

FOURTH DAY

Friday 28 June 2019

DRAFT HANSARD

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HARRY MOMOS

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FOURTH DAY

Friday 28 June 2019

The Acting Speaker (**Mr Jeffrey Pesab 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 10.50 a.m., and invited the Member for North Bougainville, **Honourable William Nakin**, to say Prayers:

‘In the name of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Spirit, everlasting and ever-living God, the creator of Heaven and Earth. Thank you for creating each one of us in your image and likeness. Thank you for choosing each one of us to represent your people in this honourable House.

In your word Lord, in John 13:5, you said ‘I am the Vine and you are the branches and those that remain in me and I in them will bear a great deal of fruit for you can do nothing without me,’ in recognising this our weaknesses and sinfulness we asked for your mercy, Lord, in our downfalls.

Have mercy on us and send your most Holy Spirit upon us to help and guide us as we deliberate on important matters of this country PNG, give us wisdom, knowledge and understanding. Bless our newly elected Prime Minister, his Deputy, bless the Opposition Leader, his Deputy, the Speaker, his Deputy, bless all the Members of Parliament who are here today and those that are not present with us, bless the people of PNG.

And we exalt and give glory to you, Lord! Amen’

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF SOGERI NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament that the students and the teachers of Sogeri National High School are present

in the Public Gallery this morning. On behalf of the Parliament, I extend a warm welcome to the National Parliament.

QUESTIONS

Water Supply Problem – Kundiawa Town

Mr WILLIAM ONGLO – Mr Acting Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister for National Planning and Monitoring.

Before I proceed with my question, I wish to extend my congratulatory remarks on behalf of the people of Kundiawa-Gembogl to our Honourable Prime Minister, and Member for Tari-Pori, James Marape on being elected the Eighth Prime Minister of this country. I also want to thank the former Prime Minister for his services contributed to this beautiful country.

My question is in relation to Kundiawa town water supply. Kundiawa town has been without water for the past 18 years up till now. I have been going in and out of the office of the Water Board for almost two years.

The water supply issue is a major problem in Kundiawa town. The Kundiawa General Hospital has been upgraded to Grade 5 and is servicing all of Highlands Region and also parts of Momase Region.

02/04

The business houses can't even build public utilities like toilets. This town is a health hazard and should have been closed a long time ago. The people are really struggling daily to operate in this town, the business houses are mostly suffering and the hospital is going worse now. Every day, a truck is to go down to Wara Chimbu, take three tanks up there, filter and purify it before we service the hospital. This has been going on for too long now. I have been in and out of your office for too long now.

Can the Minister inform the people of Kundiawa-Gembogl on the commencement date of this water project?

It is coming towards the middle of my term now and it is affecting our people very badly.

Mr RICHARD MARU –Thank you, Acting Speaker. I would like to thank the Member for Kundiawa-Gembogl for this very important question. I am happy to inform Parliament, the people of Kundiawa-Gembogl, and Chimbu that your long awaited project is going to finally happen this year.

Water PNG has now completed the entire design to restore water to Kundiawa. It will cost us K15 million to restore water fully, including making sure our land owners are happy – a problem that caused the delays of this project. The previous money given was basically picked up by a person who went into hiding. And landowner problems have also caused the delay.

I am happy to announce in Parliament that the warrant is out and I am hoping that we will have some cash in the next week, so a substantial amount of funding will be provided to Water PNG in your presence Honorable Member, so work can get started this year. I am hoping that late this year or early next year, Kundiawa will have all its water restored in full.

Thank you, Acting Mr Speaker.

WNB-Volcanic Disaster

Mr JOSEPH LELANG –Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My questions are directed to Prime Minister and I would appreciate if the Minister for Inter-Government Relations, Treasury, Finance and Planning take note.

Mr Acting Speaker, on Wednesday this week, Mount Ulawun, one of the three active volcanoes located in West New Britain Province erupted spewing ash more than 13 kilometers into the air as reported by the Australia Bureau of Meteorology. The eruption disrupted flights and displaced more than five thousand people, and also damaged infrastructure.

The other two active volcanoes in West New Britain Province are Mount Pago which erupted in 2002, and Mount Langla in Gloucester Local Level Government in the Kandrian District. Both of these volcanoes are currently also spewing ash and in the case of Mount Langla, rumbling and earth tremors are continually being felt so we need to closely monitor them.

Mr Acting Speaker, only two days after the eruption of Mount Ulawun, thousands of people were displaced, homeless and frightened. They need shelter, food, and safe drinking water. They also need clothes, medicines and proper sanitation. According to the Japanese

satellite imagery, sulfur-dioxide and volcano ashes are now drifting away from the crater over land and now into the ocean posing further threats and risks.

Mr Acting Speaker, fears of contaminated drinking water, respiratory ailments, irritation to the skin and eyes are very real. Lava flows from the volcano have already disrupted the main coastal roads area, and with limited trucks in the area, evacuation has been slow. The situation is now **becoming** stressful and grim especially for the displaced families. If we do not act quickly as a Government, we will have a human disaster of significant proportion on our hands.

Mr Acting Speaker, having said this, my questions to the Prime Minister is as follows:

(1) What steps has the National Government taken so far to address the displaced families who fled their homes, food gardens, cash crops and small businesses as result of the natural disaster?

(2) Has the Government come up with an emergency response plan to respond to the immediate plight of the displaced 5000 families and who are now exposed to the diseases and other health concerns arising?

03/04

(3) What kind of funding commitment are we looking at to assist the victims of the Mt Ulawun disaster in this regard?

Mr Acting Speaker, it is our experience that countries and foreign donor agencies, business houses and the public often make donations in cash and kind.

(4) Do we have a coordination centre to coordinate all cash and in-kind donations in a coordinated, transparent and efficient manner?

(5) Who is going to be in-charge of that?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – I thank the Member for Kandrian-Gloucester for his questions. On behalf of the Parliament and the country, I would like to express my greatest sympathy to our people who are now facing this disaster. We live in the Ring of Fire and we are exposed to natural disasters like earthquakes and volcanoes.

Mr Acting Speaker, there are also areas in the Southern Region who are facing flood related problems so I also extend my sympathies to them. The Member for Bogia also came across to inform me that Manam Volcano is also spewing dust and people there are also

experiencing distress. Our nation is always faced with these natural disasters and we cannot be running away from these problems.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Governor is on the ground and is informing us of what is happening and we are mobilising health and support as we speak. In this new re-structure, disaster comes under the Minister for Defence. The military is ready to be dispatched to attend to these matters. In relation to the transportation of relief materials and support, we are now awaiting the plan that will be put forward by leaders from the ground through the provincial government. We will support their plans and their endeavours to resettle our people there. As soon as the report comes to us, we will try and mobilise whatever help and support we can get to assist our people.

Relocation of Kundiawa Airport

Mr BARI PALMA – I wish to direct my questions to the Minister for National Planning and Monitoring.

My questions are related to the relocation of the Kundiawa Airport to the Kup area.

(1) Can the Minister confirm whether there are any plans to build this airport?

(2) Will the Kundiawa Airport be permanently shut down or not?

I understand that in the 2019 Budget, there was a budget allocation made for the Kup Airport. I have written letters to the Minister and copy to the NEC.

I have been following up on it but to no avail, so can the good Minister please shed some light?

04/04

Mr RICHARD MARU – I want to thank the Honourable Member for Kerowagi for asking this very important question.

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to inform Parliament that a budget appropriation of K2.5 million was made available in the 2019 Budget to initiate works in the design of this very important airport that our government wanted to build.

One million out of the K2.5 million has been given out to the National Airports Corporation. I want to make it clear to the Member and to Parliament that the appropriation is made to the name of the National Airports Corporation and not to his District or the Simbu Provincial Government. It is the National Airports Corporation's duty to design and build

provincial airports like the Kup Airport that we are talking about, so rightly the money goes to the National Airports Corporation.

I'm also happy to inform Parliament that I have finished the review meeting with the ADB and they have now announced that we are going to start the new CARDIF Two programme on completing some of the work that they have done in a lot of our airports like Mt Hagen, under phase one. And we are now starting the design of phase two.

