

SEVENTH DAY

Thursday 4 July 2019

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD

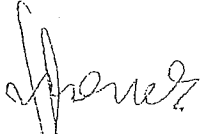
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HARRY MOMOS

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

SEVENTH DAY

Thursday 4 July 2019

The Acting Speaker (**Mr Jeffrey 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 10.46 a.m., and invited the Member for Ambunti –Drekikir **Honourable Johnson Wapunai** to say Prayers:

We are thankful this morning for the breathe of life that you have given and to once more be given the opportunity to be here to serve your people. Thank you for choosing us as your leaders. God, we ask you this morning to inspire us with your Holy Spirit on what we are going to deliberate this morning. God, you are our creator, our sustainer and redeemer. We pray that your wisdom from Heaven be upon all the leaders who are bowing our heads this morning. Give us understanding as we deliberate on issues this morning and accept our prayer this morning. In Jesus Name, Amen.

QUESTIONS

Progress of 99-year Land Lease Arrangement

Mr CHRIS HAIVETA – Mr Acting Speaker, I direct my questions to the new Lands and Physical Planning Minister. Before I do so, let me congratulate the Eighth Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape on his election as the Prime Minister and the new Government.

If the Minister is not in the Chamber, I will direct it to the Prime Minister.

In Papua New Guinea, infrastructure development is carried out and done on land. This was a precedence when the colonial masters and missionaries came to our shores and this was the way it was. They registered our land, built and provided economic corridors in this manner.

Land is in short supply and these lands that were obtained during those times came under a 99-year lease. Many of these leases have expired and those landowners are now claiming the land back to their heritage. They no longer belong to the Government or the missions.

This issue is affecting new and existing development plans that the Government has to build infrastructure and services throughout the country.

02/07

Can the Minister clarify this on the Floor of Parliament so that each one of us, especially the Governors of each province, who are caretakers of the State land, will know the Government's position on the progress of the 99-year land leases which has already expired?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I also thank the Governor of Gulf for his important question. He is correct, all the land across the country is classified, three per cent as government-owned State land while 97 per cent as customary land, owned by the people. Of the limited State land that we own, the 99-year leases might be maturing. This is an issue for us to address and undertake.

Let me assure the House that the Minister for Lands and Physical Planning, who has just arrived at his chair is taking note of it. We will look into the existing policies in respect to the 99-year leases that expired and update the House. Obviously, we don't like to dilute what is already a State-owned land. We would like to maintain them. In fact, we would like to increase our State land areas because land is an important piece of asset that offers security any development that we would like to pursue for our nation. So, I will get the Minister for Lands and Physical Planning to look into the totality of where we are on the issue of leases expiry and report back to this House.

Release DSIP and PSIP for 2019

Mr JAMES DONALD – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker I direct my question to the Minister for Treasury. We are already into July, the seventh month and its three-quarters into the full year. My question is in relation to our funds such as DSIP and PSIP. I am aware that we only received K1 million in the beginning this year.

Can the Minister confirm whether we will receive the remainder of the full K10 million earmarked for our districts this year? Or, are we not going to receive it because of lack of funds?

That's for the benefit of the 111 Members in this Parliament to know.

Mr SAM BASIL – I thank the Member for his question. Mr Acting Speaker, last week when I presented the state of economy report, I assured this Parliament that we will try our best to deliver the 2019 Budget. If there is big problem then we will inform later, but for DSIP and PSIP, Mr Acting Speaker, this Government is committed to making sure that we deliver those.

Maybe this week, the Minister for Finance and Rural Development will announce K1 million for this year. For hardships that we are now facing, I have explained earlier on that when we reached the fiscal year of 2019, we carried forward some payments for DSIP for 2018 to 2019. This caused financial strain on our performance for 2019. So, I want to assure the Member and all the Members of this Parliament that this Government is fully committed to deliver the full DSIP and PSIP in the remaining months of this year.

Mr ROBERT AGAROBÉ – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to thank NEC, the Prime Minister and in particular the Minister for Inter-Government Relations for hearing the cries of the people of Central Province, in suspending our Provincial Administrator and appointing a care-taker administrator so that now we can start to deal with a lot of our outstanding issues.

03/07

Central Province-Provincial Hospital

On that note, I would like to also direct this question to the Minister for Health.

As we all know, Central Province is the only province that lack a lot of infrastructure that other provinces enjoy. We are the only province that does not have a provincial capital, have a provincial wharf, a provincial airport and a provincial hospital.

Last year, I raised these issues to our good former Prime Minister regarding the health system. As you know, we are the only province that does not have a provincial hospital. With that talk about having a hospital came up and we had allocated a land at Bautama. And there

was an NEC decision that came out early this year, but lately I have not heard anything on that issue.

So Mr Acting Speaker, Can the good Health Minister address and inform this good House, and the people of Central Province on where we are with our provincial hospital?

Thank you.

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I would like to thank the good Governor of Central for raising this important question.

Provision of accessible, of equitable and quality health care is important, and it is the priority of our Government. The Prime Minister recently gave directives among others that my Department must achieve Universal Health Coverage by year 2024. An important requirement for this is also in making sure that we comply in meeting some of the Health standards in our country.

Mr Acting Speaker, I concur with what the Governor of Central have said. The people of Central Province need a provincial hospital of their own. We cannot continue to see our people use Port Moresby General Hospital. They cannot continue to come and use Gerehu Hospital. They have a population of about 236,000 and they deserve to have their own provincial hospital.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Government will make sure that we revisit one of the NEC decision which I am aware of. There was a decision made back in 2014. NEC decision No.352, 2014 that approved construction of a 250-bed hospital for Central Province at Bautama.

I am also aware of the decision made by the PEC recently, also in the support of this particular decision for the Hospital to be built at Bautama. And there was also a decision made by NEC recently to commit K20 million for the purchase of land in NCD for the Hospital also for Central Province.

Mr Acting Speaker, there is a project steering committee established by my Department also co-chaired by the Central Province Administration. They are also updating me on a weekly basis on what is happening in regard to this particular subject.

I assure the good Governor and also confirm to this honourable House that the Department of Health is committed to making sure that we will deliver the provincial hospital for Central Province and its people within this Government

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Northern- Medical Store Construction Delayed

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My questions are to the Minister for Health. I would like to give a little background and to congratulate the Minister on his appointment from having worked in that Department. You are thoroughly versed with a lot of issues that confront your Department.

One of the issues I wish to highlight, is your corrupt practices in the Department's procurement system. That system is causing significant inconvenience to the people of this country. You will never be able to progress that Department until you attend to this particular problem within your Ministry.

04/07

In 2013, your Department paid K600,000 to a male nurse operating a building company in my province, who never went to work for almost five years but was still being paid fortnightly to build a transit warehouse but he never completed his tasks. It was reported many times to your Ministry and also raised on the Floor of Parliament but nothing was done about it, K600, 000 is not a small amount of money.

We reported to your Department head and so many Ministers have passed through this Ministry yet nothing has been done to date. This man is roaming freely in Popondetta, and I had his salary stopped. This is just one example of many such instances involving the procurement system in your Department.

(1) Can the Minister give an undertaking that he will investigate this problem and deal with it?

(2) When will the transit centre for Northern Province be completed, of which K600,000 was spent?

(3) Are you going to report this matter to the Police?

I would like the Minister for Police to take note. This sort of issues tarnish the reputation of the Department and Ministry. It affects the lives of a lot of people especially our rural communities.

(4) What is the name of the company that was engaged to deliver consumables to the district and rural aid posts in the country?

The consumables they delivered are not relevant for these areas. For example, they have delivered electric beds to aid posts where there is no electricity. We are paying a lot of

money for consumables which are irrelevant to our area. I have already written to your Ministry but I want to raise it on the Floor so that people are aware that these types of problem exists in your Ministry.

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE – I would like to thank the Governor of Northern for these important questions regarding this person whom I believed was contracted by the Department to construct a medical store in his province. I am not really sure as to whether this transit warehouse is completed or not. We need to get a report and a final documentation on this so that we have evidence of this incomplete project. This is so that the contractor can face the full force of the law.

We have changed Ministers several times, so I ask if that the Governor can give me that report again so I investigate this particular project and can proceed from there. There is a lot of issues raised with regards to medical supplies procurement. We recently had a workshop organised by ADB and our development partners and I admit that we have issues in this particular matter. This is one of the important areas that we are looking into at the moment.

05/07

Mr Acting Speaker, I am getting recommendations from many of our development partners on what has been happening with regard to medical supplies and will be giving recommendations on how best we can move forward. We want to have a system where there is a consistent supply of basic consumables in medical supplies right across the nation. How can we do that? That is the basic question that we all have to ask. We have to seek answers from different partners going forward.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to thank many of our partners who are willing to support us and we will have to seriously look into this. I think in the future we will need to go into international biddings so we can invite other partners who can be able to deliver this kind of arrangements.

There are about 22 medical stores built across the country and four regional medical stores. We will be getting reports on our different medical stores on whether they are supplying as required of them or not. The report I received from the department is that there are four suppliers doing logistics of distribution of medical supplies throughout the country. At the moment we are revisiting this particular arrangement. They must be performance-

based and we will be making decisions soon on whether to continue with them or not. I believe there are some issues with this arrangement.

Mr Acting Speaker, this year our Government committed K250 million for medical supplies. We have issues of funding not coming in on time but it does come in and there are also many other issues that are faced by the Department. But, we must make sure that we get the right people to deliver the medical supplies and doing the right thing.

Whilst I have this opportunity, I would like to add that the medical drugs that are procured through the medical system in our country are certified by WHO. We have a centre for this control managed by the WHO and the US at Gordons. Many of our drugs coming into the country are assessed by them to make sure that we are not giving fake drugs to our people. This has been an issue in the past and I have confirmed that most of the drugs that we are using today have gone through the process of potency and are relevant and not fake drugs.

Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Governor for those issues raised and please give us those reports. We have a lot of issues at the moment but we are here to support each other and if there are people not doing the right thing then we must put them under the spotlight and make some right decisions. Thank you very much.

Supplementary Question

Mr PETER NUMU – My supplementary is also in regard to the procurement in Eastern Highlands Province.

Mr Acting Speaker, during the 2017 National Elections, many members of the hospital board resigned and stood for elections. After the elections, they assumed office at their own discretion and conducted meetings that would most probably be deemed illegal, to procure programs in the hospital. This concern was brought to the attention of the former Health Minister after a decision by the PEC.

The *Provincial Health Authority Act* stipulates that the Health Minister on behalf of the board must consult the Governor of the province. We therefore made a decision through the PEC to hold talks with the former Health Minister to recommend candidates to be appointed to the board through the Head of State.

06/07

But the office of the CEO hijacked that process by way of advertisement. They selected their own candidates using their own process or law and last month these board members were sworn in.

They overlooked the decision made by PEC to recruit qualified people to manage our hospital properly

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, ask your question.

