

FOURTH DAY

Friday 13 November 2020

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD

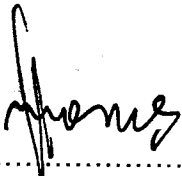
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.....
Mr Harry Momos

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FOURTH DAY

Friday 13 November 2020

The Deputy Speaker (**Mr Koni Iguan**) took the Chair at 10 a.m.

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

Sitting Suspended.

The Deputy Speaker (**Mr Koni Iguan**) again took the Chair at 10. 50 a.m., and invited the Member for Nawae **Honourable Kennedy Wenge**, to say Prayers:

‘Papa God long Heaven, nem bilong yu i save stap holi, pipol bilong yu i makim mipela, bung bilong man i save kamap holi. Yu makim mipela long dispela Floor na mipela kam. Yu as bilong laif bilong mipela so yu givim dispela laif gen long mipela kam na toktok long pipol bilong yu insait long Papua New Guinea. Long dispela beten mi laik tok tenkyu long yu long dispela moning, yu givim mipela kaiaki bilong de, strong bilong de, tingting bilong de yu givim mipela bai mipela toktok long pipol bilong yu. Helpim Praim Minista, ministers, Opposition Leader na ol member bilong Parliament. Yu givim stia long mipela long toktok long stia long toktok long pipol bilong Papua New Guinea..Long i bilong Jisas Kraus na bikpela bilong mipela. I tru’

QUESTIONS

Oil spillage at Kwaiwata Island – Milne Bay

Mr ISI HENRY LEONARD – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker for giving me the opportunity to participate in this question time. I rise to raise a series of questions to the Minister for Transport and for the Minister for Environment and Conservation and the Minister for Fisheries can take note.

Mr Deputy Speaker, around 3 a.m on the 24 December 2012, a ship ran aground at Kwaiwata island in my district. The Kwaiwata island lies towards the northern end or extremity of Jomard passage.

According to the photograph taken, this ship had caused huge environment damage to the reefs surrounding this island. Indicating that the ship was travelling at a high speed about 16 to 20 knots. I find it very difficult to understand how this modern ship ran aground at Kwaiwata Island. I find it very difficult to understand a modern merchant ship running aground on an island.

According to the report I received the ship named *Asian Lilly* and owned by Santoku Shipping in Osaka Japan and managed by Faith Marine Tokyo Japan. The impact caused on the reef is immense because of the high impact damage to the ship's bow resulting in leakage of both oil and fuel. There is an oil spillage surrounding the island and environment of Kwaiwata Island.

02/04

Up until now there has been no report from the Department of Transport to my office regarding this issue. And at the same time, there is no visibility in the country to hold accountable shipping owners for damages that caused to the environment, the fuel spillage in Kwaiwata and the Gau Islands.

My question to the Minister for Transport are;

(1) Is there are way that Department of Transport can hold the ship owners accountable for the damages caused to the reefs and also the oil spillage in Gau and Kwaiwata?

(2) If there is a way, then when exactly is the Minister for Transport going to take action against the shipping owners?

(3) Since the island is located at the Jomard Passage area, when will the Minister for Transport visit the Jomard Passage so he will be familiar with the Jomard issue?

It is an issue affecting my district and also it is of importance to the country. So he must be well versed with the information and the situation at the island so that we can make decisions and policies in a holistic manner. Thank you.

Mr WILLIAM SAMB – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker and the Member for Samarai-Murua Open for his important question.

I have heard about the incident involving a ship running off an island in Milne Bay but because of the nature of the question, I ask the Chair to let me consult first with my department and then present the information in the next sitting.

There are also some important points I want to present, Mr Deputy Speaker, firstly, he was talking about the damage caused and the oil spillage. Secondly, the speed that the vessel was travelling at. And thirdly the issue of the Jomard Passage.

My response to his first question will come after consultation with my department. I will get the reports and present the information to this Parliament as well as the Member for Samarai-Murua Open.

To answer his second question, my department through the agency NMSA have an oil and spill facility in place. The Department of Transport has established these centres in our central marine points.

