

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 27 August 2019

DRAFT HANSARD

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

Amendments cannot be accepted over the phone.

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



HARRY MOMOS

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 27 August 2019

The Parliament met at 2 p.m., according to the resolution of 5 July 2019.

The Speaker (**Mr Job Pomat**) took the Chair.

There being no quorum present, Mr Speaker suspended the Parliament until the ringing of the Bells.

Sitting suspended.

The Speaker again took the Chair at 2:43 p.m., and invited the Member for Lufa, Honourable **Moriape Kavori**, to say Prayers:

“Thank you Papa God lon Heven Nem blon yu em holi na u pawaful God creator. Thank yu lon dispel avinun, mipela aut lo wanwan district na mipela laik statim mitin long dispel avinun na mi invitim yu lon kam stap wataim mipela lon dispel hour. Na blesim Praim Minista wantaim olgeta Ministas ol bekbenchers na ol Opposisen tu. Helpim mipela lon stap na discuss na dispela ol toktok bai sanap na hepim gavman lo mekim wok kamap lo ol pipol blo yu lon dispel kantri. Thank you lon harim preia blon mipela lon dispel avinun.
Amen.”

BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS –

STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER

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

(a) *National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC)* television and radio will be allowed to telecast and broadcast live Question Time; and

(b) *EMTV* and *TVWAN* will also be allowed to telecast live Question Time for news purposes for the duration of this meeting.

QUESTIONS

National Fraud Investigations on MPs

Mr JOHN KAUPA – Mr Acting Speaker, I direct my questions to the Minister for Police and I ask the Deputy Prime Minister to take note.

I take this opportunity to thank the Prime Minister and the Government for attending and participating in the National Repentance Day where they delivered a very powerful statement at the Sir John Guise Stadium. The message touched the hearts and minds of our people.

Mr Acting Speaker, there is so much talk in the corners of Waigani about the 40 people that are implicated and are now investigated by the Fraud Squad.

My questions are as follows;

(1) Can the Minister inform this Parliament and this nation on the progress of what is happening to the 40 Members of this Parliament who are implicated?

(2) How far has the investigation gone? The people of this nation are anxious to know who these people are.

02/02

(3) Can the Minister confirm to this Parliament and the 8 million people of Papua New Guineans whether these people are reporting to a particular person?

The files are believed to going through a vetting process with the Deputy Commissioner.

(4) Can the Minister explain the meaning of the ‘vetting process?’

We have a committal court in place to determine if a leader is guilty or not.

With all the files on vetting process, what has being done about it?

Mr Speaker, we all follow only one law in this country. For example; if a person from the street steals a tinned fish or food item, the police are quick to make arrest and charge the person, so what is the difference if a leader also steals? Do we have two separate laws for ordinary people and prominent leaders?

(5) Can the Minister clarify whether there are two separate laws for ordinary people and prominent leaders?

Thank you, Mr Speaker

Mr BRYAN KRAMER – Mr Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the valid question asked by the member for Moresby North- East.

Mr Speaker, I believe this concern has been raised as a result of a press statement made by the former Acting Commissioner saying that there were 40 files that relate to members of Parliament outstanding powers that have yet to be progressed.

Following that press statement and the appointment of a new Acting Commissioner, I requested a brief. As I have said in the past, I do not have the powers to direct police.

In relation to this statement of 40 files, the Acting Commissioner requested for the Director for Fraud to provide a brief. I was sitting in that meeting and confirmed that there were no such 40 files. So, it appears that that the statement was fake news or false statement.

There were about 20 files that complaints have been filed and the Fraud department is looking into them. Most of those files or cases are confirmed not to be genuine or have insufficient evidence to progress.

During those discussions I made it clear to the Acting Commissioner in terms of fraud, that there is a process provided by Law. And it is important to maintain the confidence, in the neutrality and independence of the Police Force, that they conduct their investigations, diligently and independently and are not to be influenced by third parties that may seek to pursue arrest on other Members of Parliament or political opponents.

So previously, the former Police Commissioner had set up a vetting process and there were some arguments raised in the public about the constitutionality of this vetting process, where files are referred to a committee set by the Commissioner who has superintendence over Police.

This committee was essentially set up to shut down high profile cases against Members of Parliament or also those who are holding the Office of the Prime Minister.