Eastern Highlands - Improper Appointment of PHA Board Members

Mr PETER NUMU – Mr Acting Speaker, I am coming to my question now.

I am making clarification and our situation remains like this. So, my question is,

(1) Can the Minister look into the dubious appointment process of those board members who are now illegally awarding contracts?

(2) Can the Minister recruit qualified people on the board?

People who have no political interest and affiliations, are dedicated to manage the hospital's interest properly and have concern for our peoples' welfare.

(3) Can the Minister address this matter immediately in my province?

There are many outstanding projects; therefore, we need to have qualified board members to look into our problems.

The Minister must make clarifications to this Parliament and the people of Eastern Highlands Province on the recruitment process of the board members. What is the proper process in recruiting a board member? Will the Department communicate with health authority or as provided by our law, the Health Minister will discuss with the respective provincial governor through consultation and appoint the board members?

Many people in the Eastern Highlands people are dying of curable diseases due to this impediments created by the administration which is affecting the function of the hospital.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I would like to thank the Governor of Eastern Highlands for this important question.

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to make it clear to this honourable House that the efficiency and effectiveness of the Provincial Health Authority in our provinces depends on having good boards, management and a good CEO.

We need to get people who have no political interests. Those who have the passion to deliver health services to our people

I thank the Governor for raising this important point today. One of the issues we identified with regards to implementation of the *Provincial Health Authority Act of 2007* is the lack of proper regulations. There is an *Act*, but our Department is still working on the regulations so that we can actually measure the performance of the board. How do we appoint them properly? We need to have a performance management system in place to evaluate the performances, this also applies to the management team as well.

So, with regards to the by-laws and the regulations, the Department is working on it with the First Legislative Counsel and we wish to deliver this particular regulation very soon, within the next two months.

Mr Acting Speaker, to the point raised by the Governor, I am hearing this for the first time today. I ask the Governor to give me those information. I will also stress again that the appointment of the board members for provincial Health Authorities (PHAs) is done in consultation with the Governor's office and Minister's office and not with Department of Health team or other person with their recommendations to the Minister for Health.

07/07

I assure the Governor today on this Floor that we will revisit all those processes that led to the appointment of the current board members and if they were done illegally and out of the system, I can assure you that we will nullify those appointments.

And also, if the board members are illegally appointed that means that all contracts they entered into are also nullified and disqualified as well.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to thank the Governor for these questions and I urge all governors to raise these sort of issues so we can improve these situations for the betterment of our country.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Address Increasing Rate of Violence Against Women

Mr ALLAN BIRD – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My question is directed to the Prime Minister and perhaps the Minister for Police Minister can take note.

Mr Acting Speaker, last week in my province, I received a report from the Hospital, about the number of cases relating to violence, both violence in general and violence against women where the hospital is dealing with now.

Since then, I consulted other hospitals only to find out that they have similar statistics also. This includes Port Moresby. In East Sepik, about 50 per cent of the violence cases the surgeons have been dealing with are caused using bush knives, grass knives and a new weapon called wired-slingshot.

Mr Acting Speaker, as the former Chairman of the Hospital, the statistics have remained the same for the last seven years and continues to rise. You will also note that in social media there is a lot of violence against women. Most of these were cases were domestic violence cases where wives and girlfriends were beaten by husbands and boyfriends.

All these issues have not been addressed by the relevant state agencies, yet we promote the slogan 'Take back PNG'.

To 'Take back PNG', means our people must operate freely without the fear of violence and intimidation from others. The rate of these cases is reaching epidemic proportions and pretty soon we will be dealing with violence just like we are dealing with polio.

This is my question;

(1) Could the Prime Minister give some under-taking and form a Bi-Partisan Committee to look into this matter?

In my view, the police are not dealing with it. There are also issues where women are seeking protection from the court system to stop their partners from abusing them and those women are having difficulties accessing services of the State.

(2) Could the Prime Minister give an undertaking on how we can deal with these issues going forward from this Parliament?

For instance, can we quickly move towards arresting the perpetrators of violence? Supposedly if a bush knife or grass knife is used in an event of violence and the police are still slack, is there a way where we can compel the police.

I know that the Minister says that we have regulations and processes but in the event while waiting and a violent event takes place, how can we make sure that those sorts of protection from violence is immediately available and which agency is responsible for coming providing support to these victims of violence.

Finally Mr Acting Speaker, on the Floor of Parliament last year, we passed a law to increase the penalties not just for gun-related violence but violence in general.

(3) Could the Prime Minister inform the House, how quickly will those penalties be brought to bear by the judicial system?

If they have not already been brought to bear on the family, supposedly Mr Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Justice. If not, can there be some advocacy on this issue. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

08/07

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Acting Speaker, I thank the Governor of East Sepik for raising some important issues in his questions on violence against women in PNG and general violence within society.

We can't talk about increasing the economy and growing it when our communities don't feel safe and are insecure. One of the safest measurement of a safe society is when people live in peace and harmony with each other.

In the last few public discourse, I have always concluded with this line where I am appealing to the menfolk that we respect the women that we come across. The measurement of the progress of our society can be seen in that regard.

If 10 years from now we see our womenfolk going about doing their business late at night and walking around freely without any harassment then we are on the path of change.

The issue that concerns the Governor of East Sepik is a common and prevalent issue. Each one of us must have every right to be concerned of how our womenfolk both mothers and daughters are being treated.

Mr Acting Speaker, let me add value to these concerns by saying that laws have been passed whether it is causing grievous bodily harm or attempted violence there are these set of laws for us to police. I appeal to every policemen throughout the country to deploy the use of these laws and ensure that we bring those to face the rule of law.

Maybe the issue now is the effecting of that law and policing it must take place now.

In this country, when it comes to women and violence, we always tend to say it is custom or it is an issue of the household. But the woman in abuse is being harmed by other females or the husband or a male relative.

Mr Acting Speaker, there are laws and I make this call to all the police personnel to be sensitive when carrying out their duties and responsibilities. They don't need the Prime Minister or the Police Minister to continuously direct them.

Whilst I am on that, the Police Minister is on strengthening the Police Force now by advertising the top jobs for a major restructure from the top down and hopefully we can re-energize the police force in the right spot.

Our policemen and women are working under trying circumstances and wherever they are across the country, we are appealing that they deploy the trust faithfully for the rule of law.

In the instance of violence against women, the penalties have increased so it is a matter of police doing their work and attending to the complaints brought before them.

When these culprits are seized, they must make sure they go the full length of prosecution until a penalty is being adduced.

09/07

So, laws are already in place and we ask our police personnel to proceed with their duties.

I ask all our senior ranking officers in the police force, for instances Station Commanders and Provincial Commanders to take heed of the sensitiveness of the issue raised by the Governor.

There are instances where police personnel would want their allowances first before actual duties are carried out. These sort of attitude and behaviour have been taken note of and would be dealt with by the Minister for Police under this new Government.

Such issues will be seriously looked at and there will be proper structuring implemented for the leadership of the police force. This is starting from top down so that police personnel will work without fear or favour from influences from civilians, 'wantok system' culture and so forth.

Culture is one of the main issue that really spoils the work of the police personnel. For instance, the Member for Wabag and Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resources recently

raised a point on outlawing compensation. This is because most times, compensation takes precedence over justice.

There is no vacuum in law. There are provisions of law that addresses these matters. We haven't been fully utilising the use of prosecution by bringing the matters before competent authorities. In the first instance, report the matter to the police and then prosecute the perpetrator then it moves on to the next process until it reaches all the courts, and the culprit faces justice for causing pain or injury to mothers and children.

I urge all of us to fully support the work of the police and allow them to carry out their duties.

I also appeal to the general public who are listening today on questions raised by the Governor of East Sepik, let us not say it's the business of husbands and wives. Instead, we the society must rally around this victim and present evidence to police rather than compensation, bring it straight to the courts to complete the legal process.

Maybe it's because our country has been independent for only 44 years therefore we have this strong affinity to our culture and way of doing things. Our culture continues to stand in the way of justice being delivered. But, we can't hide behind the banner of culture and custom and continue to allow for violence in our societies.

Therefore, I put to Parliament to think about outlawing compensation completely. And allow police to function properly. We as the Government are giving commitment to restoring the integrity and pride of the Police Force. The Minister for Police is considering to extend police training from six months to two years diploma training.

Once they pass-out from Bomana, they should be fully equipped in all aspects of police duties. Six months is too limited in gaining wider knowledge. These are some of the reforms that Minister for Police will be considering as far as policy interventions are concerned.

But in the first instances, the law allows for punishment to take place and let us bring all complaints to police.

With that, I ask the Minister for Police to deal with any police officer in the front desk anywhere across the country if they are not processing a lawful complaint being reported accordingly.

Don't hide behind the custom banner and tell them to go back to the house to sort it out because these are husband and wife issues.

Mr KONI IGUAN – Mr Acting Speaker, correction, I am the Member for Markham. My apologies to you. The Sergeant-At-Arms allocated a new seat for me because the earpiece on my allocated seat was faulty so they allowed me to seat on Member for Kabwum's seat.

So, Mr Acting Speaker, I ask your empathy to recognise me as Member for Markham.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER –I apologise, you moved to the other side that's why I addressed you as Member for Kabwum.

10/07

Outstanding Allowances for Ward Councillors

Mr KONI IGUAN – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Before I ask my question, I would like to put something on notice to the Minister for Transport.

During this week, there was a question being raised on allocation of money on rural roads. The Minister himself have made it clear that these rural roads funds will be allocated to rural districts. I want to ask the Minister to see Markham not just as valley with a highway running through and not recognising it as a rural district but to recognise it as such.

Markham is spread through the mountains of Kabwum, Obura-Wonenara, Menyamya, Rai-Coast, and Huon Gulf. I have people living in those area so, Mr Acting Speaker. I would like to put this on notice so that the Minister can include Markham as one of the rural district.

Mr Acting Speaker, my question are directed to the Minister for Finance. The nominations for the LLG Elections will be closed today, 4 July 2019. While I was in my district, a lot of councillors have raised questions regarding their allowances. They have not received their allowances.

(1) Can the Minister clarify to this House and the councillors if we have already paid them their allowances?

(2) If we have not paid their allowances, when are going to do so?

(3) If it is after the LLG Elections, will those who lose during election still receive their outstanding allowances?

We need to assure them, so that the councillors can be fully informed that they can still claim their allowance even if they do not make it through the election.

Mr Acting Speaker, those are my few questions to the Minister for Finance. Thank you.

Mr CHARLES ABEL – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I thank the good Member for Markham for his important questions.

Yes, Mr Acting Speaker, obviously the LLG Elections are pending and will happen this month. All is well and it is only natural that our 6119 ward councillors, not every ward councillors are councillors, but most of them 6119 are there concerned about receiving their outstanding allowances.

Mr Acting Speaker, my understanding is, we made an important decision in 2014, to increase their allowances from K100 per month to K400 per month which is an excellent decision, along with some other decisions like increasing the conditions for Village Court Magistrates and church health workers.