I am happy to inform the Member that Kup Airport will be in phase two of the CARDIF Programme. I will be talking to the Minister for Civil Aviation to take a joint trip with him up to Kup after Parliament rises. It is our intention to work with the National Airports Corporation to complete the design and work and work with ADB to fund this new airport as soon as possible. It is important that we provide another alternative airport in the Highlands.

I am aware that the former Governor of Chimbu has provided nearly K10 million to undertake a feasibility study and from this, it shows very clearly that this could be a big international airport in the Highlands region one day.

It's important that the people of Jiwaka and Chimbu have a provincial airport to serve them as Mt Hagen is too far. I am committed as Planning Minister and I assure the Prime Minister and our Government to work with the leaders of Chimbu to deliver that airport in the medium term.

So, it is certainly high on our priority. It is going to go into the ADB CARDIF Two Programme and I look forward to meeting you and the leaders of Chimbu along with my colleague minister in the coming weeks at Kup. We will have a look for ourselves for the first time and work with the Ministry and ADB to deliver this very important airport to the people of Chimbu and Jiwaka provinces.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Include Tufi in CARDIF Programme

Mr RICHARD MASERE – Mr Acting Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Planning regarding his announcement today on the CARDIF Two Programme to progress.

As we know, Tufi is one of the tourist destinations in the country and our Prime Minister alluded to in one of his speeches that he's looking at building tourism in the country.

Tufi offers a great opportunity for Papua New Guinea to grow its tourism industry and it has the potential to be promoted overseas.

At this particular point, we've only got Airlines PNG traveling to Tufi Station because the airport is unsealed thus Air Niugini refuses to go there.

If your Ministry can also include Tufi Station under the CARDIF Two Programme, I believe we can grow tourism in this country by sealing that airstrip so that Air Niugini can promote it as a tourist destination. So that Air Niugini can have their international passengers traveling through connection flights to Tufi.

Can the Minister enlighten the people of Oro as to whether the CARDIF Two Programme two will also extend to Tufi Airstrip as well?

Thank you.

Mr RICHARD MARU – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for this very important question.

I'm happy to inform Parliament that in terms of the initial discussions, CARDIF Two will not only include some work on the existing airports but will also go down to the 'tier two' airports.

05/04

These are Tufi, Kikori, Hayfield, Jacquinet Bay and airports like that. So it is important to advise you all that if your airport is one of that which is quite busy, you need to sit down with my colleague Minister, the Minister for Civil Aviation, and the Planning Department so that we will work on it and make sure your airport is one of those included in Cardiff Two. We will not only include major airports, but also the regional airports. We have also asked the ADB to look at supporting us to complement the Rural Airports Program that we funded last year with K5 million and this year with K10 million. We wanted Cardiff Two to also include looking at all the rural airstrips throughout the country, and that is the scope.

I am sure you will talk with my counterpart minister, the Minister for Civil Aviation, and the Planning Department, so we can look at which airports that deserve to be under Tier 2, based on economics, volume, trade, tourism prospects and make some decisions. At the lower end is Tier 3. These are basic rural airstrips that will get our people and their produce into towns.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Amend Mining Laws

Dr ALLAN MARAT – Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are for the Honourable Prime Minister to answer.

Before I do so, I would like to formally congratulate the Prime Minister on behalf of my people of Rabaul District and my nuclear family. Mr Prime Minister, we praise God for your election to the highest Chief Executive Officer's post of this country, Papua New Guinea.

Mr Acting Speaker, I also ask that the Minister for Mining, Petroleum and Energy to take note of my question.

Mr Acting Speaker, yesterday, the Honourable Governor of Enga asked the Honourable Prime Minister a question relating to the expiry and the renewal of the Pogera Gold Mine.

Mr Prime Minister, among other important points in terms of renewal of the mining lease of the Pogera Gold Mine, said Papua New Guinea and the foreign investors who owned the mine would be given renewal talks at a meeting point. That meeting point, as expressed by the Prime Minister, is the law.

My questions are as follows:-

(1) How many 100 per cent owned citizen companies operating in Papua New Guinea specialise in the determining process of whether there are mineable non-renewable resources and sufficient reserves of such non-renewable resources underneath the ground surface or below six feet underground.

In view of your answer, Mr Prime Minister, must we amend the appropriate laws?

(2) How many 100 per cent owned citizen companies operating in Papua New Guinea specialise in the initial physical profiling and putting together and putting up the bits and pieces of the physical infrastructure construction framework of a mine before extraction of non-renewable resources can begin.

In view of your answer, Mr Prime Minister, must we amend the appropriate laws? We have been talking about taking Papua New Guinea back.

(3) In terms of reviewing the laws governing the extraction of non-renewable resources, are we Papua New Guinea not a Sovereign Nation to amend our own extractive laws for the greater benefits of our struggling majority living in the rural areas of Papua New Guinea?

Again, Mr Prime Minister, must we pay homage to our sovereignty and amend the appropriate laws?

06/04

There is talk that we should not scare foreign investors away, but this is our country and we determine what goes into the laws of this country; yes we can accept the views of foreign investors but tailor it to what we want.

Final question, Mr Acting Speaker, why has Papua New Guinea been shying away from injecting financial capital into establishment of 100-per-cent-owned citizenship companies for the non-renewable resources extractive industries.

Inevitably, we will have future generations of citizens – human beings in Papua New Guinea so why can't we begin creating this corporation and the extractive infrastructure now. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Let me thank the esteemed Member for Rabaul, the Honourable Dr Allan Marat. Firstly for his kind words regarding my ascension to become Prime Minister for our good country but more importantly also the important points he raised.

His points are geared towards ensuring that our mind are stimulated, towards making appropriate change that goes in line or consistence with our thoughts that we must harvest more for our country in as far as blessings and resources God has endowed us with in our country.

Mr Acting Speaker, my reference yesterday towards all investors meeting us at where our law is, is a reference to some of the projects that we have on line right now coming up for review. Our law, as we have today, we are not a nation to shift away from what is not clearly encapsulated or spelt out in law.

As we are today, laws in my view, I stand to be corrected, are tailored towards attracting investors into our country. I have said in my maiden speech in this House that we no longer a greenfield in the areas of mining, in the areas of oil and gas, in the areas of all our resources. We are already established as a nation that is known towards producing world class mining projects, world class oil and gas projects, world class harvest of other resource in the renewable sectors like forestry, fisheries, and agriculture.

Coming back to this question your series of question, Honourable Member. I will be the first to admit that the Government statistic don't have clearest data as to how many 100-per-cent-owned Papua New Guinean companies are clearly participating in those upstream activities and highly specialised technical areas. But, we can't give excuses for us not having capacity.

We have had enough mines in our country since Bougainville copper in the 1970s up to Porgera and Ok Tedi in the 1980s and 1990s, Lihir in the 1990s and early 2000 and Ramu lately. It will certainly be of interest to bring back to this Parliament the exact number of various Papua New Guinean businesses who are participating in this sector.

I take special notes to your reference to company with ability to look into datas, look into our resource base and give us another view as exactly how much we have, in as far as our profiling is concern in relation to those assets we have in our country.

I will ask MRA to give us the views and options as to whether we have local based companies who can give the independent assessment into our total asset base.

One thing I can inform this House, one week into office as Prime Minister, I summoned MRA and I asked them, 'do you have registry of total profile of our asset base', they were quite deficient in their answer, and they were not certain themselves.

The second question I put to them was, 'do you know how much exactly we selling or flying out of Porgera, out of Lihir, out of all our productions in our country' and they said they dependent on Form 24. Form 24 submitted by our production from those miners, in my personal view, I felt that was not sufficient so we taking a deeper diagnostic into how harvest of these resources are taking place and essentially how much capacity we build as a nation going forward.

