

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 25 August 2020

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD

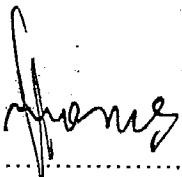
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Corrections maybe marked on a photocopy of the Daily Draft Hansard and lodged at the Office of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter, A123 (next to the Security Control Room).

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

Amendments cannot be accepted over the phone.

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



.....
Mr Harry Momos

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 25 August 2020

The Parliament met at 2 p.m., according to the Terms of Resolutions of Friday 12 June 2020.

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

There being no quorum present, Mr Speaker stated that he would resume the Chair after the ringing of the Bells.

Sitting suspended.

The Speaker again took the Chair at 2.40 p.m., and invited the Member for Talasea, **Honourable Francis Maneke** to say Prayers:

‘God, Papa lo Heven, Yu God blo displa graun na lo Heven tu. Long tudei mipela ol lidas blo displa kantri kam bung gen lo displa haus blo olgeta pipol blo Papua Niu Gini, mipela kam long ai bilong yu lo seekim displa precious blood blo yu. Yu bin dai lo diwai kros lo wasim sin blo mipla long taim igo pinis na kamap long tudei.

Papa God, mipela i kam long ai blong yu mipla ol sin man but mipela bilip olsem yu yet yu God na yu lukautim mipla. Yu yet iken givim mipla knowledge, understanding na wisdom long tudei lo dispel bung blo mipla long bikpla haus blo mipla.

Long tudei, mipela kam long ai bilong yu na givim Praitim Minista blo mipla husait em istap wantaim mipla lo displa haus. Blessim em na deputi blon em lo displa Parliament na tu mipela ofarim Oposisen Lida and olgeta members blo em so that yu ken continue lo blessim ol.

Long tudei mipela bilip olsem yu yet yu God na yu yet yu bai lidim mipela lon olgeta toktok long mitin blo mipela tudei na bai mipela ken kamapim ol gutpla toktok blo kantri blo mipla. Olsem na mipela askim long yu yet iken bringim Holy Spririt blo yu long kamapim olgeta haus na bai yumi ken stap insait lo lukaut blo spirit blo yu. Amen.’

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

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

(a) the National Broadcasting Cooperation (NBC) will be allowed to broadcast live on Radio, Questions Without Notice as part of its community obligation,

(b) the National Television Service (Kundu 2), *EMTV* and *TVWAN* will be allowed to telecast live Questions Without Notice for the news purposes for the duration of this meeting.

CERTIFICATION OF ACTS

Mr SPEAKER – All Members, I have to inform the Parliament that I have, in accordance with *Section 110* of the *Constitution*, certified the following *Acts* as having been passed by the National Parliament:

- (1) *Mineral Resources Development Company Limited Authorisation Act 2020*,
- (2) *Mining (Amendment) Act 2020*,
- (3) *National Pandemic Act 2020*,
- (4) *Oil and Gas (Amendment) Act 2020*,
- (5) *Prime Minister and National Executive Council (Amendment) Act 2020*,
- (6) *Public Curator (Amendment) Act 2020*, and
- (7) *United Church in Papua New Guinea Incorporation Act 2020*

DEATH OF FORMER MEMBERS

(Messrs Suckling Tamanabae and Roger Tongai Palme) –

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament of the deaths of the following former Members:

(a) Mr Suckling Tamanabae, on 14 July 2020, a former Member for Northern Provincial regional seat. He was first elected to the Eighth National Parliament from 2007 to 2012 and was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Parliamentary Referral Committee on Communications; and,

(b) Mr Roger Tongai Palme, on 10 August 2020, a former Member for Anglimp-South Wahgi Open Electorate. He was first elected to the Third National Parliament 1982 to 1987. During that term, he served as Chairman of the Plans and Estimates Committee, Deputy-Member of the Public Works Committee, Member of the Subordinate Legislation, Pensions and Retirement Benefits and Privileges Committee.

As a mark of respect to the memory of the late honourable gentlemen, I invite all honourable members to rise in their places.

All honourable Members stood in their places as a mark of respect to the memory of the late gentlemen.

I thank the Parliament.