In relation to the councillors, we allowed some of those to accumulate rather than paying them monthly. Unfortunately, but we have managed over-time since 2014 to catch up. Last year, we managed to pay those outstanding allowances to our councillors.

The concern of course is that the allowances from January to June this year are outstanding, but I also believe that a warrant has been released to the Provincial Affairs Department from Treasury for K5 million and the Department of Finance is in the process now of authorising that expenditure.

Everything comes back to cash flow and we will do our very best to make sure that the councillors receive those allowances before the return of writs. Even if that does not occur, we will do our very best to ensure its paid. Even after the elections, win or lose, whatever happens, they have served that function and therefore are entitled to receive those allowances. Otherwise, we will do our very best to ensure they are paid before the return of writs

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Mr GINSON SAONU – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Before I raise my questions, can I ask that the question time be extended to another twenty minutes?

11/07

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – EXTENDED TIME FOR QUESTIONS

Motion (by **Mr Ginson Saonu**) put-

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the time for Questions Time this day being extended by 20 minutes.

There being no absolute majority motion not carried.

Mr GINSON SAONU –Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

My questions are in relation to the Integrated Financial Management System roll out. They are directed to the Minister for Finance. IFMS was introduced in my province in 2018. It was installed and connected in Morobe Province by Department of Finance in 2018. Later on, Morobe Provincial Administration took it on board early this year, 2019.

For the benefit of everybody in this House, let me give you some experiences that I had that will help you understand why this roll out programme must be fixed. This is so that you are not frustrated with your money going through the system. These are problems that I am facing with this system. For instance, the workforce processing the IFMS is slow and causes delays in payment processing because authorized users are inexperienced, new and untrained.

There are delays in payments when authorized users are not at work at IFMS sites. There are no appointed officers to assist on relief basis in the absence of authorized users. Support infrastructure is very limited for effective implementation of IFMS. There are no computers for authorized users, no proper office space to station authorized users; for effective workflow and payment processes.

In some instances, there are no constant power supply for the IFMS sites. In some districts the communication systems which the IFMS is connected to is not reliable and effective. There is still no training provided as yet to access IFMS for improvement purposes such as bank reconciliation and other reports needed by the stakeholders.

The IFMS officers given access are busy while others are relaxing away. Financial delegates and section 32 officers have to be appointed by provincial administrators, LLG, MPG and the district accounts. However, this is not the case in the Morobe Provincial Administration Department of Finance, officers who have been given access to finance delegates and section32 for training purposes are still ineffective. The expenditure codes do not capture itemised activities; like LLG and MPG budgets. Funds posted through CFCs are in bulk for economic items only.

Each economic item should capture sub-items as per LLG and provincial government budgets for each activity. District and LLG staff are still not given access to IFMS and only finance staff are given access to procurement and payments.

Mr Acting Speaker, in addition, a significant disadvantage of the use IFMS Procurement System in Morobe is very obvious –

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, it would be wise to ask your questions.

Fix Integrated Financial Management System

Mr GINSON SAONU – The two districts, Tewai-Siassi and Kabwum are not operating. My related questions are:

(1) Can the Minister make sure the IFMS in the Morobe Province be halted and reverted to former PGA system and all following IFMS issues are being efficiently addressed?

(2) Can the Minister make sure PGA system continues so that effectiveness of releasing funds to Members and Governors are done on time until the relevant problems are fixed?

Mr CHARLES ABEL – I thank the Governor for his questions relating to the Integrated Financial Management System which is rolled out through the Department of Finance.

This is one of the major undertakings and programs by the Department of Finance to integrate the Government accounting system and link the provincial governments down to the districts for very good reasons. But, of course, there have been some problems.

The program has not been rolling for quite a few years and whilst all the government departments are all linked up, we are still having problems connecting to provincial governments and districts. In fact, the IFMS has been halted to make sure that we look at what these issues are and we selectively iron them out with individual provinces and districts.

However, if the Governor for Morobe can put the particulars together to give it to me in writing, then I will arrange for him to meet with the Secretary for Finance and the finance team; we will consider what he is requesting depending on the nature of the issues.

We will take all these things on board, but let me say that the Government is committed to making sure that the IFMS is rolled out across the country. We understand that it relies on

a good communication system, a reliable data connection and a good backup power system that many of our remote areas are still struggling to achieve.

But, for the purposes of accountability and real time information coming back to Department of Finance and the central government agencies so that we can have timely reports and understand what is happening, this system is very important.

I have heard many complaints about the roll-out so that is why it has been halted.

We will take it on case by case and undertake to work with our Governor and with the Department so sort out those issues.

13/07

**AUDITOR-GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA –
EAST NEW BRITAIN FINANCIAL REPORT, 2016 –
PAPER – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF THE PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – I present the following report pursuant to *section 214* of the *Constitution*.

Auditor-General of Papua New Guinea, East New Britain Financial Report, 2016.

Motion (by **Sir John Pundari**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the Paper and the Report be referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts.

**AUDITOR GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA –
NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT, 2014 –
PAPER – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF THE PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER - I present the following report pursuant to *section 214* of the *Constitution*.

Auditor-General of Papua New Guinea, National Youth Commission Annual Report, 2014.

Motion (by **Sir John Pundari**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the Paper and the Report be referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts.

**AUDITOR GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA –
NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, ANNUAL REPORT, 2015 –
PAPER – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF THE PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I present the following report pursuant to *section 214* of the *Constitution*.

*Auditor General of Papua New Guinea – National Youth Development Authority,
Annual Report, 2015*

Motion (by **Sir John Pundari**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the Paper and the Report be referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA – REPORT OF THE
COMPLIANCE AUDIT ON PROCUREMENT OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 2015 – PAPER - MOTION TO TAKE NOTE
OF THE PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER - Honourable Members, I present the following Report pursuant to *section 214* of the *Constitution*.

*Auditor-General of Papua New Guinea – Report of the Compliance Audit on Procurement of
Health Department for the Financial Year, 2015.*

Motion (by **Sir John Pundari**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the Paper and the Report be referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA – REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS
OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND FISCAL COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR
ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2017 –PAPER –MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF THE
PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER - Honourable Members, pursuant to *section 214* of the *Constitution*, I present the following report,

Auditor-General of Papua New Guinea – Report on the Accounts of National Economic and Fiscal Commission for the year ending 31 December 2017

Motion (by **Sir John Pundari**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the Paper and the Report be referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts.

**AUDITOR GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA –
NATIONAL MARITIME SAFETY AUTHORITY,
REPORT, 2017 – PAPER –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF THE PAPER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER - Honourable Members, pursuant to *section 214* of the *Constitution*, I present the following report,

Auditor General of Papua New Guinea – National Maritime Safety Authority, Report, 2017

Motion (by **Sir John Pundari**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the Paper and the Report be referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts.

**BOUGAINVILLE REFERENDUM AND PEACE-BUILDING – PAPERS
AND STATEMENT – PAPERS NOTED**

Sir **PUKA TEMU** (Abau - Minister for Bougainville Affairs) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I present the following papers pursuant to statute:

PM and NEC ACT 2002

(a) Bougainville Peace Agreement Signed in Arawa on 30 August 2001,

(b) A Guide to Awareness on Materials and Activities, and;

(c) Fact Sheet No.3. for awareness, materials and activities and see section No.3 which is written in tok pisin

I ask leave of the Parliament to make a statement in connection with the papers.

Leave granted.

14/07

Thank you Mr Acting Speaker, and the honourable members of this Parliament for providing me with the opportunity to present a statement with regards to these important documents.

As you recall last week, I made a commitment to inform both, Opposition Caucus and Government Caucus to make available these very important documents and wish to follow it up with the statement in the view that this is the second last last Meeting of Parliament before voting on the referendum takes place in October, I thought that it is very important for the honourable Members of the Tenth Parliament to be fully aware of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

Therefore in circulation is the actual document called the Bougainville Peace Agreement and also the work that has been continuing since our leaders in the JSB process agrees to the date and on the 2nd document which is the agreed awareness messages so that

So as I make my statement some of this sentiment will be a repetition but as you are listening and perusing through the document I request, Mr Acting Speaker, to take them home and continue and be made fully aware on the issues on Bougainville because this 10th Parliament will make the final ratification of the outcome of the referendum.

Mr Acting Speaker, at the outset, on behalf of the people of Abau and my own family, let me express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Prime Minister, Hon James Marape for allocating me this ministry of Bougainville Affairs, my family association which all of you are aware of with the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Prime minister it has been a personal journey for me to relate to these different phases of Bougainville experience, in speaking of my previous experience and personal links with Bougainville, I am especially pleased to know the firm commitment the Prime Minister has made to honour the letter and spirit of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the constitutional laws which gives its legal effect. The Prime Minister has appointed for Minister for Bougainville affairs is the most important and challenging time for Bougainville, my ministry and indeed our country, Papua New Guinea as a whole.

The Prime Ministers fair commitment to the peace building in Bougainville, provides a strong and welcome re-assurance to all of us who are directly engaged in preparation for the referendum or otherwise concerned for the guiding principles for the Bougainville peace agreement and the board to secure lasting peace by peaceful means.

My system with my commitment to my ministry within the first week of my appointment to the ministry. I was in Bougainville interacting and covering with Bougainville leaders and the people. There is no better reminder of all the important challenges laying ahead then to see the unfailing commitment by Bougainville's who poor implementation of the Bougainville peace agreement.

Mr Acting Speaker, as all honourable members would be aware that preparations for the Bougainville referendum are now well underway.

The Bougainville Referendum Commission has been appointed with former Irish Prime Minister, Honourable Betty Ahan as its Chair other Members including the Nationals and Bougainville National Electoral Commissioners and four other persons were nominated by the National and Bougainville Executive Councils respectively. An independent Chief Referendum Officer CRO has been appointed to oversee implementation.

15/07

The CRO is required to provide annual reports to the joint supervisory body JSB through which the National Government and the ABG to consult, cooperate and work together to resolve such differences as might arise.

The Bougainville Referendum Commissions main office is now established in Buka. The enrolment of Bougainvilleans voters is in progress in order to make sure that the enrolment is conducted as well as possible, the time for enrolment has recently been extended. As the Bougainville Peace Agreement and our National Constitution require, the Referendum has to be held before the middle of 2020.