07/04

We are taking a deeper, diagnostic look at how harvest of the resources are taking place and, historically, how much capacity we have built as a nation and in going forward, to be more cautious in dealing with big miners who are coming. And I will be first to admit that we are not in the business of chasing away the competent miners as they are here to be partners. The laws we have will be honoured in these partnerships. But going forward, I am in the process of discussing with like-minded leaders on both sides of the House as well as our civil servants and advisors to ensure that we tailor-make new series of laws in our *Constitution*. These laws will not differ from the intention of our *Constitution*. The laws

drafted by the founding fathers of this nation are very deep and rich, particularly the laws dealing with the harvesting of our resource and sharing equally to all corners of our nation.

That intention of the *Constitution* has always been there but the environment of doing business today has migrated so much away from how it was in the 70s, 80s, 90s and early 2000. In modern PNG or contemporary PNG, there are also best practices that we can find in similar regimes around the world but more so in neighbouring economies such as Indonesia, Malaysia and other economies in the region. Most of the mining companies are also operating in regimes that have tailor-made resource laws that are geared towards greater gain for their own local economies.

As I have stressed many times, companies that are operating in the country will have their operational address in PNG. PNG needs to be safe and secure and our citizens need to be happy so that in turn their business address is operating in a healthier and safer environment that continues to generate profits for the shareholders of our eight million people in the country.

The good Member will be engaged – through a bipartisan approach – in the area of resource laws, finding a balance in not chasing away investors, but getting to ensure we pick from the resource harvest by way of a systematic and proper shift in resource laws.

I put to this House my view that the amendments made will not be radical and sudden to shock the industries. We will introduce to the industry what we have in mind. And what we have in mind must come from forth from our discussions here. Our discussions must be signalled in a systematic manner to the industry so they know what we are talking about.

I am comforted by the fact that I am surrounded with people with greater experience in this House. And I take this time to mention the submission from Sir Julius Chan and his team from New Ireland based on the experiences on the harvest of Lihir resources and across the country. They have also been mooting some tailor-mix of laws and together we can look at finding the right balance and pitch in not chasing away our investors in the first instance but maintaining their interest, whilst at the same time gearing towards greater harvest whether it be in equity models or tax models. But more importantly also for me, as the Honourable Member clearly articulated; it is not just gaining from the equity and tax regimes but greater inherent gain must be in the spin-offs that emanate from these projects. We must build capacity along the way; capacity in the first instance to have a registry of all our assets, but also going forward, capacity in harvesting resources and having local companies participating themselves.

Those are some of the things that we must do. Our government systems lack the capacity to provide data, and we have talked about this many times.

Let me inform this House that every secretary of State has been put on notice that they have one month now to supply to the government a blueprint of their strategies that is consistent with the vision or dream we have outlaid to them. The highest dream any group of leaders have dreamt has been dreamt. There is nothing wrong with dreaming of becoming a rich country. Our country must be prosperous and wealthy. If we are not dreaming the same dream then we are on different pages and different game plan. As leaders we have dreamt the dream as our founding fathers dreamt in 1975 up until today. But our resources have not been fully harnessed and sustained in a safer environment.

08/04

The role we have now is to change the laws and as you all would have noted, we have structured the Cabinet in two main core groups.

One is to ensure we look at harvesting better from our resources. The second and the more important one is the one headed by the Deputy Prime Minister is to ensure that we ring-fence our country from abuse, waste, corruption, theft, misuse and having a stronger ring fence around our economy. Our borders are protected, our judiciary is working well, our police is working well, our school systems are working well, our health and all other aspects are working well. That area is headed by the Deputy Prime Minister. Whatever that we gain in through an expanded policy outlook will be kept inside.

Mr Acting Speaker, there is nothing wrong with having gold bullions in our country, such thoughts must not be dented or hard. What is wrong with dreaming about having gold bullion in our country? What's wrong with dreaming about having oil refineries in our country? What is wrong with having forestry down-streaming in our country?

This morning whilst in our Government Caucus, a Member of Parliament was thinking of looking for funds to contract consultants and advisors. But, I respectfully put it back to the Member that we have agents who are already paid a salary that is almost equivalent to Members of Parliament. Why aren't we engaging them? They must now come up with a game plan and tell us – this is the blue print.

If amending this law will chase investors away then I need to know what it is. If amending this law will consolidate revenue, then we need to know. Our nation will soon be 50 years in 2025 which is only about six years away.

Mr Acting Speaker, I propose to Parliament that we contribute stimulative ideas with these sort of ideas coming from very senior minds. These are the kind of discussions that is right and proper. Our investors must not feel that we are intimidating them. They have a place to stay in our economy so long as our economy is healthy. We do not want an economy like what has happened in Bougainville and we are left to pick up from the slacks. When our economy is healthy, this multinational-conglomerates will still make profit for their shareholders whilst we make profit for our shareholders.

I think the timing is right for us to talk about these areas. We will not be creating shocking changes. Whatever changes that we will be doing will be progressive and we will be consulting the industries on our intentions particular the minor sector. We will work hand in hand so that we all win in the end. Our laws must be clear for both parties to win.

I thank the Member for his questions and I believe these are questions to stimulate every one of us to think. As we think, we can add value to our resources and in turn these resources will ensure that we are looked after well going into the future.

I will seek further details on these questions especially with the data on the number of companies we have operating and their capacities in the mining space and make a presentation later to Parliament. We will inform the country on the level of capacities that are operating in the mining space and the oil and gas space. We have always talked about down-streaming in fisheries, agriculture and forestry but we rarely talk about it in the mining sector. We are already a brownfield national in as far as the mining and petroleum sector is concerned.

We have been producing oil since 1990 and producing in Panguna since the mid-70s therefore it is time we start talking about down-streaming in this sector.

Mr JONNY ALONK – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker for recognising the people of Middle Ramu. I wish to direct my questions to the Minister for Inter-Government Relations.

Before I ask my questions, I would like to take this time on behalf of the people of Middle Ramu to congratulate Honourable James Marape, the Member for Tari-Pori on becoming the Eighth Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

09/04

LLG Election Funds

My question is in relation to the funds released to the Electoral Commission to conduct the Local-level Government elections. I know this is the major question for all the members here representing each electorate and we all must contribute towards a smooth election.

My question is; have the funds been given to the Electoral Commission to deliver the elections in each of the provinces?

I have obtained information from my electorate stating that the funds are not sufficient to run the election, however, the writs were issued yesterday on Thursday at 4.06 p.m., and today is the first day for the candidates to nominate and start their campaigns.

My concern is that if funds have already been delivered then is it sufficient to conduct the election for all the provinces? Knowing PNG, most electorates around the country are situated in remotest areas and the people travel by sea, air and road and it's not easy to run elections in such areas. For instance, in my electorate of Middle-Ramu, we travel most times by air. That is only one example of how such situations can hinder the running of an election so that's why I am stressing this point so that the Minister can be able to clarify and let us know so that we can assist whichever way we can support to run the LLG elections.

Mr PILA NININGI – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for Middle-Ramu for his question. This is the question on the minds of all Members of Parliament and the country as well wants to know whether funds have been released or not.

Funds have already been released and it's been sorted out to be delivered to each of the electorates.

Mr Walter Schnaubelt – Point of Order! Can the Minister confirm the exact figure released because the word 'funds' is too general and can mean any amount. It is important we understand that because if there are insufficient funds for this LLG elections then we will be bombarded with complaints from the public servants who are going to administer the elections.

It will be a major problem if we have to suddenly stop the elections midway.

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

Mr PILA NININGI – Mr Acting Speaker, I was about to get to that part of my response.

An amount of K13 million was first released for the preparation part and now we have released K20 million. So we have released a total of K33 million. Funds should reach each electorate by now and if there are shortfalls then I appeal to each Member of Parliament to chip in then it would be greatly appreciated so that we can successfully conduct the elections.

Mr Walter Schnaubelt – Point of Order! Mr Minister, can you enlighten all of us here the total cost of conducting the LLG elections in the past and whether K33 million is enough?

What is your normal expenditure to conduct an LLG election? This is so that we can determine whether or not K33 million is sufficient or if we have to contribute to the shortfalls.

Mr PILA NININGI – Mr Acting Speaker, normally, K33 million is a lot of money. If public servants cannot spend money wisely then we have a problem.