I made it clear from my opinion that there is a process so they have to follow. So rather than having a vetting committee, which in my opinion is to operate outside the normal practice or criminal investigations, when a file is ready, firstly it is vetted, then considered for the process of by the Director. He will then consider the evidence in that file, and if there is sufficient evidence, then briefs the ACP Crimes, his immediate superior. He reviews the

file, and if he is satisfied also that there is sufficient evidence to progress the matter, he will then notify the Commissioner and then presents the file to the Commissioner.

So, there are three stages that they go through as a matter of protocol and that protocol has been there for years. If it relates to a Member of Parliament who holds Public Office then the protocol is for the Commissioner to write a letter.

03/01

Unlike an ordinary individual who commits a crime and goes into hiding, it is a lot more difficult for a Member of Parliament, even though previously some have managed to do that by running to Parliament.

So in response to the 40 files and the vetting process, the vetting process is no longer in place, however, the existing protocols have been there since the establishment of the Police Force as well as similar protocols and jurisdictions that are followed by other countries.

The Member asked why an ordinary person on the street who is accused of stealing one tinned fish and is assaulted, belted and thrown into jail but the same practice does not apply to Members of Parliament. The simple issue is in the manner of conducting police investigations; if an officer sees a person committing a crime, then he has the right to arrest him then and there. Some cases that relate to high profile Members of Parliament or people in high positions, the police officer is not on site to see; therefore, he does not take immediate action. However, therefore, investigations are carried out once a complaint is formally lodged.

And there must be sufficient evidence, otherwise it will just be rumors like the 40 files, when there is no basis of 40 files that have existed which I am aware of. This is my response to the Member for North East.

Review ILG Process

Mr CHRIS HAIVETA – Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Lands. We know that a lot of our resource developments take place on our lands, especially in the rural areas where we have developments such as forestry, mining, oil and gas and industrial developments. However, the ILG process differ and once a new development takes place, new ILG has to be done before any development takes place.

Mr Minister, can we review the ILG process so that the same ILG is used with the different types of development that come into an area. Right now, if there is forestry in one

area the ILG that has been created caters only for forestry. And if mining or oil and gas are discovered in the same area, the ILG process is done all over again to cater for the different developments.

Can we review our ILG process so that the same ILG process is used for the same piece of land whether it is producing oil, gold, copper or forestry and others?

Mr JOHN ROSSO –Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor of Gulf for his question. We have seen that there are duplications in some of the ILG titles and we are trying to get to the bottom of this. The Lands Department is aware of it and we have advised the department. AusAID have assisted by sending advisors to help us. They have been sent to us to advise on instituting proper processes so we can fix the ILG issues. In relation to the duplication of ILG, it is very important and we are looking at ways to address this at the moment.

K1 Million for Wantoat School

Mr GINSON SAONU – Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Education. Last year, around November or December towards the end of the school year, the former Minister for Education, Honourable Nick Kuman, was invited to Wantuot High School for its graduation ceremony and he was accompanied by the Education Secretary. On this occasion, they made a commitment of K1 million to the school.

Can the Minister confirm whether he is able to honour the commitment made by the former Minister?

04/01

Mr JOSEPH YOPYYOPY – Thank you Mr Speaker and I thank the good Governor of Morobe for his questions. The commitment has been made and I am fully aware of that and have been already briefed by the Secretary that the commitment will be honored. You do not need to worry, I will accompany him to the school and deliver this commitment. Thank you.

Resolve Police Issues – Madang Town

Mr JIMMY UGURO – Mr Speaker, I direct my questions to the Minister for Police. We've got a big problem in Madang Province, which is in your electorate and your town. Madang is facing so many killings and law and order problems. Some of the houses at New Town were burnt down due to some ethnic fighting amongst the settlements in Mero and Public Tank.

I have only two questions for the Minister:

(1) Do you have any plans to; take control measures, and manage the Police in Madang Province?

(2) If there are any leadership issues for Police in Madang Province, what plans do you have for the PPC for Madang?

It seems the PPC for Madang is not performing his duties as a policeman but is seen to be following politicians around. I ask that he be removed and replaced in order to restore confidence that people have for the police in the province because we want Madang people to be free from problems and hold-ups. And you as the Member for Madang, you must bring back the beauty of our province and it must be done. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr BRYAN KRAMER – Thank you Mr Speaker, I acknowledge the question raised by the Member for Usino-Bundi. The issue on law and order is a chronic issue facing the whole of Madang Province. I would like to make it clear that there are similar law and order problems throughout the four regions of this country and it's not only for Madang Province alone.