The Bougainville Referendum Commission has just advised that the diverse challenges it has to address in preparing the way for the vote mean it is re-question that the National Government ABG to agree to defer the dates previously set for issuing the ridge and then holding the vote by further six weeks, (for example) it will go to from 16th August to 12th October and to 27th September and then 23rd of November respectively. This request is still to be considered, discussed and the two Government to response are agreed will be in the next JSB meeting.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Referendum is best understood as a process of which the preparations, voting and the declaration of the result of the vote apart. As the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the Papua New Guinea *Constitution part 14* specify these important events will be followed by consultation between the National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

The Minister for Bougainville Affairs will table the result of the Referendum in the National Parliament, the Speaker will than forward the copy of the minutes of the proceedings in the National Parliament and whatever the decisions of Parliament might make to the Bougainville Executive, the President and the Bougainville Executive Council. Important as the Bougainville Referendum process surely is, it is best and we view it as part of the much bigger picture to which it belongs. The Bougainville Peace Agreement which was sign and then given legal effect by our predecessors in this Honorable House.

It is now our responsibility and duty of care to ensure that the letter and the spirit of the Bougainville Peace Agreement are honored in full so that we keep building lasting peace by peaceful means and peace is sustained. Mr Acting Speaker, in providing the foundation and framework for making and continuing to build peace, the Bougainville Peace Agreement has three pillars as all of us are aware of and I want remind us again. Autonomy Referendum and Weapons deposal are the three key pillar of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

These pillars are not standalone, it's one of them has to be build. They are all significant implication for one and other. Weapons disposal was a pre-repressive or implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and now to ensure that voting in the referendum is free and fair. Autonomy provided opportunity for a significant mature of self-government in Bougainville in a lead up to a referendum and now greater autonomy is one of the options to be offered on the referendum ballot paper together with independent.

Together the three pillars make it possible for the parties involved in the previous conflict to agree to make and keep building last in peace by peaceful means.

Mr Speaker, let me elaborate and remind us once again on the progress and heat of the three pillars. The presence of weapons in Bougainville continues to be of concern to authority including the National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government as well as communities in Government many of which were adversely affected during the conflict. Weapons deposal is recognized in the Bougainville Peace Agreement as a precursor for the referendum.

Weapons disposal is still regarded as a high priority even at this stage when peace has been maintained continuously since the Bougainville Peace Agreement was signed in 2001.

16/07

Mr Speaker, as my predecessor Honourable Willam Samb has previously stated, the JSB and important mechanism through which the National Government and ABG meet to consult and to facilitate cooperation's and resolve any differences has agreed to a strategy for weapons disposal. The strategy is to be coordinated through a joint weapons disposal secretariat by weapons disposal committees in each of the 33 constituencies. As I speak, 30 out of the 33 constituencies have now been declared weapons-free and referendum-ready.

The only exceptions are the Tsitalato, Halia and Taunita-Teop constituencies, all of which are in North Bougainville.

Mr Acting Speaker, weapons disposal is recognized in the Bougainville Peace Agreement as a precursor for the referendum.

Mr Acting Speaker, there are four recognized categories of weapons in Bougainville:

weapons of the Bougainville war; weapons which are remnants from World War Two; weapons procured and held by Bougainvilleans under Papua New Guinea's Firearms Act; and, weapons held by Bougainvilleans who were other than ex-combatants and Me'ekamui.

Weapons disposal will continue to be a joint effort by the Government of Papua New Guinea and the ABG.

2019 has been specifically marked for upscaling all activities directed to ensure weapons disposal – with clear strategies and dates for implementation.

In February this year, several dates were decided for the Joint Secretariat on Weapons Disposal to meet in 2019. The following activities are ongoing: a schedule of weapons; disposal ceremonies or activities in each of the three regions; introduction to standardized forms for distribution; containment, monuments and memorial parks; technical and logistical support to facilitate collection and storage; evaluating the constituency 'referendum ready declaration' reports; and the law enforcement approach to dealing with possession of firearms.

What I have observed since becoming Minister for Bougainville Affairs is that former combatants in Bougainville are very much involved in the process, and even spearheading some of the activities.

In fact, two weeks ago, I met a body called the 'Core Group' which comprises different leaders of what were previously fighting factions. They assured me that the Bougainville referendum will be secure.

Meanwhile, they are organizing a Summit, which will, in part, deal with weapons disposal.

Mr Acting Speaker in regards to Autonomy, the implementation of the agreed arrangements for Bougainville autonomy has significant implications for governance, the conduct of relations between the National Government and Bougainville, and, potentially, for the choice that Bougainvillean voters might make in the forthcoming referendum, and the negotiations between the National Government and the ABG following the vote.

While the autonomy arrangements are clearly of interest to people in other parts of the country, it is important for everyone to bear in mind that Bougainville autonomy was not devised as a way of reforming existing government arrangements but agreed in the course of negotiations to bring peace — following the deadliest and most destructive conflict in the Pacific since World War II.

Bougainville autonomy should not be dragged into proposals and discussions concerned with autonomy in other parts of our country.

Mr Acting Speaker, Implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the Constitutional Amendment and Organic Law on Peace-Building which give it legal effect led to the election of the first ABG in 2005.

Subsequent elections were held in 2010 and 2015.

The Bougainville Peace Agreement and implementing laws have continued to operate. Neither the elections nor the operations of the ABG were derailed from within or outside.

The National Government has continued to provide financial support to the ABG, both through the grants specified in the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the Special Intervention Fund (SW) of K500 million announced in 2011 by former Prime Minister, Honourable Peter O'Neill.

17/07

The SIF was intended to provide the ABG with K100 million a year for five years.

However, financial constraints on the National Government have meant that an outstanding balance of K200 million originally promised to the ABG emerged in 2016.

The two Governments have subsequently agreed in a JSB meeting to credit a number of National Government projects in Bougainville against the commitments made for the SIF.

The National Government paid a one-off establishment grant to the ABG when the ABG was established.

Ongoing grants to the ABG for the Bougainville Peace Agreement provides in the National Constitutional Laws require are:

(a) a recurrent unconditional grant which is provided annually to support the recurrent costs of functions for which the ABG is responsible, and;

(b) an annual restoration and development grant (RDG), in regard to the calculation of which significant differences have arisen between the National Government and the ABG.

These two Governments can, of course, agree to additional conditional grants for specific purposes (they must be agreed; they cannot be imposed).

The Bougainville Peace Agreement also provides that, following consultation with the ABG, the National Government may also provide specific purpose conditional grants, including a recurrent grant to meet the costs of policing in Bougainville.

Mr Acting Speaker, as honourable Members will be aware, differences have arisen between the National Government and the ABG over the way in which the National Government has calculated the annual RDG to the ABG.

The two Governments have now agreed to refer their differences over the way in which the formula for the RDG has been calculated and applied to an independent expert which the United Nations has agreed to provide.

We await the expert's advice and I have personally requested the United Nations to advance that at the earliest possible time.

Meanwhile, the SIF has been used to support restoration and upgrading of facilities for radio broadcasting, hospitals, agriculture and livestock farming, school classrooms, and roads, including major roads such as the Buka Ring Road and feeder roads around Bougainville.

The National Government has also encouraged and facilitated support for restoration and development of infrastructure and services in Bougainville by Papua New Guinea's development cooperation partners. These include Australia, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, and the United Nations.

Between 2012 and 2017, assistance to Bougainville by Papua New Guinea's development co-operation partners amounted to well over K1 billion.

The efficiency, effectiveness and integrity with which funding and related arrangements for restoration, service delivery, and development in Bougainville are implemented is clearly important for both peace-building and evidence of the National Government's commitment and seeking the support required to honour the letter and spirit of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

Transfer of functions and powers

Mr Acting Speaker, consistent with developing Bougainville autonomy within the framework of our identify as an independent nation and our National *Constitution*, the Bougainville Peace Agreement and National Constitutional Laws provide that certain functions and powers of government will continue to be the National Government's responsibilities, while others are available for transfer on request by the ABG.

The National Government's ongoing responsibilities are in such areas of clearly national significance and relevance to Papua New Guinea's relations with other countries and participation in international organizations such as defence and foreign relations.

The Bougainville Peace Agreement and implementing Constitutional Laws provide that the two Governments may negotiate co-operative arrangements in trade, immigration, and certain aspects of border management, fisheries, central banking, as well as international transport and communication.

Financial support for the ABG.

18/07

For Honourable Members' information, the following transfers have been effected: some which might be regarded as essentially of symbolic significance, such as home affairs, liquor licencing, public holidays, sports, recreation, and time zone (which has resulted in Bougainville time being set one hour ahead of Papua New Guinea time); while others are focused on significant areas of political activity, public sector management, and other aspects of governance, taxation and the management of public funds, as well as planning and implementation of restoration and development, education and health, inward investment, mining, liquor, and public holidays.

Transfers currently in progress to the ABG from the National Government agencies with relevant responsibilities include Works, Lands and Physical Planning, Community Development, Civil Registry, and Agriculture and Livestock.

The National Government and the ABG are working together to implement further transfers. Where Bougainville laws are required in order to implement or regulate a transfer, the ABG and the Bougainville House of Representatives continue to engage in relevant legislative processes.

Consistent with the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the national laws which give the Agreement legal effect within the framework of our National Constitution, implementation of the arrangements for Bougainville autonomy are subject to regular, five-yearly reviews by independent experts whose reports are then jointly considered by the National Government and the ABG.

The second review was conducted somewhat later than it should have been.

The two Governments have, in turn, reviewed its findings, and have been consulting with a view to joint consideration and implementation of such actions as might be appropriate and agreed.

Referendum

I now turn to this last leg of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, referendum.

Consistent with Constitutional requirements, the Bougainville referendum will be held with the time frame previously agreed, namely, between 10 and 15 years after the election of the first ABG. As you and I know, it was in 2005 and therefore 10 to 15 means that mid 2020 but we have cautioned that the referendum will take place this year in 2019.

The Bougainville Referendum Commission is actively engaged in promoting public awareness of the forthcoming referendum.

An eligible voter is defined as a Papua New Guinea citizen, at least 18 years of age, enrolled or entitled to vote in a national election, with links to Bougainville by birth, adoption, marriage, or membership of a clan. So I'm a Bougainvillean under that category.

The time-frame initially set for voters to check or add their names on the roll has been extended in order to ensure every practical effort is made to secure the integrity of the process.

Operating with the support of the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission and Bougainville Electoral Office, the Bougainville Referendum Commission is preparing to establish polling booths around Bougainville.

Bougainvilleans outside Bougainville will be able to vote at offices of the National Electoral Commission at other centres around Papua New Guinea.

Eligible non-residents living in countries where there are substantial numbers of eligible Bougainvilleans will be able to vote at polling centres to be set up at Gizo and Honiara in Solomon Islands, as well as Cairns and Brisbane in Australia. The BRC had made those formal decisions because we believe that that's where most Bougainvilleans are at this time. Arrangements are also being made so that other eligible voters can cast their vote by post.

The National Government and the ABG have agreed to the choices on offer on the referendum ballot-paper, and the way in which they are defined and explained for voters.

The choices and their definitions are:

Independence – an independent nation state with sovereign powers and laws, recognized under international law and by other sovereign states to be an independent state, separate from the State of Papua New Guinea.