10/04

So we have to spend or stay within our means and K33 million has been released as of today. I believe this could be successfully bringing the Election. In some areas like in my own electorate, one council area consists of 19 council wards, only three of the wards will host elections, they will contest, others get elected in unopposed.

As you can see, with such cases we can minimize the cost. Those areas which will host elections are the ones that we have to spend money. I believed K33 million is lot of money and if not the Government will fund it, we are not bankrupt yet. We will also get funds. Honourable Member don't you worry; we will deliver the election. Thank you very much, God bless you.

Future of Prisoners on Life Sentences

Mr POWES PARKOP –Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to ask my question. My question was intended for the Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney-General but since he's absent, I will direct it to the Prime Minister.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to take this time to congratulate the Prime Minister James Marape for his elevation to the highest post in our land including the Ministers on their

appointments. For us – the Nation’s Capital, we are here to support the Government and work with the Government to achieve the outcome desired by the Government.

Having said that, I want to ask my question. This question is in relation to 11 prisoners who are in limbo up at Bomana. In my recent visit to Bomana, the Prison Commander reminded me of this issue.

It is not just a problem for Bomana Prison but the problem for the Nation, because the prisoners who are in Limbo are from all over the country. These are the prisoners on death row or death sentence. Some of them, Mr Acting Speaker, they have been in incarcerated for more than 10 years.

Their status was not clear because they are sentenced to death and the Parliament has not passed any law to prescribe how the death penalty will be executed. In addition, who will execute the penalties – the state security forces, the CS, Police, PNGDF or other mercenaries?

So, they are in limbo and it is causing anxiety to their relatives and I am sure, to the prisoners themselves. Even the CS, especially the Commanders and the officers, they don’t know what to do with these prisoners. Are they going to rehabilitate them and if so, for what?

If the sentence is carried out tomorrow, then there is no use for rehabilitation. It is a problem for all of us including the Prime Minister to take note of.

It seems most Parliamentarians will disagree with the death penalty sentence. So my first proposal is,

(1) Can the Government take the issue back to court and ask the court to commute the sentence back to life sentence?

I think that is as good as death penalty because in death penalty they don’t get to pay the price. They are dead and gone. Although it is the ultimate price for the big crimes committed, if they are sentenced to life, it is even a severe penalty. So, I think we should commute the death sentences to life sentences.

(2) If not, then, can we repeal the death penalty law in the criminal code?

11/04

Make an amendment so that they can be transferred to life sentence, this is just one proposal otherwise, if we are indecisive,

(3) Can we ask the Committee under the power of mercy to reconsider and maybe suspend the death penalty and instead give them life sentence?

This will give an inclination of certainty to family members, prison workers or CS officers on how to deal with these prisoners. As I have stated earlier, some of these people have been on death row for more than 10 years.

If the Prime Minister is unable to respond then he may refer it to the Attorney-General to respond later. I am just raising this question for public information.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Acting Speaker, I will try and answer to the best of my ability and thank you for allowing the Governor of NCD to raise these questions.

We know that law and order is a big issue in our country and deterrent or death penalty is now prescribed in our criminal law. I do not know how old it is but it is possibly 10 years old. By virtue of fact that these prisoners have been on death row for 10 years indicates that the death penalty law came around 10 years ago into our court system as a justice relief mechanism.

As Prime Minister, I will be advising Parliament in its ability as a law making institution on whether or not changing the law on death penalty is a matter that belongs to the mandate of the Parliament going into the future. The reason why prisoners have been waiting for 10 years is because there has not been any prisoner that has been the served death penalty judgement. They have committed crimes that in view of our existing law warrants death penalty. I think most of them are wilful murders and other worse convictions are also secured in these instance where they are waiting death penalty.

These prisoners should be happy that Parliament sanctioned death penalty in between the time of their convictions until today. They have never fully deliberated on method of execution. There was a study trip to USA to ascertain exactly different forms of termination of lives of those who received the death penalty. Those convictions include the electric chair or firing squad, which is very gruesome and I do not wish to speak about it in front of our school children up in the *Public Gallery*.

In our Criminal Code we have the death penalty for those who have committed very, very serious crimes in our land. And those are put in place for reasons of convictions secured and death penalty being imposed becomes a deterrent for serious crimes.

Those on death row have been given mercy and extended life due to the fact that Parliament has not gone down the path of securing which would be the form execution as far as the termination of the life is concerned. So that is something for us to discuss.

I will allow the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Justice to pick up this conversation at the earliest and for us as Parliament to decide whether we still maintain death row as part of our penalties in the *Criminal Code* or we shift away from it. For instance, those who have committed serious crimes at the highest level be locked away in some place with no parole, and et cetera.

It is something that the greater wisdom of Parliament must direct as to how these laws are fully implemented or re-constructed for the betterment of our country and having safer laws and penalties are something that we must make.

Whilst speaking on prisons and prisoners, I have instructed the CS Minister to convert prisons into an industry. They put prisoners in Bomana, feed them and they do nothing. First, we must re-educate them.

12/04

If they don't have any basic education, engage them with some TVET skills. Most of our prisons across the country have big dormant land and free labour is within the confines of prisons, yet we are not engaging them there.

I don't know about most of you but when I was growing up, I saw prisoners doing duties out there in public space. I think prisoners are being clothed and fed while doing nothing up there. We care for them, love them, we want to rehabilitate them and give them education in wherever they are imprisoned. But also allow them to contribute back to civil society by engaging them in free work. Some of them are excavator operator, some of them are carpenters, some of them are mechanics, and others have various professions. Those who have no skill at all can be brought in to clean the city for Governor NCD as free labourers.

I think in this day and age, we can have systems to monitor prisoners. Bring them back into society by participating in civil activities free of charge because we are already providing them accommodation up in the prisons. They are being fed three meals a day whatever the cost of food is. They have a house and we are caring for them. Let's engage them in civil society doing civil duties.

But, in the instance of those on death row, Parliament can debate on this. Grievance Debate is coming up. If you want to engage in this conversation, I am here to listen and we are all here to listen. We are a Christian country. I am not placed in a position to judge a fellow brother.

Having said this, justice must be seen to be done. Whatever the level of punishment and banishment it is, is something that I as an individual leader am not qualified to speak on. But a greater consensus of our Parliament must decide a way for us today going forward.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Question proposed –

That Grievances be noted.

State of the Economy

Mr SAM BASIL (Bulolo – Minister for Treasury) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I would like to speak on the presentation I made the other day in regards to the State of the Economy.

Mr Acting Speaker, it is easy for some of us to throw rubbish at what we are doing, but I'd like to remind all of us that we must be very careful when we are sitting in the Opposition try to throw mud at what we are trying to do in clearing the economy out of what we thought was bad.

Mr Acting Speaker, I was very honest to put the figures out here. We did not hide anything. We put the figures out here so that we can be measured from what we put from here on.

Mr Acting Speaker, we've got a good six months before the end of the year and we've got another year, 2020 when we throw a new budget in November to take us on from January next year.

Mr Acting Speaker, I have made it very clear that the Prime Minister has said it and he said it many times in many of his speeches that we have to block the leakages of our expenditures. We have to make sure that all unnecessary spending which are now being practiced must be stopped. And we made commitments to those.

We want to make sure that when our multi-lateral partners, those who lend to the country, must not be allowed to cook up something and bring it for us to swallow. I know that there are some of those sitting on my table when I came in. We want to make sure that every money that they wish to give to us as concessional loans or with low interest and long

repayment periods, we have to make sure that our line departments and agencies are well consulted and everybody is contributing to the rolling-out of those programmes.

The Prime Minister has made it very clear that whatever we have to do in borrowing money in the future, we have to make sure that it must have impact on whatever we are doing.

So, Mr Acting Speaker, I've outlined very clearly in my speech that we do have multi-lateral partners like the China Development Bank, the ADB, the Credit Suisse, the World Bank and of course the hard work that the previous Treasurer has put in to raising sovereign bonds. We do have those options in place that we can do tap on with the current bond. But, we want to make sure that whatever arrangements we make hereon must be at a better rate than the rate that was delivered before.