For example, a couple of weeks ago our team was in Kimbe and were able to talk to our partners at the Provincial Government and the good Governor of West New Britain on accessing a facility in Kimbe port area. That facility will accommodate rescue and search boats as well as an oil spill facility to look after the New Guinea Islands. There will be similar facilities in Madang and Milne Bay as well

03/04

We have an oil spill team in NMSA who are addressing that. Our challenge now is to get the capability to attend to such problems.

The second point is the speed of the vessel, without the report I can't pre-empt, so, we will be submitting a submission to NEC to declare the Jomard Passage as a piloted area. Our inter-agencies comprising PNG Ports, Transport, NMSA and the Milne Bay Provincial Government and other stakeholders are holding meetings to get processes and systems in place. Upon approval of the submission we can work on controlling the area.

The Government can collect fees from vessels entering the Jomard Passage area. In the area, there are a lot of reefs and the depth of the sea is not that deep. Therefore, in order to avoid such incidents, we would like to make that a compulsory piloted area where we can provide that service by partnership or economical means to manage that.

As per our discussions with NMSA, we hope to have a meeting with stakeholders in Milne Bay. Part of that is to visit the area so that we can appreciate what we are talking about. But I thank the Government for making the area a compulsory piloted area.

As I have stated earlier, the Jomard passage area is a technical area that needs a lot of planning of processes and systems. Therefore, I will present a report to Parliament as soon as I get a report from the Department. Thank you

Mr TOBOI YOTO – Thank you Deputy Speaker. My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Agriculture. Before I ask my question, I would like to thank the Marape- Basil Government for subsidizing our commodities

04/04

Mr TOBOI YOTO – Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. In Western Province, 12 000 people are growing rubber. I would like to ask if the government has plans to subsidise cost of rubber and to increase price of rubber in the same way as it did for Coffee and Cocoa.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr JOHN SIMON – Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank the Governor for Western Province for his good question.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Governor for Western Province and Honourable Members of Parliament, there are two areas that I would like to state;

(1) Import Replacement – Before the country turns 50 years old in 2025, it's a must to cut down on imports.

(2) Increase Export Commodity by 2025, whereas it will bring in foreign exchange and grow our economy.

On the same note, we allocated funds under the leadership of our Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape to rural communities of Papua New Guinea to support markets for agriculture and livestock. The only plan was to support the price so that funds are injected to rural communities so that all farmers would receive cash incentives directly.

So many times and government after government, money is said to be allocated to the people in the rural communities but it does not reach them. As an intervention, money will be given to the rural people as cash injection in the communities in our country. The existing policy and structure with the commodity boards will be used to provide direct cash injection into the rural communities with the support of the districts.

In regards to the price support, we are working on current existing policy and current existing structure is in place now with the community board. We have liaised with certain districts to identify buying points, so once buying points are identified then we will work and pay their cash incentives directly and will not liaise with any middle man.

The K50 million allocated from the supplementary budget this year was for price stability, support and intervention.

05/04

We have the Arabica and the Robusta coffee in our country and we want the market price to be at K5 for Arabica coffee and Robusta at least K4.

For copra it must be at K2 for a kilo and rubber at K2 for a kilo as well we want these prices to go to farm gate. What it means is that our farmers with their produce are harvesting at their farms, be it coffee, copra or whatever produce they receive, their prices are there and then. They don't need to come out and look for a market.

We are encouraging districts to set up buying points to set up under their DDA and buy those produce from local farmers, so that our local farmers can receive that benefit at their farm gate.

With these the districts are taking the lead in this development.

In terms of moving these produce out we are in talks with major exporters who need to invest back into the industry because they are exporting and benefiting a lot and they need to come back and invest in terms of subsidising the freight.

These are the areas we are looking into to support our pricing so that it trickles down to our local people.

These developments will bring about employment at the rural areas because that's where the majority of our country's population lives.

We have more than 3 million coffee farmers in this country 2 million cocoa farmers in this country and 1.5 million copra farmers, and this is providing employment to more than 7 million Papua New Guineans. When we allocate monies to the rural areas it will benefit the majority out there.