19/07

A negotiated political settlement that provides for a form of autonomy with greater powers and those currently available under the constitutional arrangement. As previously mentioned, the Bougainvillean Referendum Commission is in full swing in managing the electoral process. The National Government and the ABG are committed to providing the Bougainville Referendum Commission with the funds required to ensure that the referendum

is conducted so that the process is both free and fair as Bougainville Peace Agreement and good governance require.

The referendum process will not impact on or be impacted by the elections for the ABG due to be held in mid-2020. Given the funding challenges the Bougainville Referendum Commission has managed to revise its project budget downwards, from K44 million to K27.8 million. Papua New Guinea Development Corporation partners are being approached for assistance in filling in the gaps. The New Zealand Government is taking the initiative of mobilising a regional force to provide security during the election.

Mr Acting Speaker, meanwhile the National Government is also approaching possible sources of independent observers to monitor the integrity of the voting. As previously mentioned, Papua New Guinea's development corporation partners have been approached and are providing support for the referendum process. The financial challenges we are currently facing means that we have to rely at least to some degree on their support. Our government appreciates their loyalty and understanding,

In saying so, let me be quite clear that the referendum process and implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and implementing laws is a Papua New Guinean responsibility, which the Government is determined to fulfil. The Bougainville peace process has been conducted and the Bougainville Peace Agreement was made, and is now being implemented by Papua New Guineans for the future well-being of our country, and in Papua New Guinean ways.

Mr Acting Speaker, co-operation in such ways enables us to conduct ourselves so that we can achieve important shared objectives, as the various agreements reached on the way to achieving the Bougainville Peace Agreement show. This does not and cannot mean that we are other than grateful for the support that others provide. We value their contributions, and appreciate the respect they show for Papua New Guinean values and ways.

It is through such co-operation that we can demonstrate our robust determination to achieve shared objectives with the result that the Bougainville peace process is regarded as one of the most successful peace processes to date in which the United Nations has been engaged. And we need to tap ourselves on the back and say thank you to all of us and including those leaders that went before us.

As Minister for Bougainville Affairs, I am determined to keep building on my predecessor's achievements in order to secure lasting peace in Bougainville by peaceful means. The forthcoming national reconciliation will, I believe, make a positive contribution.

And that has been planned for between July and early August and the Prime minister will make the announcement.

Mr Acting Speaker, the steps being taken to identify missing persons will, I believe, provide support and, at least, some comfort to families and communities which have experienced the most devastating, personal impacts of the previous conflict. The plans for weapons disposal and reconciliation being developed by former combatants can also be expected to add further strength to the peace already achieved. The National government, the ABG and the Bougainville Referendum Commission are determined to do what it takes to keep moving ahead. The Bougainville referendum will be conducted as the Bougainville Peace Agreement and implementing laws provide and honouring the latter and the spirit of the agreement required.

I am confident that together we can overcome the challenges lying ahead and secure lasting peace. Previous elections for the ABG have been free and fair and they have been conducted in peace. The next ABG election which is due to be held early next year; while Bougainville's longer term political future is still in the process of implementation, will I am sure' be conducted so that it is free and fair and neither interfered with, nor is interfered by the Bougainville referendum.

20/07

Meanwhile, a Joint post-Referendum Task Force, in which I as Minister for Bougainville Affairs and the ABG's Minister for Peace Agreement implementation, Honourable Albert Punghau, are co-chairs, we are working hard with the support of independent, expert facilitators from outside the region to identify issues likely to arise following the vote and possible options for addressing them to ensure that peace is maintained.

As a participant in the Joint post-Referendum Task Force's deliberations, I would like to see it become a focus for community outreach, political dialogue, and co-operation by the National Government and the ABG.

I am accordingly keen for the Task Force to receive support from Papua New Guinea's development co-operation partners in efforts to promote greater awareness among Members of Parliament and the general public townsmen and women, villagers, as well as non-government organisations and other bodies, both in-country and abroad with an interest in the referendum process and/or its eventual outcome.

It is vital that every effort is made to maintain and keep building peace. In this regard, it is important to note, as I have been emphasizing, that the referendum is best understood as a process. Following the vote, if the National Parliament agrees to either of the options on the ballot-paper greater autonomy or independence for Bougainville, it is important for all interested parties to be aware that it will, almost certainly, be necessary to amend the national *Constitution* and probably the *Constitution* of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, as well as other National and Bougainville laws.

This will, almost certainly, require the preparation and presentation of submissions to the National and Bougainville Executive Councils, drafting of amendments to relevant Constitutional Laws, and then presentation, debate, and the support of the two-thirds absolute majorities required.

Such a process, surely, takes time. Quite apart from and additional to the politics involved, a Constitutional Amendment to change the ABG's legal status requires publication in advance of being moved in the National Parliament; presentation at two separate sessions of Parliament at least two months apart; opportunity for debate; and then a final vote, publication, and implementation.

Depending on what Parliament decides, the last step, in particular, might take quite some time based on experience, I would imagine not just months but possibly years.

Meanwhile, it does not take much imagination to guess that the referendum process from voting to the making and implementation of the final decision might be taken to court by a party or parties with an interest in a particular issue or aspects.

This might add further delay to the process as a whole. It is accordingly important that the sequence of events that constitute the referendum process is explained to the public so that impatience and/or unrealistic expectations for or against honouring the people's vote do not lead to disorder or otherwise disturb the peace process on the ground.

Every effort must continue to be made to ensure that implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement continues to be peaceful and that peace-building continues.

In short, we are in for a period that might test participants at every level in ways that are not always readily perceived or addressed.

These concerns underline my concern to see that the Joint Post-Referendum Task Force receives the support physical, political, financial, and participatory to secure lasting peace.

Mr Acting Speaker, as previously mentioned, the casting and counting of votes in the referendum is part of a bigger process. Following the vote, the counting of votes and declaration of the result of the count, the National Government and the ABG are to consult.

The National Parliament will then decide what the outcome will be. Experience in enacting the Constitutional Laws which give legal effect to the Bougainville Peace Agreement suggests that we need to ensure that all Members of Parliament are properly briefed so that they are fully aware both of the two Governments' positions following the vote by eligible Bougainvilleans and the two Governments' consultations.

As honourable Members will be aware and Members of the Bipartisan Partisan Parliamentary Committee on Bougainville can confirm - two critical areas that have given rise to concerns among Bougainvilleans are that the (a) result of the vote is not binding, but (b) subject to ratification or final decision by the National Parliament.

In short, as the Bougainville Peace Agreement requires, the National Government and the ABG are only required to consult over the result of the vote reported by the Bougainville Referendum Result.

In other words, the Agreement allows for negotiation between the two Governments (whereas a binding result would require immediate implementation of whatever choice a specified majority of voters has made).

The next step in the process is ratification or the process by which the National Parliament (not just the National Government-of-the-day) will make the final decision.

The process will, surely, require preparation of relevant submissions initially to the National Executive Council and the Bougainville Executive Council.

Civic education, Mr Acting Speaker, the references to the process outlined, among many other critical issues, calls for adequate awareness, particularly among the people of Bougainville. This has been an issue for some time. Public awareness is critical to orderly conduct of the referendum, acceptance of the outcome, and maintenance of public order and peace.

The National Government and the ABG are working together and the ABG administration is actively engaged in efforts to promote civic education, including public awareness of the referendum process.

21/07

The United Nations Peace-Building Fund has established a community information centre in Buka to support efforts to promote public awareness and there are effort to do the same in Arawa and Buin.

The Charter agreement for the Bougainville Referendum Commission requires that the Commission be guided by the following principles: neutrality, impartiality, transparency, professionalism, and inclusivity.

In particular, it states that the Commission is not subject to direction by the National Government, the ABG or anyone else. It must carry out its duties in an impartial manner without regard to the outcome of the Bougainville Referendum. It must not engage in promoting or supporting any person or group in promoting a particular outcome.

Thus, are arrangements being put in place to ensure that necessary arrangements are made and integrity secured for the conduct of the constitutionally guaranteed referendum on Bougainville's political future, unless the ABG decides that the referendum not be held which is definitely not a possibility at this stages.

Finally, Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to express a few words about our good and loyal friends, our development partners. They have been loyal and understanding, and we are grateful for that.

On that note, I would like to address a question that could be bothering our national leaders and members of the public: how involved should our partners be in development co-operation in the various areas that are being undertaken leading to the referendum and beyond? I would like to allay fears by saying that we are in control of the processes and activities.

Since the inception of the Bougainville Peace Agreement in 2001, Papua New Guinean and Bougainvillean leaders and officials have shown that they can work together.

In more recent times, I have observed that they can relate well to each other in order to achieve common outcomes - while being mindful of each other's particular interests.

Through such co-operation, I honestly believe that we can show people, even the rest of the world, that we can rise from the ashes of deadly conflict and resort to the use of our Melanesian ways to solve our own problems and forge fresh relationships.

Therefore, as Minister responsible, it is my position that we will and must not be dictated to in terms of how we resolve the Bougainville issue and secure lasting peace.

Mr Acting Speaker, in conclusion and based on what I can sense and observe through information I have received, I would say on the Floor of this Parliament that Papua New Guinea and Bougainville is ready for the referendum.

Bougainville leaders' initiative to prepare their respective constituencies for the referendum has assisted the people to understand the process. This is an ongoing commitment as we approach the final voting days.

An illustration I used during my recent trip to Bougainville, where I likened the post-conflict situation to a case of 'Rausim Haus Krai'. As we prepare for the referendum, we are going through a process where the sense of loss is being slowly lifted and the crying will turn to a sense of hope.

On that note, I implore my colleague Members from both sides of the House for us to join hands in working the way through towards finality in this issue.

The Bougainville conflict has been the worse conflict in our short political history, the deadliest since World War II in the South Pacific, and the most destabilizing for our people.

With that in mind, I made specific statements in the following areas in my recent trip to Bougainville:

Never again shall we, or any future Government, deploy security forces to Bougainville. I strongly encourage all of us to consider other solutions and preferably those based on our Melanesian cultures and traditions to meet challenges to do with our people and their resources;

The National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government must continue to work together and come up with joint decisions where possible so that qualities such as ownership, respect, consideration for others, and transparency are further developed and given practical effort; and, Bougainvilleans are fellow Papua New Guineans.

22/07

I would like all of us to take advantage of opportunities to reach out to our people on Bougainville in the spirit of respect, reconciliation and oneness so that we continue to build a firm foundation for them. The churches have been engaging in such activities for some time now and we do the same. Full implementations of the pillars will not mean that Bougainville Peace Agreement has come to an end.

The Bougainville Peace Agreement was intended and peace and good governance require that it will continue to provide a foundation for relations between Bougainville and

the Independent State of Papua New Guinea whatever the result of referendum and the National Parliament decision.

Finally Mr Acting Speaker, I want to reaffirm that all of us agree that Bougainville and the rest of PNG have always been close together, we will be sole forever.