Mr Acting Speaker, those confidence that was given to us by those financial institutions, our multi-lateral partners also hinges on our commitments to those projects that we've made. So we must be very careful that whatever commitments we've made.

13/04

We must understand that it will come back to also affect how we manage the economy of this country going forward.

So, Mr Acting Speaker, those are some of the issues that I thought I would want to raise. Also we understand that, Mr Acting Speaker, -

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Minister for Treasury, I believe your statement is on the Notice Paper so we will debate it next week.

Mr SAM BASIL –I understand, Mr Acting Speaker, I will now deviate to other matters.

Mr Acting Speaker, while I have the Floor for seven minutes, I would like to also talk about the departments that I am heading; the IRC and the Customs Department.

Mr Acting Speaker, I wish to express an important point to this House and I will pin my attention on those two very important departments, because those two departments are collecting taxes and levies for the country.

Mr Acting Speaker, I will be looking very closely on their welfare. I understand that those working in these two departments collect 80 per cent in taxes to fund the National

Budget. And seventy percent of these employees live in the settlements. These employees fight against counterfeit products and even open up containers that may be concealing substances that can do harm, yet in terms of housing, most of them live in settlements.

Mr Acting Speaker, chasing up big companies to ask for taxes and try to make them responsible is a very hard task. We should not expect to treat those IRC and Customs staff like any other ordinary staff. I would like to see an increase their pay and provide them proper housing. But we will hold them liable if they make compromising deals with big tax payers. And we must make sure to amend laws so the penalties are heavier than those imposed on other public servants.

Mr Acting Speaker, I have been tasked to go back and squeeze more out of those departments, but at the same time we must take care of those people that are heading those institutions.

Mr Acting Speaker, I will restrict my debate because I understand that as per the *Standing Orders*, no debates should resume unless it comes from the Notice Paper on the Floor.

Once again, Mr Acting Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Expand Members Carpark – Parliament House

Mr SIMON DUMARINU – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I would also like to contribute and talk on some issues as well.

Mr Acting Speaker, we must appreciate the services provided by Ela Motors, Boroko Motors and other car sales companies. If they were selling trains, I think all Members of Parliament would buy trains to get to work.

Mr Acting Speaker, we are finding it difficult to find space to park our vehicles in the Parliament carpark. The car park area was designed during the time this Parliament was built and it only catered for smaller cars. There are much larger cars on the market now and so, Members are using larger cars and I am certain accidents can happen in the process of parking their vehicles.

Mr Acting Speaker, through you, I bring this to your attention for the Parliament to do something about expanding the Parliament carpark for the Members of Parliament.

The other issue is that the Prime Minister has already set the vision for this country and there is a lot of talk on downstream processing and taking our country back.

14/04

Control Government Expenditure

Mr Acting Speaker, the best way to start off is by getting the small things done. We need to cut the cost of Government expenditure. There are many complaints coming from the departments.

Mr Acting Speaker, if the Prime Minister wants to take back PNG, it's about time we start with the Ministers. We must start with them. When we come to Parliament, we are provided a copy of SRC determinations on the entitlements for each individual member as per the mandate given by the people of this country.

Each Member of Parliament is entitled to a Port Moresby official vehicle and an electoral vehicle. Ministers are entitled to a Port Moresby official vehicle and a support vehicle.

In the SRC determination, funds are allocated for vehicle service. There are complaints from Departments that Ministers are double-dipping, meaning that despite receiving the benefits through our package, the Ministers are also requesting supports from the Department to service their vehicle.

We have to start with small things before we can start with bigger things. I very pleased that the Prime Minister has taken a tough stand on all departmental heads, but the Ministers must held accountable. This has been the practice for a long period of time, yet this issue was never raised in Parliament.

So, Mr Prime Minister, through the Mr Acting Speaker, I think it is best to start off with the ministers. Not all of them, only a handful of Ministers are double-dipping, getting department to pay for their vehicle and expenses when they are not entitled to do that. Institutions have raised complaints that Ministers are doing that.

Mr Acting Speaker, some the ministers and their first secretaries have become very powerful. The first secretaries act even like a minster, making demands to the departments without the minister's knowledge.

So these are small things we need to tidy up, if we want take back PNG. I apologise for raising this issue; however, it is not something we should shy away from. The people of Papua New Guinea are paying us to do these jobs.

Downstream Processing

Mr Acting Speaker, in terms of downstream processing, yes, many of us dream to be able to carry out downstream processing in our country; that is our biggest ever dream.

You know from experience, in the past we had this downstream processing plant for gold in Port Moresby – MRO.

MRO's operational structure ownership enabled other mines to bring their gold bars to be refined there. To my recollection, the amount of gold is passing through MRO was about one million ounces a year.

But then, when the ownership of MRO changed and Perth Mint took an interest in MRO and they started to hike their refining cost.

15/04

When this refining cost was not accepted by the miners they started to deviate and export gold outside of Papua New Guinea to Perth Mint. So do you see where the problem is?

I support the statement by the Prime Minister that departmental heads are assigned to provide advice to each Minister.

Mr Acting Speaker, we have been producing copper concentrate in this country. To refine copper concentrate you need a copper smelter that will separate the minerals. If we were to build just one copper smelter, it will basically chew up all the power energy we produce in this country. The cost of energy in this country is very high, therefore, it is not viable for a copper smelter to be constructed in PNG. These are the things that we need to be mindful of in terms of downstream processing.

Mr Acting Speaker, on the issue of gold, all we need is to attract an investor who can construct a gold refinery in this country at a cost that is suitable.

Mr Acting Speaker, there is also talk of gold bullion. We had an opportunity to have a gold bullion in this country when the State owned 20 percent of Pogera.

When we were talking about the UBS loan and all related issues that 20 percent was sold by the Government. That is the only gold this country was entitled to because we owned 20 percent. The Government was not yet exporting its gold in those days.

So we really have to come up with how you can have a gold bullion because all the gold that is now been exported is owned by the mines and to own that gold bullion you have to go and buy it from the miners to be able to build that gold bullion we are all dreaming of.

Mr WERA MORI (Chuave – Minister for Commerce and Industry) – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank you for giving me and my people this opportunity to air my grievances. I

share the same sentiments with the Member for Central Bougainville but let me raise and touch on another issue first.

Let me say here that sometimes we become our own enemies. Through different phases in life we go through experiences and at the end we realise that some of the decisions we make arise from the results of our own actions.

PNG is located in a region where we are prone to natural disasters. Our state of preparedness must be of essence. This has become our enemy.

16/04

Restore Rabaul Observatory

Today we know that Mt Uluwan in West New Britain is erupting and it may also cause all the other volcanic surrounding there to erupt, depending on the degree or intensity of tectonic activities. But, what is important is, there used to be a very safe and secure well-equipped monitoring system at the Rabaul Observatory. It has either been scaled down or malfunctioned and now we are depending on other regional countries like New Zealand Geography Survey and Observatory to monitor our activities or the United States.

We must now get the Rabaul Observatory which is a very significant installation and infrastructure for this country. It is able to monitor places far as Manan. They knew it was going to erupt in 1994, and of Gazelle which was recorded. Not one life was lost, simply for the fact for the fact that it was effective. But, now we have just become our own worst enemies.

Some weeks ago, we have the major tremor in Morobe. The magnitude of the earthquake is equivalent to the size of what happened in Southern Highlands in February 2018. Recently, another earthquake that centred somewhere to the south-east of New Ireland.

What I am trying to point out here is this our road transport infrastructure especially up in the Highlands and a lot of areas in Morobe, cut through steep valleys. When you have a major earthquake, it destabilizes the contact between the bed rock and the overhanging soil. You only have to have a major or prolonged wet season for you to allow the accumulation of water in the regulate leading to landside. We must be prepared for it. We must bring back PTB, equip them and place them in strategic locations. This is important so that we don't go back digging and screaming at each other for money to fix the roads. I come from a very rural electorate like Chuave and I have these problems at the back of Elimbari and Nambayufa.

And when I ask for support, I don't get it, probably because we are too insignificant or we don't account for this country.