Madang and Alotau were once known to be safe and peaceful towns but now they are unsafe. In fact, all the places are unsafe or there are or problems everywhere. As the Police Minister and Member for Madang, if I look into Madang alone there are going to be more rumors and questions being raised, saying that I am taking sides on Madang alone

So, my focus will not be on Madang alone. My focus is now on the structure of Police. We've got only 7500 police officers looking after close to 10-12 million people. Pomio District is close to 11 square kilometers with 80 thousand people looked after by a lady in that district.

If I go after only one issue for Madang, tomorrow Lae will rise, Mul-Buyer will rise and then I would only go around in a circle.

So in relation to my plans in regard to the problems in Madang, I have already talked with Commissioner or Acting Operations, PCP Operations. Also, I talked with the ACP

Commander for Momase and Northern Region so they will deploy two or three mobile units with Mobile 13.

As the Member for Madang, I will fund another two units which will assist operations in Madang to address these law and order problems. And we will carry out law and order issues and not to fire shots at innocent people unnecessarily.

So, under this program, we will go into the community and address all the law and order issues and when we see that the implemented program brings good outcome, then we will transfer it to other districts who are facing similar problem. But, it's not a thing were we just caught up by surprise right now and fix it right now.

So, it's a very important question you have asked, regarding those problems that had occurred in Madang because it's my home. I know I will fix it and there is no question.

But at the moment we've got big problems in the Police Force. It's not only for Madang PPC alone but as Minister, I don't have the power to come down and remove that PPC because I have said that I will de-politize the Force so politicians cannot be in control. So, if I happen to come down to remove the PPC, then I will bridge my own law. So, this decision has come already. I talked with the commissioner and I also talked with the duty operations but a lot of Members have requested for a new PPC and I've said, 'which PPC will I give you?' If my PPC is bad, okay, I will give my bad one to you and you give me your bad one and the same problem will occur.

This is what we are actually facing. I think six Members or Governors have requested for new PPC.

05/01

Come to me and the same problem will still arise. They have already been about 6 Members of Parliament who have asked for a change in their Provincial Police Commander. We have discipline issues and we also have resource issues in the Police Force.

For example, just last week the Finance Department slashed K1.3 million worth of fuel and as it is we do not have fuel to police the country. We are working towards fixing it but it will take some months to do so. But to answer your question, yes the issue is before the Police Commissioner and his DCP and I am waiting for them to follow the due processes on solving this issue. They will also give him time to respond to all these issues. We will not jump into appointing a new PPC until we solve these problems once and for all.

Commissions of Inquiry Findings

Mr GARRY JUFFA – I direct my questions to the Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, we have had a lot of inquiries in this country since independence and the latest being the UBS Inquiry.

My question to the Prime Minister with his Deputy and the Minister for Police to take note is that will he give some commitment that after the findings of the inquiries, will we take some action on these findings?

Can the Prime Minister also give an undertaking that these inquiries both current and past have a mechanism where we can ensure that the government take action against those that have been implicated for justice to our people?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor of Northern for his questions. I also would like to welcome him and the others into the Government ranks. I welcome Honourable Ian Ling-Stuckey as our new Treasurer. We are a government of like-minded leaders. We have crossed so many barriers to work together to find solutions for our country.

I welcome him not only to be part of us but continue to maintain his level of constructive debates and questions that he continues to give to us to ensure that we are on the right path going forward.

In this instance, let me assure the Governor that commissions of inquiry brings no finality to matters of law and inquiry. Commissions of inquiry will just be a punctuation mark in matters that deal with breaking of laws. Our Government will not stop matters of inquiries progressing beyond further investigations. If there are other matters not brought before Parliament for scrutiny and public debate then they must be brought forward.

For example, the UBS saga will be brought to light and likewise any other matter pertaining to inquiries will be presented in Parliament for full debate. We will be doing our best of endeavours to ensure that Police and other constitutional office holders that are in the same business to bring those that are implicated to be answerable to the laws of this country.

I therefore encourage the Governor that if there are other inquiries with their findings not yet brought before us then we will do our best to produce them in Parliament for public appreciation and consumption and to be further progressed beyond those inquiries.

06/01

For instance, inquiries that are on foot like the UBS Inquiry will be given three months for it to come to conclusion, but the members of the inquiry have the fullest liberty to not only work within that three months but extend beyond the scope where they feel is relevant. When this inquiry is brought into conclusion, the findings will be made available for the public through this Parliament and we will likewise ask police to do their job. The police and other constitutional office holders are not barred from running their own investigations.

