our former leaders did not agree to. Secondly was the issue of autonomy which they did not accept. These two options gave the third issue of an autonomy with the idea of voting later on. This caused the referendum to come about.

Mr Acting Speaker, now that the referendum is here, the guarantee was a 10-year to 15-year time span after the establishment of a Bouganvillean Government which came in 2005. We are now in the 15th year window and so we must deliver the referendum result before June 2020. We have agreed that October 12 will be the date to vote. On June 20 is the election for the next Bougainville Government.

I am explaining this time frames because we are the ones that are going to debate the results. We have October till June 20 before the next elections. We therefore need to make sure that we manage the processes where we begin to negotiate.

The other issue on the Bougainville Peace Agreement and what the Government need is what we call a Transitional Task Force which has been established. This task force is coached by myself as Minister responsible and my counterpart the Minister for Bougainville Peace Agreement and Implementation.

20/03

We had the fourth meeting and the Ministers selected Ministers from this Government and the selected Ministers on the ABG side, and it is a jointly-chaired task force. The Peace Agreement always prescribed that everything must be done together.

For those of you who have been following the Bougainville Peace Agreement, there is a body called the Joint Supervisory Body (JSB) that was also an instrument to continue to managing the pre-referendum process from 2005 to now, chaired by both the Prime Minister on this side and the President. So, everything has to be done together. As part of preparation for the result of referendum, the process allowed for the establishment of a transitional Ministerial Task Force that is also in place.

The biggest challenge that we face is to meet regularly to identify all the issues that we believe will arise, such as the negotiating period. As we are negotiating, how long we will negotiate for, if we negotiate for a very short time, what are the risk? If we take too long, what are the risks? So our task is in the task forces to make sure that we manage the time frame very effectively.

There are two areas which I have included which is basically related to the post-referendum process. So when I give you the specific details at your caucus meeting, I will explain in detail the requirements. But, at the end of the day, we cannot defer this Referendum; we must fully resource it. We must deliver it.

I want to conclude by making this clarity, the Referendum is what we called non-binding referendum that means that it has to be negotiated between those two teams before it comes to the Parliament for ratification. It is going to be a negotiated outcome that will come to the Floor of Parliament for us leaders in the Tenth Parliament to ratify it.

Time has got up with me, thank you, I thank chair for the opportunity, but I look forward to further briefing both at the Government Caucus and the Opposition. I thank you.

Sitting suspended for lunch from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m..

21/03

Mr SAM AKOITAI (Central Bougainville) – Mr Acting Speaker, I want to contribute on this debate on a bipartisan report presented by the Committee on their trip to Bougainville. I am grateful to the Committee Members for representing Parliament to go to Bougainville so that our people can witness the work carried out by Parliament to implement this Bougainville Peace Agreement come to reality.

Firstly, I want to thank the Prime Minister for appointing Sir Puka Temu as the Minister responsible for Bougainville Affairs. He is a senior Statesman and this issue of Bougainville really needs a fatherly figure to carry out this responsibility for the implementation of Bougainville Peace Agreement. And of course he is not new to this issue so I will fully support and I too believe the four of us from Bougainville will continue to work with him to make sure that we work to achieve the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

The Minister has contributed meaningfully by way of debating on issues concerning Bougainville Peace Agreement. In fact, he has outlined the process which he has already commenced on it.

Therefore, what we all should be made aware is that the Bougainville Peace Agreement has got three main structures; (1) Weapons disposal, (2) Autonomy and (3) Referendum. So in this package of Bougainville Peace Agreement, we have 15 years to fulfil the requirements of this Bougainville Peace Agreement.

Right now, the stage that we are in since the Parliamentary Committee went to Bougainville, they have found out a lot of issues when they went there. And those issues I believe should actually be looked at by the National Government. Some of the issues covered were the issue of outstanding commitments by the National Government.

But right now, we can wait for the Minister to have that report tabled next week and we will continue with this debate on Bougainville, but the main success for Bougainville Peace Agreement is that it is set up in a way that the National Government with ABC will work hand in hand to implement the Bougainville Peace Agreement and not one party only. Because the Bougainville Peace Agreement is jointly created by both the National Government and the people of Bougainville and they both must join to achieve that.