Production Sharing Arrangement

But I am thankfully this morning for the Member for Central Bougainville who himself comes from a mining province, thank you for reminding us on what we should do.

The way going forward, we have to migrate out of the current physically regimes governing how we benefit from exploitation of our resources. We go straight into production sharing. We don't have to worry about how much we have to put in, in terms of infrastructure because when we come into production sharing we can forgo some of the benefits but in the end, we get more than what we were bargaining for under the current circumstances.

My Department is now writing to the mining companies, we are going to go into long detailed consultation process, putting them on notice that we are going to go into production sharing on a 40-60 basis.

17/04

SME Sector

Mr RICHARD MARU (Yangoru-Saussia - Minister for National Planning and Monitoring) – Mr Acting Speaker, I also want to debate particularly on the SME sector in PNG. Firstly, I commend the Prime Minister because since he got elected he made it clear that he wants to support our Papua New Guineans to go into businesses and also expand their current businesses.

I want to state here clearly in this Parliament for the benefit of the people of this nation that right now, 90 per cent of our businesses in PNG are owned by foreigners, and that we all know. There is no way we can start to take back PNG if we don't enact legislation very quickly and restrict certain businesses and levels of investments to only Papua New Guineans. The previous government has already done that by approving legislations to come to Parliament but it is being delayed now.

Mr Prime Minister, I want to remind you that this needs to happen very quickly so laws can be enacted. And it is simple as this; if you want to grow into a big business in the future you have to start small. Papua New Guineans need a reserve space for what we call an incubation space so their companies can start and grow and evolve into bigger companies in the future.

If we don't prepare the reserve list now in this term of Parliament, whilst having the political will, then we are wasting our time talking about taking back PNG and we will never do it.

I urge the Prime Minister to bring this legislation forward on the Floor so we can reserve businesses exclusively for Papua New Guinean companies. The Prime Minister did state earlier this week that businesses should be reserved for Papua New Guineans, including security businesses. That is a very good statement but we now must lock that down by way of legislation so that such businesses should be reserved for our citizens. We can only do this by law and not by policy because so many of our Papua New Guineans compromise too much and it will never happen unless you lock it down by law. If there is anyone trying to go around the law then the law can deal with them.

In other countries there is an institution called the Foreign Investment Review Board. This institution screens applications from foreigners companies who are interested in investing in that country and select the companies that will really do genuine business. PNG is the only country in the world that has an 'open door policy' and as a result there is an influx of foreigners going into rural areas just to operate trade stores. And we are totally ignoring that and they do business freely. This has to stop. If you want to take back PNG then we must bring in legislation and take over some of these small businesses that foreigners are engaged in rural areas.

Mr Prime Minister, please seriously consider that by bringing in this legislation to Parliament and I can assure you that support is guaranteed.

The second aspect is the establishment of a Credit Guarantee Corporation, which is already in the SME policy. Last year, the Cabinet approved for the Bank of PNG to set up a Credit Guaranteed Corporation for the State which will be owned by the Central Bank and hopefully other banks as well. And that institution will be managed independently by the Central Bank of PNG under its laws.

But up till now, Central Bank has not moved the agenda. Without such guarantee to secure loans, our people cannot start their businesses. Where will they get the loan because every bank will ask for security like a mortgage?

In Malaysia now 8 billion Ringgit is given as guarantee and that's the reason why Malaysia SME sector is growing rapidly. Citizens can secure a guarantee from Credit Guarantee Corporation to grow their businesses. We need to adopt this concept for the SME sector to grow.

18/04

Review Bank of PNG Laws

And secure a guarantee from their credit guarantee corporation to obtain loans to start or grow their business. This is the biggest weakness in our SME Sector Growth. We have no source for providing guarantees for Papua New Guineans to get loans.

We approved it last year in November up to now and the Bank of PNG is still sleeping because they have not acted. I want the treasure to listen to this, the current Bank of Papua New Guinea legislation states, 'the Governor is Chairman, with two of its Deputies seated on the boards. It is one of the weakest corporate governance regimes we have. The Bank of PNG does not account to anyone. Do you know this? They are a power in themselves under the current legislative regime and yet when they preside over the supervision of the financial sector including savings and loan Societies, they are very strict on corporate governance and yet they lack it.

Previously, I was the Finance Minister, I went and inquired about the payment of their dividends to the state. They said they would pay between June and July when the board meets. This is because they do not report to anyone. Why can't they get their audits completed in March and pay us the dividend which we need to pay DSIP. I think that the time has come for this Government and the Treasurer and our Government to review the current Bank of Papua New Guinea legislation.

Why should they have strict Corporate Governance Structures for everybody else under their regime except themselves? They do not report to anyone which other Central Banks does the same. I would like to suggest to this floor of Parliament that is time to review the Bank of Papua New Guinea legislation. They should be told by the 31 March, their audit is should be done and they should pay their dividends to the State and not when they want to pay because they do not report to anyone. These are two serious issues, I want to bring to Parliament.

We need legislations, we need the credit guarantee corporation otherwise taking back PNG will never happen because your citizens will never be empowered. We need laws and institutions to make it happen and both of those clearly prescribed in the SME Policy the pleasure to write.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Repair Damage and Modernize Parliament

Mr REINBO PAITA (Finschhafen – Minister for Communications & Energy) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I also want to contribute to this Grievance Debate.

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to raise my grievances in Parliament regarding some observations I have made on issues in the country and also here in Parliament.

Mr Acting Speaker, when I came in as part of this new cabinet lineup and new Government the first thing I noticed when we entered this Building was the glass windows still remaining broken. Certain portions of the building remain damaged from the vandalism caused by the joint-security forces after the APEC Meeting.

This is an iconic building in this country which can be likened to a traditional *hausman*. In our customs and traditions, the *hausman* is given a lot of respect. A *hausman* is also beautified so that leaders can meet in there.

Mr Acting Speaker, I understand we have an issue with the cash flow but under the leadership of this new Government, can we have minor repairs done. It is quite disheartening walking into Parliament and see damages still clearly visible. This is our *hausman* so let us restore it.

Let us take note of this. The damages have not been repaired for a long while. I have spoken to the Clerk about it. So it must be fixed as soon as possible for the House to regain its significance.

Secondly, Mr Acting Speaker, there is a modernization program for Parliament. I think we have come to a time where we are moving into the 50th Anniversary of Papua New Guinea and it is right for us to modernize the Parliament as well. I think the stickers that we are using currently were used 40 years ago, 20 years ago and we should update the Parliament and the system including the way we are arrange the conference rooms and all these. There is a budget in place therefore this Government must be serious to take modernization on board so we can have modernized the Parliament.

19/04

Melanesian Way of Leadership

Mr Acting Speaker, I wish to touch on the public complaints on the salaries of Members and Ministers. We must appreciate the fact that even though we have a system of government that is western, the system of leadership is still Melanesian - a chieftain system.

We uphold the culture of looking after people, contributing to a 'Haus Karai' (mourning house) and so on are features of leadership in our country. That we cannot deny.

Most leaders must not deny that a portion of your salaries go towards meeting extra demands such as for mourning houses and to people who claim to have worked hard to get us elected. These are demands that plague us every day.

Yet some leaders deny that these pressures are there. We don't accept the fact that the system of our leadership is Melanesian or uniquely Papua New Guinean although it is basically a western system. So at some point we must make some interventions. We appreciate that some programmes complement our unique style of leadership; for instance, the programmes such as the discretion and non-discretion components that accommodate those issues.

This side and that side of the House must agree that we have these issues and so at some stage there must be interventions to appreciate the system of leadership that we have. And also to appreciate that we must be held accountable for money that we hold in trust for the people.

Mr Acting Speaker, that point must be seriously considered and some interventions taken on those programmes.

I have noted that as a country we have some deficiencies in our policies which we have made appropriate interventions. I think as political leaders we must also make interventions into the way we conduct politics. I personally think that once we have a political system where we are actively engaged, we will also have healthy policies and population going into the future. That's why the way we play politics is very important in this country.

I am a first-term Member coming in but having seen a lot of changes and interacting with a lot of political parties, Members and leaders on the Floor intend to appreciate the kind of system that we have.