02/01

**RESIGNATION FROM PARLIAMENT (Mr JOE LERA) –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament that honourable Joe Lera, Member for Bougainville Provincial has resigned as Member of Parliament on 17 June 2020 to contest in the election of the President of the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

I have accepted his resignation and thanked him for his valuable contribution in Parliament as a national leader representing his people of Bougainville in the Provincial Seat and wish him well in the election and his future political endeavours.

QUESTIONS

Health – Covid-19

Mr KENNEDY WENGE – Thank you for the opportunity to raise the first question in this Meeting. My question is directed to the Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS. My electorate of Nawae is in close proximity to Lae and many people are afraid of Covid-19.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member for Nawae, the Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS is not here. Do you wish to direct your question to the Prime Minister?

Mr KENNEDY WENGE – People in my electorate are afraid of Covid-19 and have not been coming to Lae City and there is a lockdown in Lae.

When will the Covid-19 lockdown be uplifted and the country will be free?

This concern is shared by the 111 electorates, not Nawae only. Before we go to other business, we need clarification on the “New Normal” and that Covid-19 will be with us and we need to be precautionous and watchful. The fear is with us and so in this meeting, I am raising this question on behalf of my electorate and the other 110 electorates in the country.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Member for Nawae for asking this question for me to answer, to give clarity as to what is happening with Covid-19 and how the country will respond to it.

From the outset, I wish to say that this virus, Covid-19 is here to stay. It is not only affecting PNG but over 213 countries globally are now faced with this virus Covid19 or Corona Virus. So Papua New Guineans, as we try our best to manage it, we must now learn to live with Covid-19 amongst us.

In reply to the question from the senior Member of Parliament who asked this question on behalf of the rest of Papua New Guinea, we will go through this year until virologists are able to come up with medication or immunisation for this virus establish it globally in Papua New Guinea the virus is not only affecting health but also the economy.

So the ideal choice was to adjust and live with Covid-19 instead of just going on a hard lockdown for the rest of this year to try to shut out Covid-19. I want to say that it will be hard for us to shut out Covid-19 as we tried to do in the earlier part of this year.

03/01

For Covid-19, we tried our best to contain it in the early part of this year.

Many may not appreciate it; but, the Minister for Immigration, as early as January, tried to control and stop people coming in, especially those who have travelled to China. That could have put a stop to uncontrolled movement of international visitors. But, as we saw in March 2020 when the first case was confirmed in Lae and when we had the second case from Rabaul, there was no epidemiological link between the first case and the second case and we tried to investigate whether these two cases were linked.

And despite over 100 contact tracings, there were no links established in the study of samples collected. So, one thing that we established earlier on was that there was no community transmission as early as March. The two lockdowns we had was not really for us to stop the country from performing but it was for us to take stock of where Covid-19 really was.

As we speak today, we are all clear about the lack of capacities that we have in our health system to effectively handle an outbreak of the pandemic or endemic. We do not have the capacity to handle it and we have tried our best to handle it in the first place. We have now moved into stage four of the Coronavirus which means that we have established that there is community transmission. We are now working with our Provincial authorities to be sensitive and if there is an increase in the trend of cough and illness that may look like Covid-19, we will move in and do the necessary tests to see whether it is Covid-19 or not.

Mr Speaker, currently eleven provinces in the country have confirmed Covid-19 cases. But those that have not had any cases confirmed, as I speak, I do not have the luxury of being one 100 per cent certain because while we have done tests, results aren't in or tests are yet to be done.

I want to assure this Parliament that we will not have another lockdown again. We are adjusting the new normal operation or living requirements and protocols. We are adjusting our lives to live with Covid-19. As you can see, I have a vacant second chair, I am unmasked. And I request that, when you are a meter or in close proximity of each other, it is in your own interest and in the interest of the society and country for you to practice, social distancing, wash hands and always wear your masks. And we request that you have to keep your distance in the work place as far as person to person contacts are concerned. Let us adjust and live with Covid-19 for the balance of this year, instead of being afraid and completely shut down. Our economy cannot afford for us to completely shut down.

Mr speaker in response the queries raised by the Member, the Minister for Health will do up a detailed Parliamentary statement on the status of Covid-19, including all the

expenditures and operations, and where were as far as Covid-19 is concerned and what is the new normal going forward. This statement is for us to understand and appreciate our situation as well as for the nation able to adjust and live with it for the balance of this year. It will be stressful but it is for the good of our families, our communities and our country.