So the stage that we are in now is on the third pillar, which is the referendum issue. And that issue was not easy for the National Government to give in to as mentioned by the Minister today in the morning session because our people really wanted independence and nothing else.

Let me also highlight that most of our bureaucrats and certain leaders who seem to not fully understand that the crisis was not about independence and we must be clear on this point.

22/03

This crisis arose due to the issues on the mine. The arguments of the landowners of Panguna was, they were never party to the Bougainville Copper Agreement. And there are

a number of Prime Ministers who refused to review the BCA to include them in the agreement that is why the crisis began.

The landowners of Panguna did not talk about the issue of independence. But what happened was, the Panguna issue was a trigger for that underlying issue, which was always there amongst Bougainvilleans – the underlying issue of Independence.

Let me take you back to the history of the issue of independence. As I alluded to my past statements, I have continued to state that we are all innocent.

The Papua New Guinea Government is so innocent. There is nothing wrong the PNG Government, even the Bougainvilleans are innocent. Those that created the problems were the two colonial masters –British and Germany.

When New Guinea was under the colonial administration of Germany and the Solomon Island was a British colony. In an exchange of Islands –Western Samoa and Bougainville, the British asked Germany to take Bougainville and while they took Western Samoa. That is what created the crisis, it was in 1899, not 1999.

All of us are born into this crisis. We have to understand where it started. So when the German took Bougainville as its colony, the Germans introduced the plantations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our people from the other provinces of this country who were instrumental in developing these plantations under the German administration. We had workers from the Highlands, as far as Lake Kopyago, Hela, Hagen and other provinces working on these plantations.

The Bougainvilleans were questioning who these people were and the Germans told them, you are part of them. The Bougainvilleans said no, we are not part of them, we are part of Solomon Islands, where did this people come from? That is when it started. They started experiencing conflicts between Bougainvilleans and non-Bougainvilleans.

One of the approaches that the Kiaps took was to create soccer competitions where non-Bougainvilleans and Bougainvilleans could sort out their differences on the field.

During those days, there were no proper rules applied on the field. Most of the players aimed to kick their opponent's legs. That was how they tried to solve the problem. It is a long history, but there were certain entities that were formed.

(1) Hahalis Welfare Society in Buka – which became a baby-boom avenue, after they were advised that to become independent, they needed a bigger population.

(2) Nakitakui Inavitu group formed on mainland Bougainville, this was in the same year that the Mataungan Association was created in East New Britain.

All these entities began in the 1950s and around 1960s. In order to spread throughout the rest of Papua New Guinea, the Bougainvilleans formed the Mungkas Association. In case, you're thinking it was just a soccer club. It was in fact a movement for independence.

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It was not until 1974 two Bougainville professionals were involved in a car accident in Goroka where a child was killed and because one of them was a doctor, they stopped and tried to assist the child at which time they were chopped and killed by the bystanders in Goroka. That started off the 1974 Crisis where Bougainvilleans destroyed all the administration offices there and that sparked-off the issue of independence. The compromise there was the Provincial Government System which came out of that crisis.

How long did it take us to have this crisis again? Thirteen years. In 1988 the Bougainville Crisis erupted not because of the independence issue, it was because of the mine but it triggered the independence issue.

So when you are guided by that, you must be mindful of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. It is an agreement which has a main objective of restoring total peace in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea. That is its main objective because of the history that I have alluded to. You must not be fooled into thinking that the crisis started in 1988 – no, it was a crisis from a long time ago.

Mr Acting Speaker, through you, Prime Minister, you are going to be the champion by resolving the Bougainville Crisis through this referendum. It's a big ask but seriously, we need to attend to it. If some Members have an inkling to forget Bougainville because peace is coming back, I assure you it is akin to you pouring water on a burning fire without turning the wood around and the embers are still burning. That's how it is going to happen.

Members, I personally got involved in this. I sound like a broken record but I am telling you, I have had experiences of our own soldiers weeping over the death of Bougainvilleans. When a Bougainvillean perished, they shed tears, why am I killing my own countrymen they lamented. These are sad stories and we don't have to allude to them but these are the things that continues to dwell in my mind.

I was supported by 4500 strong resistant force members to support the security forces and I demand nothing less from all honourable Members of this Parliament but that they work within the Peace Agreement, nothing more, nothing less. Let us resolve this issue.

