

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 22 March 2022

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FIRST DAY

Tuesday 22 March 2022

The Parliament met at 2 p.m., as per the terms of the Resolution of 2 March 2022.

The Deputy Speaker (**Mr Koni Iguan**) took the Chair

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 again took the Chair at 2.40 p.m., and invited the Member for Kairuku-Hiri, **Honourable Peter Isoaimo**, to say Prayers:

‘Papa God, mipela olgeta sanap today long Floor long Parliament. Em yu yet makim mipela long makim ol electorates long kantri, long igo pas long ol pipol bilong yu. Papa God, planti taim mipla fail na igat asua na mipela pray long forgiveness na mipla pray long planti blessings blong yu iken kam antap long mipela, so mipela ken honestly and decisively lead the people long way na pasin yu laikim long em. Amen!’

DEATH OF HONOURABLE WILLIAM SAMB – STATEMENT BY MR DEPUTY SPEAKER

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I wish to inform Parliament of the death of William Samb, the Member for Goilala and Minister for Commerce and Industry on 3 March 2022. On Thursday 24 March 2022, the casket of the Late Honourable Member William Samb, will lay in the Parliament Chamber.

CERTIFICATION OF ACTS

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament that I have in accordance with *Section 110* of the *Constitution* certified the *Attorney General Amendment Act 2022* and the *Private Partnership Amendment Act 2022*, made by the National Parliament.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS – REPRESENTATIVES OF WESTERN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AND BEWANI – WUTUNG ONEI LLG – STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I wish to acknowledge the presence of Delegates from the Western Provincial Government and Local Level Government President representative of Bewani – Wutung Onei in Vanimo Green River, who are in the Public Gallery today. On behalf of the Parliament, I extend the visitors a warm welcome.

02/01

QUESTIONS

East Sepik – Voter Registration

Mr ALLAN BIRD - Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My questions are directed to the Prime Minister. It is in relation to ‘voter registration’ leading up to the General Elections.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am informed that the process of registering new voters in my province has not yet fully commenced. I would like to know why this is an issue? I did ask the Provincial Administrator but he was not able to provide an answer because the Electoral Commission could not provide him a satisfactory response.

(1) Is the Prime Minister aware that the registration of new voters in East Sepik is slow, and hasn’t even started yet?

(2) Given that the actual voting will take place approximately twelve weeks from today, do we have enough time to ensure that the new voters are placed on the Common Rolls?

(3) What will happen if these voters are not registered, do we revert to the previous Common Roll which we all know are fraught with problems?

Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Mr. JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I'd like to thank the Governor of East Sepik for his questions, because its specific in East Sepik in as far as the common roll update is concern. I will get the relevant information and facts supplied on what is happening in East Sepik, as well as what is happening right throughout the country regarding the electoral roll update and the election preparations, if not tomorrow then in due course. I will make that public announcement through Parliament or through the media. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

PNG Overseas Missions Running Out of Funds

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – Thank you Mr. Deputy Speaker. Before I ask my questions, I would like to pay my respects and condolences to our Late Minister for Commerce and Trade, and Member for Goilala, the Late Honorable William Samb. Mr Deputy Speaker, the Member for Goilala was a fine performing member of Parliament and a performing Minister. His death will be a great loss to his family, to the people of Goilala and Pangu Pati. I wish to also sincerely convey my condolences to the leader of Pangu Pati, the Honorable Prime Minister, James Marape. And also, to the people of this country as he has contributed to so much in his capacity as Member for Goilala and also as minister in various capacities.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my questions to the Prime Minister is in relation to our Heads of Missions overseas.

Mr Deputy Speaker, let me read to the House a letter from the permanent mission from the Independent state of Papua New Guinea to the United States, dated 17 March 2022. The letter is addressed to the Acting Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Mr Deputy Speaker, the letter reads;

‘Dear Acting Secretary, this is to advise you that all the service providers, for telephone, internet and cable at the Chancery have been suspended their services due to nonpayment of outstanding bills to the mission. We have also received a call from the office property owner, informing us that they will start proceeding for eviction. And they will inform the US State Department of their next step.’