I appeal to our citizens that we are living amidst the danger of Covid-19 spreading in our communities and our cities. And citizens must take responsibility. We have distributed K1.5 million each to all districts and provinces nationwide. Provincial and district treasuries are encouraged that if your citizens do not have masks, please buy and supply them. We must make interventions in our districts level. And I ask all to show a keen interest with our health officials on the ground on what we can do with respect to trying our best to address health needs on the ground.

Mr Speaker, our nation is now adjusting to live with Covid-19 and I inform this House that we will not shut down again.

04/01

Mr Speaker, our nation is now adjusting to live with Covid-19 and I inform this House that we will not shut down again our country. But we will adjust to live with Covid-19 and we preparing our hospitals and our different health facilities nationwide to be responsive.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Procedure for Disbursement of Covid-19 Funds

Mr ALFRED MANASE – Thank you, Mr Speaker, my question is in relation to the Covid-19 funds that have been paid into different accounts for each district.

Mr Speaker, firstly I'll liked to thank the government for making available K2 million for each district for the purposes of Covid-19.

My question is the payments were made to the different Covid-19 accounts for each of the district but we have not been provided with the guideline as to how we should use those funds

In those accounts there are funds designated for different purposes but we don't appear to have a guideline as to how we should spend and for what purpose. If there is a guideline then could that be provided to all the Members of Parliament or if the members of the Government have it then we the members of the Opposition do not have the Cabinet approved guidelines.

And how much of these funds do we have to spend on SMEs, building wash basins, toilets, and buying PPEs that is why I am raising these questions.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr RAINBO PAITA – Thank you, Mr Speaker I thanked the good Member for Kandep for the very important question in relation to the direct intervention in terms of Covid-19 funding government has allocated to each province and district.

We aware that through that initiative K2 million was given to each district and K1.5 million to each province respectively. There were previous financial instructions approved through Cabinet creating a trust facility for provinces and districts to access Covid-19 funding support coming from the government.

And this new funding has been disbursed to all the districts in Papua New Guinea including members from both the Government and the Opposition.

I think the question specifically refers to the guidelines in terms of procuring that money within the trust facility. The Finance Department has given a breakdown of that funding.

We are aware that the proposed guideline might not be the same for each district but there is a high level of flexibility as to what their priorities are and how they decide to use that funding.

Maybe, the Member has not received a copy of that guideline, I will forward him a copy after this sitting. It is a public document and not privy to the government side only. It's a document same as we giving funding for Covid-19 to the government and opposition members.

That information will be made available to members who have not received a copy of the proposed guidelines on the expenditures of those funds. But basically, we are giving to each district so the level of priorities is up to the districts to decide what they need. What we are proposing is just the general draw down of how they can allocate the funding allocated to them.

I thank the Member as that is the question most members have also been asking. In relation to that, we will give the guide line and the documents to the provincial and district treasury as well. So, for those members who have not received a copy I am willing to find a copy and forward it to them.

I thanked the Government, Treasury, and Cabinet for also making available additional money. This is money on top of the DSIP that we are getting for this year. So, we should be thankful to the Government for coming up with the funding to give directly to the districts and the provinces in these difficult times.

On record, all provincial and district treasury have already received that money and its sitting in their accounts.

05/01

I hope we can procure and quickly use those money.

Thank you, Member for Kandep and thank you, Mr Speaker.

Independence Day Celebrations

Mr KOBBY BOMOREO – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Prime Minister and that is in regards to the Covid-19 and the big celebration that is coming up; – the 45 anniversary of Papua New Guinea.

The Independence Day anniversary celebrations is coming up in couple of weeks from now and with the Covid-19, what plan does the government have for that? Will the people of Papua New Guinea celebrate it as usual or will there be some form of Covid-19 control measures put in place by the Control Center? And will there be any funds allocated for the districts and provinces so that we can organize scattered celebrations in various places like local level government councils and school grounds?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Member for Tewai-Siassi for asking this question. The 45-years Independence celebrations is coming up in September 16 and with Covid-19 being around, it is advisable that we don't have big scale public events and celebrations like we normally had in the past.

We will be issuing a circular out from the National Control Center on the level of the scaled-down symbolic activities that must be staged in all the provincial and district headquarters, sub-districts and stations right across the country. Leaders and youths can come in a Covid-19 sensitive manner to get together in different parts of our country to commemorate our Independence. So, the controller will issue a circular instruction as to what is the allowable sort of conduct on this important national day.