Let me also use this opportunity to bring about an important issue we have been holding major talks on. This issue is in regards to import replacement.

Papua New Guinea will be celebrating 50 years in 2025. We have been currently importing fresh foods where it is found and produced locally here too. Now we need to seriously look into slowly reducing the number of these import replacement goods.

Those major companies who are involved must now look into going into partnership with local landowners to start working together to farm and produce these crops we are importing.

One example is the bulb onion and we seem to be importing on large scale. Another is potatoes, citrus and even rice. So, starting next year we are going to be imposing various import quotas on these produces.

Major importers like Trukai and Goodman Fielders who import rice must now work in partnership with landowners to grow rice in our country, so that when certain quotas are put on that cash crop it must be seen as also been grown here locally.

This Government has allocated K50 million in the Supplementary Budget to support our local farmers. We must discourage Waigani Paper Farmer's and desire to see this funding go down to our hardworking local farmers.

06/04

If you know how to apply for loans then go ahead and get one from our banks but for our simple villagers this is the first time we are putting money out for them. All that will be needed is for them to toil their land with cash crops and earn money. We would like to work closely with all our districts and identify buying points in order to direct funding accordingly.

Supplementary Questions

Coffee Prices

Mr PETER NUMU – When this Government came into power, they said we will take back Papua New Guinea. A lot of middlemen in the coffee trade in Eastern Highlands are a hindrance and a problem to us. My provincial government intends to build and take back Eastern Highlands through coffee. I heard that a lot of funding has been allocated for the cash crop industries.

However, with regard to the coffee industry, can the Minister inform Parliament as to where money has been directed? Has money been directed through CIC or through the private sector to stabilise prices?

Secondly, if money has been directed through CIC then I want to state here that there will be a conflict of interest. They are both the referee and the player in the field. They also collect about 20 toea as levy so where does that money go to? Does it go to rehabilitating coffee gardens or will it be used to stabilise markets when prices drop?

Thirdly, there are too many middlemen who do not own coffee trees and who manipulate prices to their own gain. International prices are sometimes very good but these

middlemen impose their own prices to benefit their own interests which in turn discourages our simple coffee growers. For example, they were buying at K3.80 per kilo but when Eastern Highlands Provincial Government came up with Rumbia Coffee they came up with a different price as compared with international pricings.

Therefore, can the Minister please look into this matter and address it for the benefit of our growers and simple people back at home? Can you look into it and deal with these so-called middlemen? Can you also inform the Parliament on what policies that you are going to implement to address this middlemen issue? Coffee is the backbone of many simple people and so we need to seriously address these matters at hand for the benefit of our people.

07/04

These are the things we are looking at it so what other strategies will we use to look at those at the middle.

Thirdly, in the past, when there was a Coffee Industry Board, it was good. However, when CIC comes in, they have a lot of consultants and many overheads and as a result they spend a lot of money and yet, they are not performing their duties in the coffee plantations in Papua New Guinea. As a result, you will notice that there is a drop in coffee export because there were impacts put in by the CIC. Now, if we want to fund some money to CIC, are they going to fix all the issues of coffee or not? Now, when we have a drop in the coffee export, we don't have any solutions for it. So, if we want to fund money to CIC, how will they stabilise the price?

So, can the Minister consider this and do away with the CIC and replace it with Coffee Industry Board which has only one board? This is because CIC has many heads and a lot of money been used.

Lastly, Mr Deputy Speaker, the small coffee growers are the ones we seriously need to look at and connect market for them outside. The Minister can look into it and connect market outside so that we can bring money into the country.

It will help our forests issues; for example, Eastern Highlands Provincial Government's company has sent two containers and during the Covid-19 we received US\$176,000. Now they are requesting for one million coffee bags of green beans which Papua New Guineans would not be able to produce.

For coffee alone, a lot of money is expected to come in, that is, from one company alone. So, I would like to ask the Minister if we can rehabilitate the existing coffee

plantations with more seedlings and meet the outside market demand. So, can the Minister look into extending the market and increase the production of coffee in the country?

Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Mr JOHN SIMON — Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I want to put on record that CIC has totally failed this country. I have requested CIC to review their structure and report to me. We have coffee berry bora which was in the country for a long time. We are still trying to find ways to isolate the problem. Having all these problems, I am continuously having discussion with the CIC Board to review their structure and how it was set up. That is regarding the CIC and its structure and the duties that were carried out by the CIC in the coffee industry in the country.

For the price support, we didn't fund the money for CIC to manage. The reason why we work with CIC and the Commodity Board is because we don't have any policy in place within the department to put aside these funds. But we are using their existing structures for the Commodity Board which we already have in place.

We will work with them but as I've said earlier, CIC will use these funds to support those provinces and districts to identify the buying points so that the money goes straight to the farmers and not to the middle men, hire cars, office fees and consultant fees. So, provinces and districts have to identify the buying point and liaise with us and the CIC so that fund can go straight there so that farmers can get their money at the farm gate.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

08/04

Money Scheme Payout

Mr KENNEDY WENGE – On behalf of my people, I wish to congratulate and welcome the new Member for Goroko to Parliament. I wish to direct my questions to the Minister for Finance. I would like ministers for Treasury and Commerce to take note.

I noticed here in Port Moresby and Lae that there is a group of people who gather around selected spots to collect money and fund or support a scheme that they believe will be paying out huge profits in the near future. In their discussions they accuse our banks for stalling their payouts.

(1) Can the Minister inform the Parliament about the status of this payment? If there is no money then can you inform Parliament and the people about the status of this issue?

(2) Can you clarify whether the Government or the banks are stalling these payments?

Mr RAINBO PAITA – I think this is a problem faced by a lot of people right across the country. This must be some kind of cargo cult group that influence people to join and contribute money. They tell people that there is a huge amount of money sitting in the banks that needs clearance to be paid to them. Some claim that there is a huge reserve of gold bullions that needs clearance to be paid out to these hopefuls.

I would like to inform Parliament and our people that these are all lies. We all know that money is the root of all evil. If this was true then we have BPNG and other banks including our government departments to verify this issue. The executives of these groups survive on the contributions of its members. I therefore would like to reiterate that these are all lies and that there is no money sitting in the banks for these groups of people.

I also would like to suggest that you give me the name of the group or association so that we can get proper and confirmed clearance from our banks. We have to follow normal procedures and protocols to get the banks to verify these claims. There is a lot of confusion regarding this matter so I thank the Member for Nawae for raising this matter.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Since there are no more questions, I will now call on Grievance Debate.

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order! Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

09/04

MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE - LEAVE

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA (Vanimo-Green – Leader of the Opposition) – I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Objections being raised, leave not granted.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – There is an objection to the motion and so leave is not granted.

(Uproar in the Chamber)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – There will be no division, Honourable Members, but Leader of the Opposition, if you want to pursue your motion, you will have to suspend the *Standing Orders*.

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS –
MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE TO PROCEED**

Motion (by **Mr Belden Namah**) proposed –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent me moving a motion without notice.

Mr Rainbo Paita – Point of Order! The Opposition Leader doesn't realize that the motion can be moved by Leader of Government Business.

(Uproar in the Chamber)

Mr Rainbo Paita – Mr Deputy Speaker, if I can conclude, we are now in Grievance Debate as per the *Standing Order* on a Friday. If he has any motion, he can move them after Grievance Debate. So, I urge to continue with the Grievance Debate. If there are any *Standing Orders* that he wants to suspend, he can do that after the Grievance Debate. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – The Leader of Government Business has raised a Point of Order and you cannot raise a Point of Order against another Point of Order. However, I will seek advice from the Clerk and advise the Parliament.

Honourable Members and Leader of Government Business, under *Standing Order Section 151*, allows any member of Parliament to move a motion.

Therefore, I will entertain the motion by the Opposition Leader. Explain your motion!

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – Mr Deputy Speaker, my motion basically is to remove members of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Private Business and replace them with new members.