Mr Acting Speaker, I will now close with this final remark, like what our prejudices demonstrated that the Bougainville Peace Agreement was home grown but the Bougainville Peace Agreement was indeed a joint creation, this is a platform and a precedence we must therefore follow and emulate in this Honourable Tenth Parliament.

The final decision of the Tenth Parliament must also be a joint creation so as to guarantee and maintain peace in Bougainville and PNG.

Mr Acting Speaker, may God bless our leaders and all our people in Bougainville and rest of our young and beautiful country, I thank you for the opportunity.

MR SAM AKOITAI (Central Bougainville) – I move –

That Parliament take note of the Paper.

Thank you, Mr acting Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Bougainville Affairs for stating a detailed report on the Floor of Parliament and Papua New Guinea.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker for allowing Minister for Bougainville Affairs for making a detailed statement. For the first time, you have come up with the dates and also being specific on the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

I am happy and would like to say thank you to this government for caring and addressing this issue on the Floor of Parliament of which is important to the people of Bougainville.

On the same note, I would also like to thank the development partners who have also contributed to making sure that Bougainville Peace Agreement was fully implemented but at the same time we have hardworking public servants that have delivered their services towards the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Papua New Guinea lost a lot of lives of which Bougainville lost more than 20 000 during the crisis which should not have happened but it did happen of which I did not expect.

24/07

Both parties played a big role in coming up to this peace agreement. As per the Minister's statement, there are three main structures in the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

- (1) Weapons Disposal,
- (2) Autonomy, and;
- (3) Referendum.

But the issue of weapons is the greatest concern for the National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

Before the ABG came into office one of the concerns was that there must be withdrawal of weapons by the warring factions.

The National Government's commitment was to withdraw the security forces from Bougainville and that has happened.

In the first elections for the ABG the United Nations supervised the first withdrawal of weapons in Bougainville. In that process the weapons were contained and confirmed that 85 percent of the weapons were withdrawn and destroyed. Only 15 per cent was left to Bougainvilleans and that will be dealt with when this process is implemented.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am pleased to say that the young people of Bougainville are now containing these weapons and there will be a ceremony were all those other weapons that remain will be destroyed in the presence of the leaders to ensure the process is going through.

I was quite surprised when I was visited by some young men in my own village and told that they had weapons and are still tracking down some more weapons that have been either stolen or kept in secret so that they could rightfully give them back. So I asked them to whom they would like to return the weapons. They replied to the Defence Force of Papua New Guinea. That is an encouraging statement to note that the young men have a positive approach.

The peace agreement does not talk about handing over weapons to anybody it talks about destroying the weapons.

So there are many high powered weapons and they have over time rusted and have no use in Bougainville.

Today, there is liberty unlike before where you couldn't walk around at night. Now you see mothers and young women walking around freely without being harassed.

Mr Acting Speaker I thank the Bougainville Affairs Minister in his tireless efforts to see this peace process being fulfilled.

Mr Acting Speaker, I also want to remind the leaders of similar situations building up in Papua New Guinea.

This situation is echoed clearly by leaders of both Central and National Capital District where people from other provinces are migrating and settling here.

Sometimes it is through marriage but many a time it's through very extra -ordinary land deals that allows people settling here.

The land grabbing issue is a serious issue and I hope and pray this must not continue to happen in other parts of the country.

25/07

I thank the Minister for making this call that honourable Members and Mr Acting Speaker, we shouldn't engage our defence force to attend to our own people. Our defence force, is to protect the *Constitution* and to deal with external forces and not our own people.

I am happy to see our young Prime Minister present and I want us to consider the call made by the Minister for Bougainville Affairs. Even though, he is making the call for Bougainvilleans but this must go to any other parts of PNG. We must not use our own Papua New Guineans, who are in the defence force to attend to problems. This conflict from Bougainville eventuated though it's too far from many parts of PNG. But you know what, it's not the Bougainvilleans only that fought. We had a combination of people from other parts of PNG who took part in the fight as well against the National Government.

In my faction, I had five men from Tari in that group which are our in-laws. Even though it's a sad situation, I want us to take that as a lesson and deal with other issues which can also end up like Bougainville situation.

So with that, thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr WILLIAM POWI (Southern Highlands) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I contributed in this debate when the Minister introduced it to Parliament last week. I won't take much time, but I want to thank the Minister for covering the issue of Bougainville comprehensively by giving the update. As you are one of our senior statesmen and the Government has made a right decision to appoint a senior statesman on this important issue on Bougainville, and also an important issue facing the country now. Not only because of your seniority but now you declared that you are their brother in-law so you are considered as a family member to Bougainvilleans.

Anyway, it was a good statement and I also acknowledge the statement made by Sam Akoitai. When we, the Bougainville Referendum Committee went to Bougainville, he was there and welcomed us as an ordinary citizens. He wept saying, he was very happy to see us going there. The atmosphere was so emotional and it really touched our hearts.

But the point that I want to stress here is about the attitude and behaviour of people there. I was approached by some of the most dangerous people and they asked me, 'you this red skinned man, what are you doing here' these people came from North Bougainville, Central Bougainville and scariest people were from Buin. They called me red skinned and I was really terrified and it also shocked me. This descriptive words came from the mouths of this younger generation of males and females during the conflict to present. They were not educated and even cared less for what PNG has done and contributed for them. They said if Waigani is not even close to us then we may as well go.

I stood up and replied, listen I too come from one complicated Province that is hard to manage as well, it's similar to Bougainville. And I don't know why God appointed me as the Chairman of this Committee to come here but who knows there may be a purpose. But I want to assure you my people for the first time without fear or favour, I will present a report including the good and bad stories on our visit here to Parliament. I told them we this Bi-partisan Committee Members represent the mini-Parliament to check the work in consultation with ABG. And we are not employees of any government organisation or representatives of any government departments.

26/07

We the Parliamentary Committee were checking on the consultancy with the ABG and Waigani. Whatever findings that we gather, we always table it here in Parliament. I can stand here saying the honourable Member for Central Bougainville, I gave you that assurance when you cried. I had shed a tear with Honourable Joseph Sungi who was my Deputy.

Without fear or favour, we presented a report on the progress to-date on Bougainville. Bougainville is an important matter in this country and we are sitting here discussing it.

Mr Acting Speaker. I would like to appeal to all the honourable Members through you, debate issues on Bougainville here. This is the forum to debate this. Do not sit back in fear of the unknown. That is one important thing I wanted to say. Why are you leaders not talking? It is not only the business for the Minister for Bougainville Affairs, it is our business.

Another thing is the referendum process, it is a complex process. It is not just here today and gone tomorrow. The Bougainville issue is going to be a matter of National importance from now, with pre-referendum which is few months away. After Referendum, the post-referendum process is critical, and I would like to also let us know in case you take this referendum lightly which it may become an important matter as time goes by, even after 2022. Because the results of the referendum process need to be articulated properly and even the process of bringing it to Parliament. And I think it is a big issue and leaders need to understand this.

I did not have any idea of this referendum, until when they said that the conduct of Bougainville referendum is an important process in the Southern Hemisphere in this part of the world. Through the Government of England, we the committee have to go down to find solutions on how the process of referendum in which they conducted in Scotland between Great Britain in the Northern Island.

These legacy issues are still on-going, same as the South Sudan and Timor Leste, but you can also see in England, in Europe. British exit is becoming a matter of national importance in Europe, more particularly for the United Kingdom.

So I would like the leaders of Parliament to know that the Bougainville issue, the referendum process is a complex process. We have already identified the question, what is the question? There is a greater Autonomy, what does that mean in the *Constitution* of our country? But in the Autonomy, Autonomy is defined in the *Constitution* and ABG. What about greater Autonomy, what does that mean? And then Independence, they need to be defined properly.

This is important. I have spoken to the previous Government, particularly the former Prime Minister, when I was out doing my research on the referendum process and said, resource the people of Bougainville and give whatever commitments that is in the budget to the ABG. There is no other process. Why ABG? Because Bougainville is not a Provincial Government. Bougainville is an Autonomous Government. The Organic *Law* application on DDA does not apply in Bougainville, so it must be clear. We have only five powers. Bougainville is constitutionally fully fledged Autonomous Government.

Secondly, I mentioned to the former Prime Minister was that, you need to have friendly, honest close personal consultation with ABG. Dialogue, relationship and partnership going forward.

Thirdly, by having this partnership you will craft the question that will be administered in their referendum process. And he said, let us bring it to Parliament and let Parliament ratify. I told him that it will not work this way. Manage the pre referendum process and manage the post referendum process. Resource and have very effective personnel, good dialogue with the ABG. They are created by the Constitution. There's just five powers we hold back.

27/07

That is fundamental and we need to understand that very carefully. Having said that, like what the Minister for Bougainville Affairs has said, there are some prerequisite, 'must do' things in the referendum, before we conduct the referendum. And the Member for Central Bougainville covered this. Weapons disposals is critical, these are prerequisite requirements of the peace agreement. Public awareness is another, are the people aware of this and two very important questions are; what do they mean by greater autonomy and what is independence.

They need to understand this properly, I do not want us to leave these in the hands of donors. And you take no control. Why I have said this is because who in Waigani is monitoring the performance of the donors in Bougainville? How does the Government synchronise the coordination of the activities that we are doing? I think it is critical that we establish a partnership approach in going forward.

The next important process is reconciliation, the Members of Bougainville will understand and agree with me. There has to be reconciliation among the Bougainvilleans themselves; there were two factions at that time, they were fighting amongst themselves and therefore need to reconcile among themselves. It is also a prerequisite requirement in the referendum process.

And then the reconciliation of the people of Bougainville and the wider Papua New Guinea. These are the important things that are part of the process. And I have told the Prime Minister and previous Governments, let us manage Bougainville and the outcome properly. I think helping Bougainville is an important matter of national issue in our country. We need to re-establish consultation, and dialogue with the Father of the *Constitution* of this country; like Sir Julius, Honourable Paias Wingti and other fathers of the country.

The last thing they would want us to see, is to become a disintegrated country. Let us have a personal touch. The Marape –Davis Government have a personal touch with the Grand

Chief Sir John Momis and his ABG and maintain this dialogue going forward. So you can manage the pre-referendum process and the post-referendum process. So that we can have a better outcome in this very dynamic complex process. I don't want to take much of your time but this is critical.

Mr LEKWA GURE (Rigo –Minister for Civil Aviation) – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker to contribute towards this important debate on Bougainville referendum.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate our senior statesman, Sir Puka Temu for presenting an informative and comprehensive statement on the Bougainville referendum. I also want to acknowledge the very important and useful work that the previous bi-partisan committee on Bougainville carried out in the last few years. I would also encourage the newly appointed bi-partisan committee to work closely with Sir Puka, in relation to this very important issue of the Bougainville referendum.

It is pleasing to note from Sir Puka's statement that the request that was put in by the BRC chairman, former Prime Minister for Ireland Mr Bertie Ahearn, requesting for an extension of six weeks to the date. And one of the important reasons was to make sure that the common-rolls will be well and truly ready, come the referendum day to ensure that nobody is turned away.