Mr Speaker, let me assure the Governor of Northern that all inquiries of the past or in the future will not be stopped here. It will be allowed to reach its fullest maturity and police or other constitutional office holders that deal with inquiries will be asked to take them and run with it and bring those that are implicated to justice.

Purchase More Police Vehicles

Mr MICHAEL DUA – Mr Speaker, I wish to direct my questions to the Minister for Police. I know he has been bombarded with questions but I would also like to ask him my questions.

Mr Speaker, recently, I bought some vehicles for my policemen. The vehicles that they have been using are all over-used and un-roadworthy and have not been replaced. The Police Force need vehicles to perform their daily constitutional duties. My policemen have not gotten any new vehicles over the years so how can they perform their duties as expected by the people? The cars that they use must all be well-marked making it easy for the people to recognise so that people can respect our police.

I see that the Police Department has a lot of money but much of it is spent on hiring cars. These hire cars are used by police personnel to do all kinds of tasks whether it be related to police work or otherwise. We also have criminals who are using unmarked cars, wearing police uniforms and pretending to be policemen.

Why is the Police Department spending too much on hiring vehicles whilst our provincial police personnel do not have police vehicles to carry out their duties? When our people lodge complaints, they are told that there is no vehicle to assist them.

Mr Speaker, my questions are as follows:

- (1) Can the Police Department look into purchasing new police vehicles for our provinces to assist our policemen and women to carry out their constitutional duties?

(2) Can we conduct an investigation into why we are spending so much on hiring vehicles to carry out police work?

We must purchase vehicles and mark them as police vehicles for use by our police personnel. This is a serious issue that we need to address.

Mr BRYAN KRAMER – I thank the Governor of Chimbu for his questions.

His concerns are valid and we are currently looking at it. But I must make it clear here that the Police Department does not have money. Like I previously mentioned, we do not have money to purchase fuel for police cars. We are in debt to MVIL for about K30 000 to fuel police vehicles just for NCD, so this is one of the biggest issues we need to discuss and resolve.

07/01

Mr Speaker, the hiring of cars is an issue and has been the practice in the past, therefore, when I took office I asked the Commissioner and DCP of Administration for the records of hire cars. I am now vigorously working to find out how many hire cars were engaged and who the money was paid and under what arrangement. If they didn't follow the process or *Financial Management Act* then the complaint will come and arrest will follow soon.

To deliberate further on police cars, the Australian Government committed Aus\$135 million equating to K280 million grant funding to assist Police training in investigation, prosecution, logistics, managing finance, college needs and forensics. It is not an easy task but at least a report will be commissioned so we will know the true cost of policing in Papua New Guinea and where our capacity is now. So we are looking forward to this report which will assist police and I will present it to Cabinet to see how we can source funding. We have offers coming from the Japanese and Chinese Embassy to assist our Police Department. We have arrangement with Exim Bank to fund the subsidy of US\$95 million, but I said hold on, let me first solve the welfare of police and operations.

We are facing shortage of money because we all are receiving DSIP and PSIP, so how can we fund the police? Some Members have allocated funds from their DSIP because there is no option. Police has no workshops and a lot of misuse is going on, therefore, we need to install all cars with GPS tracking to monitor all activities conducted by police.

Some of you buy cars for the Police and don't display 'Z' plates on them. As a result there is no control over the use of those cars and then more complaints come in. Some Members purchase firearms for police associating with them and when they are lost it becomes an issue.

Mr Speaker, we can have discussions and if Members want to commit their DSIP and PSIP for vehicles then we can install GPS systems with cameras inside and outside the car so will we know exactly what activities are conducted by police officers.

But now we will pilot this project in one station and see how it works and plan to roll it out. Where there is shortage of funds, I will be happy to come and talk with Members and Governors to top up with funds. But to answer the question, by next year we hopefully will have a plan when we know how much funding will come in for Police.

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform Members that if the DSIP and PSIP is misused for police to follow you around, it is not in their duties to do that. Their job is to take care of our people; not to follow a Minister or Member around.

08/01

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, there is still time remaining for questions but there are no more.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS –

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Mr SPEAKER - Honourable Members, I wish to inform the Parliament that a delegation of 18 representatives of the Namatanai District Development Authority are present in the Gallery.

On behalf of the Parliament, I wish to extend to the distinguished visitors a very warm welcome to the National Parliament.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION –
ANNUAL REPORT, 2018 – PAPER –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, pursuant to statute, I present the following paper:

Public Service Commission – Annual Report, 2018

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

That Parliament take note of the Paper.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn to 10.a.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.20 p.m..