It will not definitely be large scale, like involving sing-sing groups in celebrations as we normally do but, on a scale-down sort of commemoration of this Independence Day. So, keep on the lookout for the Controller's instructions regarding the celebrations.

We will certainly inform Members of Parliament and our districts and provinces. On the availability of funding, usually there are some funds allocated to districts and provinces to assist in this event; however, as a result of Coronavirus, the economy is struggling. A lot of money has also been funded to districts and provinces to ensure they have money to respond to immediate needs in the health, education, or other sectors when need arises at this time.

I advise Members of Parliament to do what they can do at their level. For instance, in our DSIP, there are some money allocated for administrative components. So please let's be mindful to the fact that our country does not have an endless pit of resource available. Today as I speak, most districts and provinces have over billions of kina sitting in their accounts. Start getting those funds out and utilize them for this small commemorative event so that we can stage it all over our country, getting our people involved.

So, I can't promise at this stage, fun-filled Independence celebrations because of what we are going through, but resources are within the resource-envelope districts and provinces, based on their resources as well as the provincial government budgets. You can access some funds to mobilize people to commemorate this event.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Ramu 2 Project

Mr PETER NUMU – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I'd like to direct my questions to the Minister for State Enterprises in relation to the Ramu 2 Project.

06/01

The Ramu 2 Project as you all know is an impact project that will eventuate in my province.

(1) Can the Minister, give an update on the status of the project?

(2) Can the Minister explain why I as the Governor of the province was not consulted in all negotiations?

I need to know about this project thereby organising my people to benefit from it. The consultations were done in isolation here in Waigani.

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – I thank the Governor of Eastern Highlands for his two important questions. I do understand and I share his concerns.

Mr Speaker, this is one of the largest private investment project for producing independent power for almost 180 megawatts power. To give a quick update, there are many unsolicited projects that usually come to PNG Power. The power purchase agreement has been seen as one of the lucrative way for any businesses in terms of getting finances and other arrangements.

Mr Speaker, this project purely depends on some precedent conditions, for example, PNG Power does not have the capacity to really buy that 180 megawatt of power. In the

contract, we are seeking to clarify the takeout pay component of minimum 113 megawatt. We need to buy power therefore this project is subjected to the Power Sale Agreement with the resource project in that area especially Wafi-Golpu and Ramu Nickel Project so that we can confirm and engage PNG Power.

Mr Speaker, the latest update, we have extensively consulted on both parties and also the lawyers concerned in terms of the proposal. This project was done well before my time and if I am not mistaken, KCH has spent almost K30 to K40 million in doing the feasibility studies. This project will be going ahead when we meet the precedent conditions in terms of getting the Power Sale Agreement and also to remove the take up pay condition. The project cost is US\$ 947 million. The entire PNG Power watt could be a billion kina whereas the project value is more than K3.5 billion so we are taking every measure to ensure that it is not going to hurt PNG Power in terms of its operations and reliability.

We have sought some clarifications from the project developer. They have given their consent and we have also given PNG Power's requirements in terms of adding the precedent conditions to sign any kind of implementation memorandum or an agreement.

In regards to the second question, this project started almost 40 years ago. I came to know about this project just last year. We are exercising extreme caution as to how we handle this project because we do invite foreign direct investments. I agree with the Governor that he should be consulted and fully aware of it so that you will know the impact of project and help mobilising your people to participate.

If the project goes ahead there will be great benefits for the two provincial governments which are the Morobe Provincial Government and the Eastern Highlands Provincial Government. We are talking about renewable power and we must ensure that we can market the power or sell the power that is produced. We can't continue to work with all independent power producers to produce power that can't be sold.

07/01

Combat Sea Piracy – Samarai-Murua

Mr ISI HENRY LEONARD – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to participate in this session. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister for Fisheries and I ask the Minister for Police to take note.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Minister for Fisheries and the Government for opening the bech-de-mer season. This season is very important to the people who are located in the coastal areas in the country. This is the only season where remote islands in Milne Bay such as

Rossel, Sudest and even Budibudi participate in earning an income. In my electorate this season can be very risky because of sea piracy.

My questions to the Minister are:

(1) Does the Minister for Fisheries have any backup plan for Police to provide water policing to protect the remote islanders who will be harvesting the beach-de-mer, during this season?