The staff of the mission have not been paid since the first payday of January 2022. Bank of America have informed the Mission last week that they will close the account of the Mission due to negative balance in their account and the uncollected bank services fees.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this correspondence says to me that I have had enough of living like this abroad, year in year out. Embarrassingly put on a strong face for my country when the landlord asks for rentals, local staff are not being trained and we beg school fees not to suspend our children from going to school.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have received the same story from our mission, in our nearest neighbor Indonesia and our Consul in Jayapura, they are virtually closed. Our mission in Seoul South Korea has also closed shockingly. I am also told that this is the same embarrassing state of affairs in all our missions abroad. These are our representatives, the representatives of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.

This is our face abroad, what are we doing about it?

03/01

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is totally embarrassing to receive this kind of letter from our representatives who are the face of our country in our international missions abroad.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I have five questions in relation to this embarrassing and deplorable state of affairs of our missions abroad;

- 1) Is the Prime Minister aware of this situation?
- 2) If he is aware, why has he allowed this situation to happen?
- 3) When is this situation going to be rectified?
- 4) Is it true that the Prime Minister is planning a State visit to Indonesia in the near-future?
- 5) How will this visit be facilitated on the ground if the PNG Embassy in Jakarta is virtually close?

While our missions are in this deplorable state, Mr Deputy Speaker, why has PNG Government been spending tens-of-thousands of kina in sending delegations after delegations to Dubai for the last 12 months?

Table World Trade Expo Report

Mr Deputy Speaker, can we have a report tabled in Parliament on the benefits of these huge delegations to Dubai?

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I want to thank and appreciate the question by the Opposition leader. These are important questions, especially in terms of our missions who are representing our country in the bi-laterals and multi-laterals meetings and programs that our country needs to run off-shore and overseas.

I want to assure our country, that we, as the Government acknowledge the fact that most of our missions are trying to catch up with the many of the legacies that have been outstanding for so long. Some of the rentals and bills go many years back and just like many of the clean-ups that we have been doing, we have been cleaning them up but they are catching up on us.

When we send in money to keep the missions running, they also try to catch up on outstanding bills that they have been carrying for many years.

So, that problem has been noted and we are aware of these problems, in response to his first question.

In response to his second question, we do not allow it to happen. Since January this year, the Department of Treasury has been instructed to send money, directly through the missions concerned and not through the Department of Foreign Affairs, so they could administer their own administration to ensure our missions are functional. This is unlike, in the past where you would send the money through the Department of Foreign Affairs who later dispatched the money to our missions.

In January, I did issue a letter that Treasury issues warrants straight to the missions. So, we are catching up on all those outstanding as well and not just on the administration of the missions. But for instance, in the United Nations, some of the subscriptions fees to some of the multi-nationals and the agencies that we are part of including United Nations, those fees and bills are being addressed as we retire all these commitments.

I sincerely apologise to our faithful public servants who head missions and those who work in those missions and their families. I personally know fine Papua New Guineans who work under stress, carrying on with smiles, representing our country. I just want to take this opportunity while answering by thanking them for serving their country well.

We hope in the future as we go forward, no more funds will go through Foreign Affairs to be sent to them. So when the Department of Treasury budgets, they will budget for them and warrants will be sent straight to those missions serving abroad.

On the issue on Indonesia, we are currently holding preliminary talks with the Indonesian Government to ramp up our relationship with Indonesia, especially from a trade perspective.

Indonesia is a country of 270 million people. They have a huge consumer appetite there. Our natural resources including our land can be used to graze beef and grow food, as well as the energy that we produce here can be sold to Indonesia

04/01

They are an emerging economic superpower. They are rated in the top 20 of the global economy. So, we must see this in a greater perspective and not just as nation relations or people relations but more importantly, see the great potential for an economic relationship with Indonesia.

So, we are discussing a visit during this year, if not in this 10th Parliament and I will definitely have a note on my desk for a visit by the PNG head of Government to Indonesia after the elections. So, that is a work in progress and if the Indonesian mission is struggling, like in all our mission's business globally, we will catch and that will be addressed to ensure that the mission is functional. The mission post in Jakarta is one of an important one because it is very strategic through our bi-lateral relationship, especially in our effort to ramp up the economy and trade relationships so that post will not be ignored anymore.