28/07

The common rolls will be ready come the referendum day to ensure that nobody is turned away plus other reasons for the request.

Mr Acting Speaker, of the three pillars of the Bougainville Peace Agreement or BPA being autonomy, weapons disposal and the referendum itself. The process has come to the stage where it is very pleasing to note that the 30 out of 33 places have declared themselves weapons ready because these are the requirements of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Each of those areas must declare themselves weapons free and referendum ready.

It is also very pleasing to note that the former combatants have given their assurance that the referendum is much secured. According to Honourable Sam Akoitai, he said about 20 000 people lost their lives in the conflict. I guess in my mind, that is 20 000 people too many that we lost in the conflict. The important thing to remember is that the Papua New Guinean people do not have an argument with the people of Bougainville. The argument was with other people in the likes of the Bougainville Copper Limited and the environmental damages

that Honourable Sam Akoitai also referred to. Because we do not have an argument with the Bougainville people, it is up to us to reach out our brothers and sisters in Bougainville.

However, going back to the history of the start of the conflict, it teaches us very useful lessons that we must always bear in mind when we are signing agreements for resource development. For example, benefit sharing and environmental issues. We must bear in mind because those issues were central in the lead-up to the conflict that happened.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to make some recommendations in relation to this debate. Firstly, the National Government of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government are carrying out all the responsibilities under the BPA at their level. I would also encourage Members of Parliament to actively play our part on people to people visit and interactions with our brothers and sisters in Bougainville. And to demonstrate to them that they are still a very important part of Papua New Guinea. Perhaps we could organise regional group visits as discussed in other forums as well.

Mr Acting Speaker, I was very encouraged during the three day workshop on this Bougainville Referendum that was organised by National Research Institute last year especially by the women's groups. Let us bear in mind that Bougainville is a matrilineal society and what women say carries a lot of weight. I was very impressed by the work that was carried out by the women themselves. They were some of the people who lost a lot during the conflict. They lost their husbands, brothers, sons and fathers. They also lost their business but yet they took it in their stride and are doing a lot of work in their awareness. They are educating their people especially the younger ones in this processes. This is one of the important groups that we need to target if we are going to organise this people to people visits in our endeavours.

Mr Acting Speaker, this visits if they are going to happen must be coordinated by a competent authority maybe through Sir Puka's Office in consultation with the Bi-Partisan Committee on Bougainville.

29/07

May be during these visits we should also actively liaise with the four Members of Parliament from Bougainville, the three Open Members as well the Regional Member if we are going to carry out this Bougainville message.

Thankyou Mr Acting Speaker

Mr CHRIS HAIVETA (Gulf) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker I rise to thank the Minister, a Senior Statesman and also a Bougainvillean because he is qualified to vote, because he has declared his interest in here and a qualified Bougainvillean stood and gave a good progress report for referendum and current situation in Bougainville.

Mr Acting Speaker this conflict occurred when the government made the first agreement for resource extraction for our country and the law which was passed in 1972 giving rise to the Bougainville Copper Agreement which Australia draft and had the House of Assembly pass it. There is a provision for review.

But Mr Acting Speaker, Self-Government came, Independence came but review didn't eventuated. When the mine began its community relations and labour relation towards the people of Bougainville, especially in the area where mine located, some managers were good but later all those managers CRA left and secured employment elsewhere.

The new managers that were brought in lost touch and lost contact in communities close to the mine, when they lost contacts with the communities close to the mine many misunderstanding occurred and built up until 1986, 1987, and 1988 the conflict occurred.

First response of the government of that time made call out and call out didn't work and sending Mobile Squad in and it also didn't work and finally they announced State Of Emergency.

Under State of Emergency, Mr Acting Speaker, huge destruction occurred that former Minister for Mining has said; there was a huge problem and covers entire island, which constitute Autonomous Region of Bougainville today.

Mr Acting Speaker I don't want to discuss on conflicts but to discuss lessons we have learnt or that are there for us and we have not learnt.

Mr Acting Speaker number one thing is when Provincial Government system, every authority that transit to Provincial Government system. The provincial government system has provisions to make transitional arrangements into decentralisation and power sharing were reviewed in 1995.

30/07

This was changed to the current system however, the current as well as the previous system failed to empower provinces. The national government contributed to the failure of the system today.

(1)The Founding Fathers that implemented these first Provincial Government system burdened these system.

(2)These has burdened former member Ben Micah and myself, we had to do a reform to the Bi-partisan Committee and I believe we all are still burdened by these system, the Provisional Government when we have consultants in these system but have not been consulted so how will National Government assist.

They have received funds from essential functions from the Provincial Governments that are allocated to all LLG and Districts.

(3)Our Resource Laws must be reviewed every five 10 years and we must implement these because if we do not, we are depriving our beneficiaries.

Mr Acting Speaker, out of Bougainville came the first development process, first development forum this took place in Porgera, when the Department for Mining and Petroleum was together,

Porgera has a problem today. The lease is about to end. How can we progress? What is the relationship that Placer previously and currently Barrick have with the community? Today over 500 miners working in a mine pit and everyday where they must receive security clearance on a daily basis in case they make explosive in the course of their duties to work with ore or process ore.

Mr Acting Speaker, PNG LNG Project, in the development forums we conducted and the agreements we signed we agreed that every five years the development agreements between the landowners, provincial governments and the companies are subject to a review.

PNG LNG has not had a review and it is nearing 10 years now, so we have missed one review and we are missing another review now. As a result there is a lot were frustrations but we are lucky because the Prime Minister for the last seven years came to that region, the Prime Minister came with his members including our current Prime Minister, they used their leadership and quelled the frustrations of their people. This is not enshrined in the system. We must have a system in place to settle this.

31/07

Those were the frustrations for their people not being in the system. We must have a system to capture those issues if we missed those agreements it's time to make a new agreement. We have to set a time table now to do it.

As a Government we have failed; therefore, I challenge the Prime Minister to set a date for the development forums in each of the areas, the eight areas, from the pipeline facilities all the way right through the concession areas so that we start looking at that and revisiting this.

As of yesterday, the last section of the pipe line for the ILG have been completed. The project is prepared to payout royalties but so I now challenge the Prime Minister to announce a date for the development forums and give us money so we can review and meet the commitments that we have made with the land owners for the first LNG Project.

Mr Acting Speaker, for the case of Bougainville crisis, it is not Papua New Guinea's fight, but the Government's fought to protect the interest of a foreign company because we signed an agreement with the foreign investors. It was the job of the sovereign and Independent State of Papua New Guinea to keep these agreements and we did that. But, Mr Acting Speaker, in the process, I witnessed in the case of Bougainville and Ok Tedi Mines, there were past and current leaders in this Parliament with self interest in the company who manipulated the Government of PNG to protect their own interest.

Those interests have been revealed. These are the same people who have been appointed to boards of companies who were granted concessions and those scenarios happened at Bougainville Copper Mine Limited and Ok Tedi Mining. I'll call those leaders by name, they sold Papua New Guinea. We were employed by the Government and ordered to follow orders? Shame on you. You owe the people of Papua New Guinea a public apology.

M Acting Speaker, Bougainville has taught us how to deal with gun culture and violence. We had a report from the last term of Parliament, where Major Jerry Singirok brought to us for implementation. Where is the report and its recommendations? What have we done about the process of weapons disposal for reconciliation? The reconciliation processes that Bougainville has done is a lesson for us. How will we adopt the strategies to deal with the increasing gun-related violence in our regions?

As my colleague, the Governor for Southern Highlands has stated, the autonomy is still there. We want to achieve greater autonomy. Currently, as we speak, Minister, where is the report card for the autonomy?

32/07

This is because between now till October when Referendum comes, the Parliament must be fully informed of the report card on the Autonomy; for example, the timely release of

funds. How much money does the Independent State of Papua New Guinea owe Bougainville within that period when Autonomy was granted?

Secondly, audits. Did we do audits for the Department and ensure the transfer of powers within the job were complete. The financial audits. Are the controls there? Because it is a separate government, it is the Minister's responsibility to bring those reports to present ion Parliament so that we can make a decision. You have already presented on the decision made, on weapons disposal but I want to know the quantity. How much percentage?

The Member for Central Bougainville advised me that only 85 per cent was done and about 15 per cent remains.

Therefore, how will they reduce that 15 per cent, because it is one of the prerequisites? Also, the processes of reconciliation within each group within Bougainville and outside. Where does it stand? We want to know.

Transfer of powers, as the Minister mentioned, how much has been transferred, and what are the problems? Is there anything Parliament can do? That is what we not sure about it? I'm pleased with the update on the Referendum processes that you have presented

Lastly and most importantly, assessment of social conditions the ground, Health indicator, social indictor, education and human development indicators, where is it?

Mr Acting Speaker, it's the Minister's responsibility to inform the Parliament, so when they host the elections after the Referendum is completed, Parliament must be fully informed by conscious decision to address these two questions.

Greater autonomy or independence? Today, if this question was put to the Floor, I will not vote because I have not received enough information to make that decision and exercise my democratic right as a leader.

The last thing that we have learnt is on the question of greater powers on autonomy for those who have been given autonomy, we want to know and use that processes for autonomy and also the referendum.

Because the process of referendum is not provided for in the *Constitution*. So for this process, we may have to make amendments to the *Constitution* and the *Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government*.

The way we conduct the referendum process today will guide us on the new policy decisions that the Government can do to strengthen our democratic processes and strengthen our unity as a nation.

Mr JOE LERA (Bougainville) – Mr Acting Speaker, I stand to debate on the three or four areas on the Peace Agreement where two of Governments with National and ABG Government can continue support in order to achieve a better outcome on the Peace Agreement where the people of Papua new Guinea and Bougainville will have peace and unity with good understanding and live harmoniously.

33/07

Before I contribute on this debate, I would like to congratulate our Prime Minister, on behalf of the 370 000 people of Bougainville, firstly on your elevation as the Prime Minister of our country, PNG.

Secondly, I thank you for contributing immensely in the past and present Government in service delivery and development benefits for our people in the crises and restoring the services.

Thirdly, I thank you for appointing our senior State man, Sir Puka Temu, as the Minister for Bougainville Affairs in this very crucial time which we only have four months left before we go into Referendum.

Fourthly, I want to thank the Minister for his ministerial statement that he presented today. His statement was comprehensive and in depth and it truly reflects the realities on the ground and achievements in relation to the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, specifically on the preparation work on the Referendum and post-Referendum issues, as reported in the statement.

I know that in the last 15 to 20 years, the Government developed so many things as stated in the ministerial statement and I agree with it. But I think the Government should have developed many more and on that juncture I want to discuss three to four main areas which I think the two governments in the remaining three month must continue to support and even after the referendum.