(2) If there is a plan in place, can he tell us so that my people in Samarai-Murua and other districts can know?

I am asking these questions to support my efforts in combating sea piracy because as for myself, I have used up all my resources to combat sea piracy in my district.

Thank you.

Mr LINO TOM – Mr Speaker, I would also like to thank the Member for Samarai-Murua for asking these important questions.

Mr Speaker, the sea cucumber season has been opened and, yes, my department is aware that there is a lot of criminal activities and sea piracy on the rise in the province.

So, before we opened the beach-de-mer season some of our officers from National Fisheries Authority went to the Milne Bay Provincial Government to discuss issues that would affect the communities and I believe that there were some mitigations on how to cut down on the issue of sea piracy.

The National Fisheries have a plan in place. Over the years the Government has funded navy patrol boats running along the borderlines. The National Fisheries Authority also pumps in a lot of funds too in terms of allowances and fuel for the policemen who go out on the patrols.

I want to assure the Member for Samarai-Murua that we are very well aware of this issue and we are already putting in some measures to help our Water Police so that they can carry out their tasks and help reduce the crime rate.

I am sure that my officers have carried out their tasks and I am pretty sure that you have come up with some strategies as a provincial government. Law and order issues are everywhere, on the coast and up in the highlands. The Enga Provincial Government has spent almost K5 million every year to employ more policemen to attend to the law and order issues in the province.

So, while we at National Fisheries Authority are giving this opportunity for the villages to earn an income we expect the provincial governments to be responsible by allocating funding to address these issues.

As you are all aware the National Fisheries Authority has opened this bech-de-mer season for the indigenous people because it is a very good opportunity for them to make money. So, when we did this we had to cut down the number of licenses we were issuing. In the past there were many license issued and many people were carrying money to and fro and many problems were created.

One of the mitigated issues that we have taken into consideration is to cut down the issuing of licences to about one-third and they have been limited to the people from the village. As I already mentioned, National Fisheries Authority has a plan in place to help the Police with sea patrolling but at the same time I ask the Milne Bay Provincial Government because Milne Bay is responsible for 80 per cent of the export of sea cucumbers.

08/01

So it brings a lot of money into provincial government and into the pockets of the ordinary people so I think it is incumbent on the Milne Bay Provincial Government to have a good strategy that it can inform other stakeholders so come on board and we can help fund the strategy they have in place because they are actually on the ground.

Supplementary Question

Proper Trainings and licences for Berche-der-mer

Mr DOUGLAS TOMURIESA – My supplementary question is directed to the Minister for Fisheries.

Mr Speaker, it is a great honour to hear that the season for beche-de-mer has reopened. My question to the Minister is that in the last season, 2018 and 2019, the resource was harvested but due to lack of training from Fisheries to the resource owners, most of the products that were harvested were either lost due to ill preparation, or when the buyer came to buy it he reduced the prices to either half or lower than half because of poor quality.

(1) Did the NFA conduct any training on the harvest and preparation of the resource before the beche-der-mer season opened for 2020?

In order for our people to fully benefit and receive maximum benefit from the harvest of this resource, I believe that proper training has to be done by NFA so that when the people harvest the product, they will know how to prepare and pack it properly, and when they sell it, they may receive maximum benefit.

(2) In 2018, a lot of licences were given to people who were not from the resource areas. People who did not know what they were buying and in doing so, our people ended up going to con people who got their products and promised to give them money but they made the sale, and they never returned. And here we have opened the season again, and many people will come and do the same thing.

The DDAs are there and I know that many of our DDAs have applied for licences and to date we have not received any feedback informing us that the DDAs will get licences so that we can also participate in generating income for our districts and provinces.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Dr LINO TOM – Mr Speaker, these are some very good questions and I will answer them. Firstly, licences not given to resource owners. That is a good question that came and I will answer it first.

When we gave out the criteria for the licences the provincial fisheries officer from that area certifies it. The licences do not go out without that. Each province has a provincial fisheries officer who recommend it. Upon his recommendation it goes to the committee that assesses the licences. After that it goes to the board for approval. If he is having this problem, the problem is with his provincial fisheries officer because that is our criteria.

It is one of the criteria we have. The provincial fisheries officer must look through the list and endorse all the applications coming from that province before they are actually brought to the committee.