It is good that we are here and we are prepared to talk about it. Let us face it. It is going to be the biggest issue that this country or this Parliament is going to face.

As the Minister alluded to this morning, there is very good progress going on right now. Positive things are happening. I am very impressed that I was an observer at those task force meetings. I was really encouraged by the turnout of Ministers at the task force meetings.

So what we have now is that the referendum issue has progressed more than when the committee went down and they compiled this report. It has progressed beyond that. But the outstanding issues that this Parliament or government need to attend to are still there and we must understand as the Minister made clear in the morning.

The third pillar kicks off a three-stage process. The three-stage process in the third pillar is on referendum. The referendum will take place including consultations after the referendum and then ratification by Parliament. That process of consultation is to manage the outcome of the referendum so that no party can be disappointed.

24/03

What has to come here, is a negotiated arrangement. With that, I am so happy that Members can openly talk about this issue.

I really wanted the same as all Papua New Guineans and the Bougainvillians that the crisis must send. We must be sensitive about this issue. This referendum role has conducted throughout Papua New Guinea and some overseas countries were the Minister has alluded to. Some of you can vote, like the Minister for Bougainville Affairs and the former Minister for Education, because under the Bougainville Constitution (I am not encouraging you to go and marry a Bougainvillean), you can vote if you are married to a Bougainvillean.

(Laughter in the chamber)

Mr SAM AKOITAI – I am looking forward to us continuing and make progress to end this crisis which has victimized more than 20 000 people.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr WILLIAM POWI (Southern Highlands) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. In my former capacity as the Chairman for Parliamentary Committee on Bougainville Referendum, I express my gratitude towards the newly appointed Minister for Bougainville Affairs, Sir Puka Temu. I think it is fitting. You are a very senior leader in the country since Bougainville is a very important issue confronting our country, it is important that a senior figure is driving

force to maintain consultation with our leaders from Bougainville, so I congratulate you on your appointment and the work going forward.

Maybe in the coming weeks, when we do have Parliament Sitting, we will need to prepare a detailed statement, so that the leaders of this country must debate on this important issue. Bougainville is an important matter for this country so we should not be in fear of the unknown. We are leaders, so we must debate on this issue because it is an important matter.

I would like the Honourable Minister to take note of the detailed report which the Parliamentary Committee has done. A lot of issues on negligence of the National Government is contained in it. I think it is a big challenge for the Government. If we can open dialogue, partnership and genuine consultation with ABG, a lot of this issues can be managed going forward. That is my honest view on this. We need honest, partnership and consultation with the leaders of this country as well as the ABG.

Mr Acting Speaker, through you, Minister, Sir Puka Temu if you can consult this first of its kind report that we had presented. It has a lot of important legal administrative governance and issues of implications going forward. That was the first matter I wanted to raise.

The leaders of this country must know that Bougainville is not a Provincial Government, get your mind away from this. Bougainville is constitutionally an Autonomous Government, with a President and its leaders. Is that clear? It is an Autonomous Government-fully Autonomous from the same *Constitution* that establishes this country, and through its provision established the Autonomous Government of Bougainville to manage their own affairs and all the issues of Governance in Bougainville.

25/03

That must be very clear. So Provincial Government DDAs and Open Electorate DDAs, where do they sit in these arrangements?

As in the report that I tabled, we were constitutionally an autonomous government but on an administrative front, you are running a parallel system that is not supported by the constitutional arrangement they have.

So, these are inherent major issues that affects governance so when you looking at Bougainville you look at the constitutional government fully given autonomy to managing all affairs with its own leader, president and their Parliament, except five things that is controlled by the Independent State of Papua New Guinea. It has control over the military,

International and Foreign Affairs, the currency and three other powers vested in Waigani, otherwise they are a fully autonomous government to manage their own affairs. So within this context the Marape-Steven government should immediately establish genuine consultations with the ABG Government. And those consultations must be genuine, must be respected and in that context whatever that is due, National Government must give it to the people of Bougainville.