This is because after the referendum, we don't know how many years we will continue with it. So from now and after the Referendum, the Government of PNG must support these two areas which are already in the peace agreement. The two Governments must continue to carrying out and strengthening it to achieve a good outcome.

The first area is on compliance, and with that comes the issue of responsibility as stated in the Bougainville Peace Agreement. The two governments are responsible for continuation of this program.

There are many areas to support peace agreement, but the obvious one is financial support. I urge the two governments to continue in carrying out this responsibility whilst complying with peace agreement requirements.

The other area is, the drawing down of powers. I encourage the National Government and ABG to work hand in hand and continue to help all Departments in Bougainville to grow and strengthen them so that they can truly serve the people in terms of service delivery and so forth.

The National Government has offloaded 24 powers to the ABG during the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2001. Of these powers, only three are held back by the National Government and has not been released as yet. But, the achievements since the transfer of powers to prepare Bougainville for Referendum has been minimal.

34/07

For the last 15 to 20 years, the government has established only six policy legislations. About 21 departments have no legislations to date. As a result, Bougainville did not progress despite the 15 to 20 years of Autonomy.

The National Government and relevant departments need to work continuously with the ABG Government to assist these departments in Bougainville who were awarded the 24 powers in order for them to function. Bougainville can move forward if we get this done, just like fixing a vehicle by inserting a piston.

Another area that needs support and strengthening, is to review the Government systems. So that they can coordinate, manage and implement the Peace Agreement, to strengthen the relevant national departments like personal management and the justice system.

Secondly, is by reviewing the current political leadership structures to encourage and build good working relationship at levels among Bougainville leaders, National Government, ABC, LLG and the community government. In order for the Peace Agreement to be implemented is by working together in unity.

I do not know if many of you are aware but under the Autonomous Arrangement, Bougainville is the only Province which has a parallel leadership, no other Province has this. We have the ABG Government, 44 MP's, 14 Ministers. The National Government awarded them 21 powers to utilise and prepare Bougainville in its political endeavours.

We have four national MPs who represent Bougainville here in the National Parliament. We have been mandated but we do not have the powers to exercise them in Bougainville. The only thing which we can do is to complement the peace agreement; however, if the leaders in Bougainville should stop us from participating, then how do we contribute?

So this is an ongoing issue. I am asking the National Government if anything can be done about it legally so that we leaders at all levels in Bougainville can work together.

Recently, this structure has created differences between us resulting in disunity amongst the leaders of Bougainville. I presenting this so that the National Government and relevant departments can review this structure.

I think after the Referendum, this Autonomy will still continue for 15 to 20 years. If we do not make this review now, this issues will affect the peace agreement.

35/07

I would also like the National Government and the ABG to continue supporting and strengthening awareness. In 2000 National Census, it was discovered that the Bougainville population had tripled and during the crisis. The population was initially recorded at 190,000 people. After the crisis, it was found during the census that the population had tripled to 370,000. But, also during that time, some areas were not counted, as they had boycotted the census, like Panguna, Kongara 1 and Kongara 2.

Within that 370,000 population, 80 per cent of these were grassroots. From that 80 per cent grass roots, 60 per cent were youths. From the 60 per cent youth, 40 per cent were aged from 0-30 years old were illiterate and 20 per cent of these illiterate were from South Bougainville, 15 per cent from Central, Bougainville, and five per cent from North Bougainville. This are the time bombs. During this period of 15 years autonomy, the National Government, ABG and us the leaders have done very little.

Mr Acting Speaker, so going forward, I want both the National Government and ABG Government to create some interventions to deal with these people. These are the people that will make and break whatever dreams that we have because as they will not make sense even if you are talking sense due to illiteracy.

The last issue I want to bring to our attention is poverty. It was discovered from this census that 80 per cent of the 370 000 population lived in poverty after the crisis. According to CDP, the people who make money today in Bougainville are making K600 a year.

Before the crisis, the grassroots were making K6000 a year. You divide K600 by 365 days a year, and you will see that most grassroots in Bougainville today are making fifty toea and that is the sad reality. So if we want to take back PNG and Bougainville, this is one area that both governments must look into.

They must come up with interventions to take back Bougainville and PNG. Before the crisis, there were plantations, about 30-40 plantations that were generating around K60 million revenue for Bougainville.

Those plantations were privately owned by outsiders with workers from outside of Bougainville. After the crisis, the relevant departments like DPI and economic services have not reviewed the laws and the policies that we had in the colonial era. They have not been revised under Bougainvillean jurisdiction. For instance, for plantation workers, we should employ locals not outsiders to develop our plantations. Some of these areas need to be looked into and so we come up with interventions to make things work. So we can attain lasting peace that will last beyond the Referendum.

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Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Prime Minister) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Let me thank all the members and ministers who presented comments in support of the Minister for Bougainville Affairs who has outlaid what we intend to do under his leadership.

Mr Acting Speaker, I'll be very short. We'll give full support to every activity under Sir Puka's leadership, we are trying to address, capturing everything that has been done in the past or has not been addressed in the past. It is very important that we give Bougainville and the Referendum process our greatest respect and to speak to the intention of what is entailed in the Bougainville Peace Agreement and everything that is occurred up till this point in time.

In 2001, the peace agreement was signed. Since then, no major conflict has started back on the island and that is a great testament to the resolve on both sides of the country, from the Bougainville Autonomous Region as well as us here on the mainland in our respect, maintenance and honouring of it thus far.

So I think in our final run towards referendum, our government will not defer. I think we've been given this greatest responsibility, honour and privilege to preside over this very, very sensitive phase of our nation's life.

So, the October 12 date will still stick as our date for Referendum. In the balance of the months and weeks we have left, we will give every support to Sir Puka and his team as they

interface with the Autonomous Bougainville Government for us to work with every stakeholder, partner and people with respect to us delivering this referendum. The important steps post-Referendum as well as the important steps prior to Referendum.

But there are a couple of key things, let me inform this House on and I invite every leader who wants to join us, as Sir Puka alluded to, we will have a reconciliation program. There were many deaths as the crisis was going on. There were people mourning for loss of loved ones on Bougainville itself and families across this nation also mourning for loss of loved ones. So we are trying to pick at least one representative each of people who've died on this side as well as one the other side and we will coordinate and participate in a reconciliation programme in Arawa. I think Sir Puka under his leadership has proposed and the PNG Council of Churches is leading that reconciliation programme so we'll offer full support to this one.

But, before or after that reconciliation has taken place, I am thinking before, we propose a Cabinet meeting in Buka. We can all drive down from Buka to Arawa. You will see in the three or four hours of driving on roads that we were supposed have done five, six, 10 years ago that we've given contract but it's still outstanding – the Kokopau to Arawa Road. We drive down to look at the road and then we go into the reconciliation programme in Arawa. After the reconciliation programme, all of us, Minister of State can join Sir Puka and I, to attend the JSB Meeting.

It is proposed that the JSB Meeting be held at Buin so we will have the furthest opportunity to drive from Buka, Kokopau, down to Arawa, past to Kieta and all the way to Buin and you could almost see the east-side. I have been there on more than four occasions and I can tell you that it is a place that will bring out a lot of emotions. There are people with scars, of devastation that they have faced. We need to treat that part of our country with diligence, care, respect, love and kindness.

In the next month, I am proposing to Sir Puka's team that, in the weeks in between these we attend to these three activities back to back. And then they can have the writs open and after the interface with them they can go into the campaign period as well as the voting that will take place in October.

Mr Acting Speaker, let us not write-off our people there. They are all Papua New Guineans at heart. Every time you see them singing the PNG national anthem as well as the Bougainville anthem it will bleed your heart in terms of listening to how they are responding.

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And so it is a very sensitive time for them so let's treat them with care. As we go to the Island, I am sure they will be receiving us with warmth, kindness, and also they will be expecting to us return to them what is rightfully theirs?

Lest we all forget too, those of us who grow up in the 80s and 90s in universities and colleges, it was revenue from Bougainville that ensured that we receive our K13 allowances for those of you in school in my generation. We will be queuing up at the K13 allowance at the University of Papua New Guinea, myself and the Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Davis Steven.

You know K13 allowances was big money back then but these are revenues from Bougainville that kept us going, paid our school fees, and kept our country going in the 70s and 80s. So whether the country is now moving on to harvesting from other resources as we have harvested from Ok Tedi, Lihiri, Porgera and Kutubu that power of combine balance sheet must be shown back to Bougainville and the sharing of resources back to them.

I think they have a trust factor between us, governments since 2001 hasn't fully reciprocated in kind and resource back to them. But, to be fair on governments of the past and our government up until today, there has been some assistance especially in last 7 years.

As we transferred money out to the rest provinces in the country, Bougainville has also received its proportionate share either through PSIP, DSIP or through special support intervention but not to the fullest expectations that is something I must be honest about.

So when we go to the Island, we will treat them with that kind, respect and hopefully, when the two sides meet in reconciliations, when our Cabinet is held there, when we meet in just have to set trigger point in which activity of discussion take place as to exactly what will take place post-Referendum.

I think that the most important process, when Referendum is held, results are being counted and the process between that and return to Parliament. You clearly heard what Sir Puka said, we will invoke the consensus of Melanesian style leadership and have serious discussion with them.

This is what you wanted; this is what we are proposing, look at the return on both sides in term of return of benefits so all those serious honest discussions based by numbers and especially numbers in economic return to the Island that is something that they are keen about. So, will we sit down and have this. Before we go to the Island whether in July or August activity or during the campaign period or during facing up to referendum, we must

clearly establish what we really want, in as far as the structure we will be proposing to them. This is a serious call on us to all unite in that approach. As Governor Powi has cautioned us, the autonomy discussion taking place between other provincial governments must not cloud whatever we trying to give to Bougainville in term of the respect of the structure of government and our relations with Bougainville in as far as our respect to the economic independence is concerned.

In my view, defining a clearer economic independence package for them is something that we must fully encapsulate, process, model, and define as a government and we have it we us all the time. As we speak to them, we sell the concept to them, for we don't have the luxury of breaking up our nation.

If we break this nation of a thousand tribes, our fundamentals will be weakened. We just have to consolidate and be consistent in line with what we expounded today. What is really independence, economic empowerment and economic independence? Give to them what is rightfully theirs and giving opportunity for them to grow and influence the island.

So, I think we need to prepare well and I ask every Ministers of States every Leaders who want to assist in the process, our pivotal point is Sir Puka and his team. Between now and towards the end of July when we want to step into the Island for the NEC and step into the island for the reconciliation, please offer you advice, and offer your assistant and service through Sir Puka and lets all rally together in this critical moment as we journey towards referendum.

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As we journey towards referendum, we will not deviate to the Referendum date it is set, we will take the bull by the horn. God has placed us all for such a time to address this sort of issue and we will address it in the way the good Lord will allow us to go through.

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

Motion – That Parliament take note of the Paper – agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Rainbo Paita**) agreed to –
That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 2.25 p.m.