On the question of DDAs getting licences, it is open to DDAs and I have spoken to a couple of DDAs already. For example Rigo DDA already got their licence. Esa'ala is on its way to get its licence but applications have closed already. I have given special instructions to the board to still have it open for DDAs so that they can still come, apply and get licences. We believe that this is one fishery where the ordinary people in the villagers are benefitting from. So we want transparency and a good governance process in place so that we can make sure that we empower the people in rural areas. So, DDAs, if you have not received your licence yet, that means you have not sent in your applications.

09/01

I have made sure that all the DDAs have to apply. In relation to training; it has to be clarified here that beche-de-mer license are given out to people in the middle of the year, and

so training is done well before that. If you do not get the training in your village is because you have not organized yourselves to bring people to conduct trainings.

Mr Speaker, licenses are given out in the middle of the year and we do not know who the potential buyers would be but we send out our officers to conduct such exercises. We have placed a moratorium on the sea cucumber season because a lot of our people are into the habit that the Member has already mentioned. They are going out and harvesting juvenile species and harvesting those that are not ready. This is mostly out of greed and they would not want another person to collect more than them; the onus is now on the villages involved in beche-der-mere harvesting.

And to stop illegal buying of beche-de-mer, we have put in place very stringent processes in place. And that is, before you acquire a license, we will check your account. If you're an existing licensee, we will check your account to make sure your remittance after you sell your products and there is constant flow of cash in your account from the sale of these sea cucumbers. If there is none, or the money is lost overseas, you are not getting your license. Many foreigners have so often abused or have used our locals for their own gain. So, this is one of our strict criteria that we have put in place to determine honesty. This is business reserved wholly to indigenous people. Those who show suspicious remittance in their accounts will be stopped from getting their licenses.

And since we do not want to prevent our people from making business, if we see that these people are genuine partners, we are giving them licenses. We will check the first export that they do. If the money comes from overseas into the recount in this country, then they will continue. Otherwise we will call off the licenses. And we are putting all these measures because, when I took over this ministry, one of the main things that I wanted to do is make sure that I empower the traditional fishermen. As you know, tuna is our biggest export earner and it caters for 95 per cent of the money that we get. But it comes through the big industries and to NFA.

Mr Speaker, those in the villages must be empowered and one of this Government's policies is the promotion of the SME policy and that is where sea cucumber comes in. So, we have put all these criteria in place. Leaders, be rest assured that your people in the village will benefit from this.

Road Maintenance – Kairuku-Hiri Electorate

Mr PETER ISOAIMO – Mr Speaker, I have three questions that I wish to direct to the Minister for Works.

(1) Mr Minister, can you confirm that these two roads in my electorate are national roads; the junction leading to Veifa'a School of Nursing in West Mekeo and the road from Koitaki to Doe, which is part of the original Hubert Murray Highway and come under your department's responsibility.

(2) If so, why aren't these two roads attracting any maintenance funds at all from the Government of Papua New Guinea, for its maintenance and upkeep?

For the West Mekeo road, as I understand, prior to 2012 Elections, I raised this matter with your predecessor that an amount of more than K7.5 million was allocated for rehabilitation and maintenance. The money has gone to unreliable contractors who have never done a good job out of it. And so, the provincial government and I are struggling to this day to get that road back to a good condition.

At the opening of the Gabagaba -Hula road reseal program, I was assured that our donor partner, the World Bank was looking into funding the Vanapa-Laloki portion of the Hiritano-Highway. Visibly now and with the signboards up, it says that the reseal program funded by World Bank is only from the Vanapa Bridge to Brown River, which the contractor Dekenai is on the road. The people of Kairuku-Hiri would want to know if the remaining 23 or so kilometers of the road from Brown River to Laloki bridge will attract some funding or not?

The third is the forgotten road, that the Chan-Haiveta government put through from Bereina turn-off into the Malalaua portion in Gulf. That seems to be also deteriorating so, are we going to have some maintenance funds allocated to the upkeep of these roads that are used by the people of my electorate as well as the people of Gulf?

Lastly is the Magi Highway portion of the Hiritano Highway and the Hiri West-Porebada road.

10/01

This road was also sealed by developer Curtain Brothers but it seems to have a lot of potholes.