Last time we went around this area, especially these youths when the crisis started to the time that we had the Bougainville Peace Agreement, within that gap 15 to 16 years old were uncontrollable and they frightened us. Waigani never recognised us and took care of our needs so what is the point of us becoming a united Papua New Guinea and coming to preach to us. You are light-skinned, why are you coming to preach on this issue?

It became very personal on some of us who went into very difficult areas and confrontations. So out of fear sometimes I wondered why I was here instead of resolving issues in Southern Highlands. It became personal, my brothers.

There are people who are saying if Waigani is too far and cannot meet our needs, there's no point in becoming part of Papua New Guinea. That is clear; give to them what belongs to them. Maintain open genuine, honest consultation with the leader of ABG because they are constitutionally not a provincial government but a separate Autonomous Government from the *constitution* to which we also have our powers to establish as a country. Once you do that, as the leader John Momis said, we need to define what greater Autonomy means and what this independence means for them.

So first and foremost in my view, is genuine understanding with the father of the *Constitution* of this country, John Momis. Definitely when he crafted the *Constitution* together with all like-minded leaders, I don't think he had in his mind to secede and leave behind a completely disintegrated country; that is the last thing he would ever dream of.

But having said that, he is now the President of a constitutionally arranged Autonomous Government. My challenge to the Marape-Steven government, young, energetic and intelligent as you are, is to maintain relationship with the ABG with a fatherly relationship and deal with this so we manage this referendum process.

With the referendum process that we observed in Northern Ireland, we were given some exposure on how they conduct referendums. We also looked at certain aspects where North Island looked to some other countries that went through referendums.

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The Referendum we understand is a very dynamic process. This exercise is for the first time happening in this part of the hemisphere. This is a very huge challenge as we strive to achieve it. Referendums have happened in Scotland, Northern Ireland and some other places in the world, but this is happening within our own country.

I urge our leaders of this country to take an active interest in the way in which Bougainville will conduct the referendum process. The outcome of the Bougainville will tell this country and the rest of the world where the people of Bougainville stand.

The most important aspect we have to grip is that we have few more months left and as a country let us manage dialogue and consultation with the Autonomous Government and manage this process of conducting this referendum and more importantly managing the outcome after the Referendum is completed.

Mr Acting Speaker, let me acknowledge the Central Bougainville Member when we visited his Wakunai Village, he broke down in tears. The predicament experienced and shared by the Honourable Leader was heart breaking. This is what he said, I have been fighting my own people. We were bereaved over their plight.

I thank God that this man is now in Parliament. He now sees the need of his people. I promised the Leader and his people there and then saying, this is the mini-Parliament, but I will deliver your heart felt concerns to the big Parliament and I stand today telling the Central Bougainville Member and your people that I have delivered back to you.

This report is a detailed report without fear or favour covering all the issues that we have encountered is on record in Parliament. We need to revisit some of these important issues we covered.

This is one of the most important peace agreements and there are three vital aspects that have transpired.

The first is the Autonomy. In Autonomy process, the devolution of powers and the public service functions from Waigani to Bougainville, I think the Chief Secretary, and the Secretaries must take heed of this very seriously and provide capacities to districts for administration and financial capacities. Where the each sections have their own ability to raise revenue for themselves or not. All these as per the agreement must be on the ground. This is one of the conditions of the peace agreement.

The second, is the weapons disposal. That happened. And that is one of the most important conditions.

Now we are at the referendum process, which is the third pillar. When we take into account the reconciliation process. Some of the prerequisites requirements like awareness, questions have already been determined. So, the people will vote for whether there will be greater autonomy or independence.

Our people need to understand, what is greater autonomy, and what it entail? In the context of this, we also need to table a Ministerial Statement to Parliament to highlight some of the defects in law.

I urge the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister to maintain consultation with one of the founding fathers of this *Constitution*, Mr John Momis. Find out whether he wants to separate from this country or leave behind a united Papua New Guinea.

I urge you all to have genuine father- son relationship and consult him and in doing so you will win his respect and trust. I am emphatic on this consultation where it must have a personal touch and meaningful trust where we give back to them what belongs to them. We must not deprive these people and bludge like the previous Government.

It is disheartening when we travelled as the Parliamentary Committee and our cheques bounced in Kieta. Just throw them away and we all go back. This is a Government cheque. It is not an LNG Cheque or some ordinary worker in the village and this cheque bounced. How do you expect us to fulfil our duties there?