Mr Bryan Kramer – Point of Order! Mr Deputy Speaker, while I recognise any Members' right to move a motion, the process is to seek leave and you have to make a ruling. What is the ruling? You guys called for a division. Was there any ruling on that or not?

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Minister for Police, we went through the process of seeking leave and that leave was not granted. The Chair gave permission under *Section 151* of the *Standing Orders* for a member to move a motion and the Leader of the Opposition did move a motion.

The motion is on the Floor and we are already in the process. Therefore, I will allow the Opposition Leader to continue.

10/04

Honourable Members and Opposition Leader, after receiving advice, according to the *Standing Orders*, we have to vote on the motion that you raised, then, you can raise your point or statement on the Floor. So, I will ask the Parliament to vote and if we have the absolute majority of 56 votes, Parliament will entertain the motion.

Motion – That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent me moving a motion without notice – put.

The motion requiring an absolute majority of 56 Members, the Deputy Speaker ordered that the Bells be rung.

The Parliament voted (The Deputy Speaker, **Mr Koni Iguan**) in the Chair -

AYES – 57

NOES – 39

Motion so agreed to.

11-12-13/04

(Voting in progress)

14/04

**PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON
PRIVATE BUSINESS – DISCHARGE AND APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS**

Motion (by **Mr Belden Namah**) agreed to –

That Mr Charlie Benjamin, Mr Philip Undialu, Mr Robert Agorobe, Mr Toboi Yoto and Mr William Powi be discharged from attendance as Members of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Private Business and that Mr Peter Isoaimo, Mr Jeffery Komal, Mr Alfred Manase, Mr Tomait Kapili, and Mr Elais Kapavore be appointed Members of the Committee.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA (Vanimu-Green) – I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHAH – Mr Deputy Speaker, we have just demonstrated a Westminster system of government that the members of the government benches have moved and have demonstrated their disbelief in the Prime Minister, and judgement day has arrived.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Motion by **(Mr Belden Namah)** proposed –

That the Parliament at its rising, adjourn to Tuesday 1 December 2020 at 2 p.m.

Mr James Marape – Point of Order! I think an important Government Business is at stake. The country's future is important and this is the Budget session. I respect all members of Parliament and their freedom of choices. They have every right to adjourn at any time but I think you as the Deputy Speaker should seek advice from the clerks regarding this matter. I know he has already moved the motion but I think Government Business must take precedence.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Prime Minister, I take note of your point and I will get advice from the clerks and make a ruling accordingly.

Honourable members, upon advice, we have already agreed on the motion, therefore, I will allow for it to proceed.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHAH – I think our outgoing Prime Minister forgot that numbers rule the Floor of Parliament.

(Members interjecting)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Leader of the Opposition, there has been no voting and there is no formal outgoing Prime Minister. There is no vacancy in the Prime Ministers seat, therefore, I ask you to withdraw your statement.

15/04

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA — Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I withdraw the statement.

Motion - That the Parliament at its rising adjourned until Tuesday 1 December 2020 at 2p.m – agreed to.

Mr Michael Nali – Point of Order! Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Being around in this House for a long time, I think it is important that I say this for the good of all of us, for our country and in respect to Parliament.

Mr Deputy Speaker, now we see that a lot of the Ministers from the Government headed by the Deputy Prime Minister have moved to the other side and looking at the numbers, this game is not yet over but Mr Deputy Speaker –

(Members interjecting)

Mr Michael Nali – This is not a joke. Mr Deputy Speaker, this Floor has always recognised the number games. I want to remind us that whatever we do, we have to do everything right. If you have 57, you can move a motion anytime in the Parliament and that does not mean that you can run over and do whatever you want to do.

What I am trying to say is that, we must respect the system and allow the process to take its course. I won't say any other thing. That's all I have to say. We have to allow the system and let the process take its course. The habit of arguing doesn't matter, you won't turn this world around today.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Minister, the motion has been passed. Thank you for raising this but there is no vacancy in the Prime Minister's post. This is just a motion on the Floor of Parliament that we are following by process. The Government is still in place.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Belden Namah**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 12 noon.