So, do we have any maintenances funds allocated for repair and maintenance to reseal this particular roads including the Magi Highway portion in my electorate?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr MICHAEL NALI – Thank you, Mr Speaker I wish to thank my colleague Member for Kairuku-Hiri for asking very important series of questions which many of us are trying to

ask including myself, but I cannot ask because I know the problem that I face as Minister responsible for Works.

Mr Speaker, the Kairuku-Hiri junction road, I do not know whether it's part of the main Hiritano Highway or it is a turn off from Hiritano going into Kairuku District so, leave the question with me and I'll get back to you.

Mr Speaker, in relation to the Doa Road, I have been on that road from Sogeri to Koitaki which leads to a tourist destination for golf enthusiasts. It was once used to raise cattle and I also heard this is where the first settlers made their home. A place where one of our country's leader Sir Maori Kiki has a house there.

And right now, we have some really good tourist set up out there and I have seen the road condition and it is really bad.

But, Mr Speaker, let me admit that I do not have the funds to attend to every road. I like to fix it up but I have no money. So, I leave this question and if I can find some money I would like to fix that particular road from Sogeri to Koitaki Country Club because it has big tourism potential.

Mr Speaker, the road from Brown River to Doa rubber plantation, connecting the main highway, the first phase of the project funded by the World Bank has been implemented

And Dekenai construction, one of the local contractors, has done very good work and I am pretty sure the Member will agree with me on that. The second phase of that was also to come in and the sealing of Epo to Kerema is included as well. And under that same program there is another road maintenance and upgrading from Bogia in Madang.

Mr Speaker, what has happened is that; Department of Works, NPC, and Tender Evaluation Committee made a recommendation to World Bank. And the World Bank rejected the recommendation so it was brought back again and reevaluated.

Mr Speaker, when the submission was made something happened in between and the very company that was recommended, unfortunately, was put off from the list. So, we have identified the problem and it will be resubmitted again. Hopefully, the World Bank will agree that we proceed with the work as soon as we get clearance from the World Bank.

Mr Speaker, the road from Napana coming back to Brown River, Kuriva and even connecting Laloki River the World Bank has agreed to fund the project.

Mr Speaker, we need to implement phase two first before phase three comes in. So, because of the mishandling of phase two phase by the system and processes of the contract is more than K10 million, it comes to me and I take it into cabinet. That process has taken quite a fair bit of time.

But we are getting very close to it. Last week I met with the Secretary for Works and he has been instructed to communicate quickly with our people in National Procurement Commission and I think the decision will be made any time this week or next week.

When the decision is made it will then be submitted to the World Bank to either agree with the recommendation put forward by the system or they will object.

11/01

Mr Speaker, the other problem that we have is that because of the covid-19, most of the World Bank personal have left and now live in Australia so with the skeleton local staff remaining there is some communication, so I leave it like that.

Mr Speaker, the last question was about the road sealing from Tatana to LNG project site and I think it is a total shame. We have the big LNG export and reservoir situated there but when you travel through that road, it is a very shameful.

Mr Speaker, unlike you all, I don't travel around a lot so don't blame me for not remembering the names of the places there.

Mr Speaker, in fact, the road is in the heart of the city and I really don't know who is responsible. Yes, the Department of Works is responsible for all those roads but when it comes to sharing responsibilities as to who should be helping or contributing or responsible for this road especially the road where LNG sits, it is a big shame as it has huge potholes everywhere, especially past Boera junction.

So, Mr Speaker, I do not have an answer for my brother at the moment but if I am able to come across any funding then I will remember your request. But I think this is a road that LNG project, NCD and all of us should be responsible for. It's not a big highway where big semi-trailers use but it is a road that goes past the major oil facility and yet 20-30 meters away from this facility, we have big potholes.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA – HELA PROVINCIAL
HEALTH AUTHORITY REPORT, 2017 – PAPER –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, pursuant to statute, I present the Audit Report of the Hela Provincial Health Authority for the year ended 31 December 2017.

Motion (by **Mr 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.

12/01

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr RAINBO PAITA (Finschhafen – Minister for Finance and Rural Development) –

I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE – Sir MEKERE MORAUTA

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

That Sir Mekere Morauta be excused during the course of this meeting due to his medical treatment overseas.

ALTERATION OF DAY OF NEXT SITTING

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

That Parliament at its rising adjourn to Thursday 27 August, 2020 at 10 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.45 p.m.