27/03

How can you send someone to Kieta and expect them to come back? How can you expect us to bring Government service there? Have some meaningful consultation, this is a matter of national importance. Debate this, my leaders, do not shy-off. There is goodness in Autonomy. Bougainville gave way to the provincial government system. Sir John Momis said, a man when you put him in the Dessert, he can craft his own destiny, so the Government is the same too, do not look at it in a bad way, look at it on the positive side as opposed to giving autonomy to New Ireland, Enga or East New Britain. These are fake Autonomies in my view. Why have an autonomy in my province, I determine the course. Autonomy backed up by legislation is what we need so we are empowered and transparent. Give Autonomy to Bougainville but if you want to go that way without the central powers in Waigani but with government powers then you can give it to the provinces.

Having said that, in my view, do not be a pessimist, always look on the positive side and let the Government consult with ABG managing the conduct of the referendum. Not only to the point of conducting referendum but after the referendum on how to manage the

process, a very complex process and then you decide a win-win situation between the Autonomous Region and Papua New Guinea. And with John Momis, the Father of our *Constitution* who is still alive, you will arrive at a destination this country will emulate as a win-win situation for the unity of this country.

That is my view but I will contribute more as I will prepare towards some of the issues that I have in my report, one of which is a constitutionally Autonomous Government. Under the *Constitution* all the resources should go to the Autonomous Government because that is what the *Constitution* says. Do not hold back in a parallel system.

With that, I thank you all very much. I commend the Minister for bringing a detailed statement. Bougainville is a matter of national importance and leaders must speak up, support it and don't sit back in fear of the unknown. Thank you.

Mr JOE LERA (Bougainville) –Mr Acting Speaker, I want to speak as the Member of the Parliamentary Bipartisan Committee in the 10th Parliament and now as the acting Chairman of the National Government Bipartisan Committee.

Let me firstly thank the Prime Minister for appointing a Prominent Senior Politician to take charge of the Bougainville Affairs Ministry. Thank you Prime Minister for your wisdom in appointing Dr Sir Puka Temu in regards to the presentation this morning by the Minister. Let me firstly congratulate Sir Puka Temu on his appointment as the new Minister for Bougainville Affairs and the great work he has commenced to do in this short time on Bougainville and here in Parliament, I also thank the former Minister, Member for Goilala, Honourable William Samb, for the great leadership he demonstrated in moving the Bougainville Peace process forward to new levels during his time as the Minister.

I agree with awareness points the Minister presented in regards to the date for the referendum, the questions to be put, the common roll updates and the total funding to the BRC to carry out the referendum preparatory work, et cetera. The outcome of the referendum is readable, reliable and globally accepted. I also thank the NRI for their continual support of the process as well as the Australian, New Zealand, UN and Japanese Governments and encourage other donors to assist as well in ensuring the referendum preparations is conducted well and all eligible voters registered to vote.

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I encourage the ANCOVA to continue to play an effective and proactive role in the coordination role of the parties involved in the Bougainville Peace Agreement. These parties include the ABC Government, the National Government, the Parliamentary Bipartisan Committee on Bougainville Affairs, the Bougainville Referendum Commission and Ministerial Task Force on Post Referendum Issues and the Donors, so everyone is seen to be working together for the common good of the people in regard to the Bougainville Peace Process and the upcoming referendum.

On behalf of the Parliamentary Bipartisan Committee on Bougainville Affairs, the Committee will do all it can to work with the parties involved. At the same time stand back and perform its oversight role on behalf of Parliament. We will continually inform MPs and encourage debate on the issues towards finding new solutions.

We will ensure that the Bougainville Peace Agreement requirements are effectively met by both governments of ABC and Papua New Guinea Government. We will ensure or try our best to ensure that all the recommendations of all reports on the Bougainville Peace Agreement Process are implemented and if not, find out why and report to Parliament.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Committee will also present the latest Parliamentary Bipartisan Report hopefully next Thursday and allow Parliament to debate the findings and try to find practical workable answers to the many unanswered questions before the referendum is voted on. Thank you Mr Acting Speaker.

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

Motion – That the Report and its recommendations be adopted – agreed to.

Report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 2.45 p.m..