20/04

Mr Acting Speaker, at some stage, I want to appreciate the system of leadership we have and also appreciate that we must be held accountable for monies that we hold in trust for the people.

Mr Acting Speaker, at that point we must consider and make some decisions or interventions into those programmes.

(5) Mr Acting Speaker, as a country we have our own politics but if there are some deficiencies in the policies that we make, we must make interventions.

I also think that as political leaders, we must make interventions into the way we conduct politics. I personally think that once we are engaged in an active political system, we will also have healthy policies and population going into the future. The way we play politics is very important in this country. I am a first time Member but I have experienced a lot of political changes, interacted with a lot of political parties, Members and leaders on the Floor, and I tend to appreciate the kind of system that we have. At some stage, Mr Acting Speaker, I want to promote that.

We must have some principles in the way we play politics in the country. At some stage, some principles must remain and some must be changed. As leaders, we have the option of changing those things going into the future.

My last point Mr Acting Speaker, I think the Prime Minister and some Ministers have stated clearly that we lack certain information or data to make credible and well-informed calculated decisions.

I thank this Government under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister for giving me the portfolio which is responsible for ICT. A system should be established so that any information coming into my Ministry can be centralised in a central database so that it is ready available and accessible by policy makers.

These are credible, up-to-date and real time data so that for instance, we can check our population at any time. We were unable to make good decisions because we didn't have up-to-date information but now that we have the technology, we can take advantage of that to leap-frog into the catch cry that we are now saying, 'Take Back PNG', and that is readily available.

We must create this database now which will give us more information so that we can make political statements or decisions based on facts and statistics rather than on assumptions. I want to encourage all the Members, especially Ministers to channel all the information or data so that we can create this centralised database. We can use this credible data and plan our country into the future.

So, these are some ideas that I have which we, as a Parliament must consider and adopt and I am looking forward to working with all the other Members on this Floor to make this change.

Mr Acting Speaker, the last point before I sit down, we leaders, both Ministers and Members on many occasions are inaccessible to our people. I want us to be more accessible to our people so that we promote the kind of government we have to our people. When we are invisible, many people come out in social media making assumptions that Ministers are hiding behind tinted glasses. Sometimes we must make ourselves available to the general public so that they can feel that we are in touch with the people.

The Prime Minister and most of the Members have set that pace now so new Ministers and Members must be accessible to our people so that they can feel that the government is with them.

Mr Acting Speaker these are my sentiments that I wanted to echo in the Grievance Debate. Thank you for giving me the opportunity.

Mr WILLIAM SAMB (Goilala – Minister for Transport) – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker for allowing me to air my grievances on this day as well.

Firstly, I'd like to, on behalf of my people in Goilala, congratulate our Prime Minister, Member for Tari-Pori for his elevation to the position of Eighth Prime Minister of this country.

For me, eight is significant because seven is complete and eight is a new beginning. So I believe that the stand that our Prime Minister is taking now is a period of new beginnings.

I am happy that the current setting of Parliament has harmony from both sides where the level of debates are not personalising issues; both sides are able to address issues in a more amicable situation.

21/04

I commend the Prime Minister on behalf of the people of Goilala for taking the lead in that manner.

Attendance of MPs

My second point is in regard to the issues highlighted by the Member for Central Bougainville concerning Ministers. I was once a Minister before and I am not sure about his views but up till today I have been using my own vehicle.

Mr Acting Speaker, look around in the Chamber today; this is Grievance Debate but most Ministers and Members are not present here.

Mr Prime Minister, if we want to take back PNG, Members must also ensure to be present for Parliament Sitting. If we give second fiddle to Parliament Sittings, how do you expect public servants to do their job? They will say, if Members are not doing their job then why should we work?

Continue Progress on Bougainville Issue

Mr Acting Speaker, going on to Bougainville, I would like to say a word of thanks to the former Prime Minister for having trust in me with the opportunity to lead our people in Bougainville. I asked myself a question; what do I have in common with these people that I have been appointed there? So I took it upon myself to ensure that I do whatever humanly possible to ensure that we progress issues on Bougainville. And at this juncture I wish to thank the Members from Bougainville and our colleagues on ABG for at least allowing me to be able to mingle with our people to address the issues.

I am so thankful that our new Minister now has taken the issue and he is running with his wealth of experience and knowledge to make progress. I want to make a commitment that I will support him in my capacity wherever possible to ensure that this Parliament delivers a successful referendum and thereafter.

Mr Acting Speaker, I wish to stress that leaders have been constantly saying everything is okay, however, through my experience I have noted that the delays are caused by public servants. In the first instance we said 10 million went through but when I returned from Bougainville, the money was still here and it was never delivered. I am just hoping that K20 million that the Minister mentioned actually reaches the people. So the Public Service needs to give urgency to some of these issues. Members don't have the knowledge to do this work. We only come and make political statements and it's up to the expert in each department to address the issues.

I have travelled with the Prime Minister a couple of times and he has written his own speech on these occasions. And I just hope that there are key people taking note of these statements at every public gathering and put meat to the bone.

Taking Back PNG

We talk about taking back PNG to be the richest black nation. I am concerned that when we continue saying this there could be people in the system that can devise a system against that.

I say this because the SME policy has not succeeded. We are trying our best with our DSIP in the districts.

Why are all these Asians going into settlements? When you drive through Hiritano Highway you will see Chinese-owned stores along the road all the way to Kerema. Who knows whether or not they are paying tax.

They come and marry our girls and set up stores on land given by their in-laws. These are the things we need to address.

My fear is that people are going to use the system and say, it is easy but difficult at the same time. Prime Minister said 'black' Christian country so don't come and change that to 'brown'. Make it black - don't deviate the power and volume of that statement.

22/04

Mr Acting Speaker, this government has been talking about a Christian country and yesterday I raised that concern in my group. We talk about Christianity but certain people at UPNG and the US Embassy are showing homosexual movies. Seriously!

Mr Acting Speaker, I am thankful to the Ministers responsible for their intervention. There are things we can do at a smaller forum. You don't need to try to interpret the law. That is bullshit.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Minister, please withdraw that un-parliamentary language.

Mr WILLIAM SAMB - Mr Acting Speaker, I withdraw my statement. I was only stressing a point that we should not be hiding behind the law. When common sense prevails and it is a no, then the answer is no. So I thank the respective Ministers for their intervention yesterday to address this issue.

Thankyou Mr Acting Speaker.

Commercial Banks

Mr SALIO WAIPO (Angoram) – Mr Acting Speaker, I also would like to join my fellow colleagues in this House to congratulate Prime Minister Honourable James Marape, the eighth Prime Minister, on behalf of the people of Angoram. We are very happy on your election as the Eighth Prime Minister of this country.

Mr Acting Speaker, I have a few grievances I wish to raise in this House. I hope both sides of the House is a new team that needs to work together to take back PNG. This team includes the Opposition and Government Members, Ministers and Governors.

Let's put aside our differences in politics and contribute to one cause which is to take back PNG and give back trust to our eight million people of Papua New Guinea.

Mr Acting Speaker, I have observed certain things and wish to know how Central Bank operates in the country. The Planning Minister has talked about and this is an issue the Treasurer and Finance Minister should note.

I know the bank knows the amount of kina that circulates in Papua New Guinea. But do they know or have records of how much money is deposited in other commercial banks and how much is floating around out there?

My grievances is that when you go to Vanimo and Jayapura or Indonesia, you see lot of cash in kina when you trade there. They won't pay in Rupiah; they will pay in Kina.

So what records does Central Bank keep of our commercial bank? There are two things happening. The commercial banks are scaring away the people of Papua New Guinea now because just to deposit K2000, they are questioned about where the money came from.

Such a question implies that you are laundering money in your own country. That is not right. I am raising this because I was questioned by ANZ Bank on a deposit I made to my account.

Mr Acting Speaker, I understand the our ordinary people in our villages are struggling to make ends meet so they cannot make deposit in our commercial banks in Papua New Guinea. So the records are not there to show Central Bank how much money flows into commercial banks.

But when you go to a border area you see huge amounts of cash in kina being exchanged on the market. The Honourable Member for Goilala has mentioned this.

23/04

There are so many outlets on the road and cartons of money are flown to Vanimo. The kina is exchanged for US dollars. The business is done elsewhere and the kina is kept there at the border.

I urge the Minister for Commerce and Trade to take heed and put on notice this new trend of business going on.

Is there a record of some sort that is kept by the commercial banks on how much cash is floating around the country? I think this Parliament should be privileged to that information. If we are embarking on taking back Papua New Guinea these are some of the things that we need to take into account.

If citizens want to deposit K5000 or any large amount at the bank, they must be asked to explain where the money is coming from.

These are my grievances and I urge all leaders to work together to get back PNG and support this new Government deliver to our people.

Mining Industry

Mr WILLIAM TONGAMP (Jiwaka) – Mr Acting Speaker, on behalf of my people of Jiwaka and my family, I extend my congratulations to the Eighth Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea and his new Cabinet for being elected on the Floor of this House.

My grievances are on mining issues. The Governor of Enga raised some questions in regards to Porgera Mine. The Rabaul Member also asked similar questions and the Commerce and Industry Minister also made a statement on these mining issues.

Mr Acting Speaker, like any other industry in the country the mining industry in this country has very high technical people in the world today. Some of them are managing mines in Australia and overseas and some work in our country.

I had the opportunity recently to travel to Ok Tedi Mine with the Prime Minister and were exposed to the mine and its operations up there. Our own Papua New Guineans have successfully run that mine over the years.

When we are embarking on changing mining legislations in the coming years ahead we will consider Pogera Mine which is coming to a close and how we will manage it and extend its life. We have the Ramu Nickel and some other mines that are also being proposed.

Mr Acting Speaker, I was privileged to work in mining companies for over five years and that included Lihir, Pogera, Misima, Ok Tedi and many other mines. We really have to look into how we can be able to control mining in our country.

We only recognise and look at the final product and outcome whether it is copper, gold, silver or whatever we are mining. But the operation itself is quite huge and we are missing out on so many benefits in an operation of a mine. Let me give a few examples here. All the gold mines in the world including our country use many things to extract gold and one of these things is called carbon. The coconut shell is used to make carbon to extract gold in

riverbeds and so forth. Since the start of mining operations in this country today we don't have a carbon producing plant in this country.

If we look at the copra industry in this country we have been extracting coconuts for generations up to date, yet we lack the capacity to produce carbon. Carbon is used in all the mining sites in this country such as in Lihir and Pogera.

24/04

But we are still importing from Malaysia and other countries. Every year, we are wasting our carbon share in this country, therefore, we should look at these issues in terms of legislation.

The other example is lime. Everywhere in the world, people use lime and where does it come from? It comes from limestone and we have vast limestone deposits in the country. I have worked in Lihir and we have suggested that we use the limestone deposit there but the company said we will use it the following year. And several years have gone and we are still importing limestone from New Zealand.

Another example is imported food. The mines are importing food from overseas while our people are trying to sell food crops on the street. They are even importing processed corn.

On human resource, we have Papua New Guineans occupying important positions in our mining industry but we need to go a little step higher and involve them more. The very smart technical Papua New Guineans are running big mines around the world today. Some of them want to come back here but our mines are suppressing them and employing them on junior levels. Let's give them the opportunity at higher management level.

In 2016, when we took over the Ok Tedi Mine, there were three or four Papua New Guineans who were given acting GM positions and they have delivered in 2016 and 2017 and now when the mine is prospering, they were demoted. So we need to empower some of our technical people to build some of our industries in the country.

On subcontracts, we really need to properly look at giving opportunities to our subcontractors in the mine sites. We have foreign CEOs who hire their own people from overseas, pay them a lot of money while they give subcontracts to our local companies with tied-in high operational costs and as a result, they are struggling. So let's create opportunities for our local companies.

We have taken over Ok Tedi and other mines like Pogera and Lihir will be coming to us in the future and things like explorations are very important for the existence of these

mines. We get inside information from top geologists and engineers from these mines but the top management define the information and ideas to us. They make their own choices on whichever mountains they want and come up with figures like K100 million or K200 million and bring in drilling contractors from overseas. In the business of mining, drilling is involved but the choices of mountains and areas that they drill, we have to be very careful because a lot of money is spent on this.

On environment, we had issues with Ok Tedi and very soon, we will commence operations in Frieda Mine so as leaders, we need to be very careful and thorough in how we assess the environment report from this mine because deposits from this area is quite different from Ok Tedi. The deposit also has various other metals as well.

Next week, I will put some cost against those individual items that I have stated today and make some additional statements but otherwise, I thank the Acting Speaker for giving me this opportunity to make few remarks.

Mr PILA NININGI (Imbonggu – Minister for Inter-Government Relations) – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank you for giving me this opportunity because you are my ‘wantok’.

Mr Acting Speaker, first point that I want to make is inform all the honourable Members that issues pertaining to disasters are not under my ministry; it is under the Defence Ministry.

25/04

Therefore, don’t direct questions on issues that are not under my responsibilities.

Secondly, Mr Acting Speaker, this is in relation to the Chair’s ruling yesterday, which I was not happy about and if I don’t talk about it, I will be committing a sin.

Mr Acting Speaker, yesterday, you made an announcement that you will bring back the artefacts and carvings that were removed from this Parliament some time back. We have placed one of the oldest Bibles right in the centre of this Chamber and now we want to bring back the artefacts and carvings to Parliament, which makes a contradictory statement

Sometimes we have to take a position because we cannot have both things. If we choose Christianity then so be it and principles must be upheld everywhere in everything we do. But if we choose to keep our traditional beliefs then we must keep to it; we cannot have both. In our *Constitution* we regard this country as a Christian country.

Mr Acting Speaker, we must respect the Christian principles and I want to set on record that what you ruled yesterday was not for the best interest of this country. The best interest is to uphold Christianity and I believe that yesterday's ruling should not take precedence because we have a Bible here already.

Thank you very much.

Technology - Involve Tertiary Level Students

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau- Minister for Bougainville Affairs) – Mr Acting Speaker, I have just three points to debate so that we can go for lunch on time.

Firstly, we need to engage the higher learning institutions such as the University of Technology. There are so many subjects particularly in the area of appropriate technology. Rather than the lecturers just being restricted to classrooms, universities must now extend outward.

For instance, if there is a topic on rural hydro or how to enhance ICT in the rural setting then those universities with their lecturers and students must participate in some of the delivery programs of the appropriate technologies rather than being purely academics.

So, I strongly suggest that the Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology consider this because the students with the wealth of academic knowledge and the intensity and depth of many subjects that are appropriate to the development of our country can contribute while still being students at the universities. I want the Minister to take note of that.

ICT and Computer Literacy

Secondly, I request that the Minister for Communication and Energy and the Leader of Government Business to consider ICT because the digital age is upon us. Whilst we have students in the Public Gallery, let me say that I believe in the One Laptop per Child policy. If all our teachers and children have the ICT knowledge, this UN-sanctioned strategy of One Laptop per Child Initiative can be delivered, and I don't think it's expensive. The knowledge of computers for instance is confined to the urban educational institutions but because the ICT technology has not yet covered the entire country the rural communities are penalised.

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I strongly recommend one of the top priorities consistent with the previous government's priority of extending the coverage of power to 70 percent of the country. I think with the infrastructure that is coming, Sydney Cable as well as the North one coming down, I think our commitment has to be to cover the country with ICT infrastructure and make it cheap so teachers and our children through the One Laptop per Child policy can be computer literate because that is the global trend now.

Computer literacy to me is the most important foundation for any nation and any citizen of any nation to progress. Let us make a commitment to ensure that every teacher and child is computer literate. There are different types of computers, laptops and phones that our children can have access to.

I was privileged to witness a school where in their own school setting, the children were able to draw down text books, communicate with the teachers and peer students in that school through this ICT Program.

We must not deny our children this opportunity so I humbly request that we progress this matter in very big way.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Motion – That the grievances be noted – agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1 p.m..