On the delegations that have visited Dubai, Dubai and the United Arab Emirates will be the melting pot in my view. It will be the melting pot of global business, commerce and trade, just as Singapore was in the last 20 to 40 years. There is a shift to commerce and trade being headquarters, centres in and around Dubai and United Arab Emirates (UAE's).

This year Dubai hosted the World Trade Expo and PNG was given a slot. We took that slot coordinated by our mission in Belgium and our Deputy Prime Minister headed the delegation as well as a number of ministers including, the Minister of Agriculture and the team, and the Late Minister, William Samb, who has passed on.

I would like to assure this House that the trip was worth it. We are looking for places of export, trade and commerce that can be centred in. Dubai will emerge as a pivotal central point of commerce and trade and global economy point of influence especially at Abu Dhabi and Doha in Dubai. You could also go down to Africa; go back to Central Asia and come back to East Asia or go to Europe.

It is a very strategic place and we intend to make greater relationship in person and in business and also to build government relationship with those countries. Our Deputy Prime Minister who is the head of this delegation will make a statement to the country. In fact, he is preparing a Cabinet report on what was achieved and that will come in due course.

We also intend to ramp up our own presence in that melting pot of commerce and trade. I just gave us indications of what had happened. The Minister for Agriculture has indicated that their level of bio-security measures is far lesser than some of our neighbouring countries. For instance, in the area of coffee, according to the Minister of Agriculture, we can be able to bring coffee over to Dubai and they will give us a slot for us to process them there and sell right throughout the world with PNG label around the products.

In those contexts, those visits were made in order to capitalise on the high exposure. So Dubai Trade Expo was a good one and that's what it will do to the global business communities. Our Deputy Prime Minister did a good job by successfully leading the delegation to that event. Unfortunately, it was also a sad one as the Ministers for Commerce passed away on that trip, but overall, it was productive. We have established government relations and business contacts so that PNG's exposure to the world of commerce and trade can be centred not only in our shores, but to target the world trade going into a new millennium.

Mr Deputy Speaker, our report is coming in due course. I just want to thank the Opposition Leader for raising these sensitive issues on an important need which is to ensure our mission posts are given due support.

05/01

Sir PETER IPATAS – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I also want to take this opportunity to join the Opposition Leader to pass my condolences and sorrow for the passing of the late Minister, the Honourable William Samb to his family, his electorate and of course Pangu Pati.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my question is directed to my brother and Minister for Health the Honourable Jelta Wong. I want to take this opportunity today to acknowledge and appreciate the government led by former Prime Minister, the Honourable Peter O'Neill in securing a loan from Exim Bank which was used to start the construction of the much-publicized Enga Provincial Hospital project.

I also want to put it on record today that this project is running at least 12 months late on the initial schedule because the previous government was not able to meet the 15 per cent counterpart funding that is required to be paid on behalf of the State. Since the change of government, the Honourable Prime Minister James Marape, Treasurer and Minister for Health tried to accelerate and assist the provincial government and the people of Enga in progressing this very important project.

Let me remind this Parliament and people of this nation, that it is the first provincial hospital to be built after Independence. All the hospitals were built prior to Independence.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the previous and current government for their continuous support and for giving us confidence as a province to deliver on this very important project. Because of the past government's inability to provide the initial counterpart funding, we are late by 12 months, but thanks to the current Government, we have progressed and coped up and hopefully the hospital will be operational and ready for use by the end of this year.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to share my concerns with the members of Parliament, building the hospital is a good idea, but the building of infrastructure is just as important as getting the manpower and equipment to make it operational.

So, Mr Deputy Speaker, my question to the good Minister is this;

This is the first hospital we are building as a nation,

Can the Minister direct his department to work with our people on the ground in Enga province?

This is so that we can utilize this massive investment by the nation to actually provide healthcare service to our people. So, it is critical now for your department to take a lead trying to find out what kind of services we need to provide from this new infrastructure.

Otherwise, Mr Deputy Speaker, what I see is that, we will have a white elephant up there and the usage may not equal the effort and the resource that we are putting. So as a province we know where to go but it is important

06/01

As a province we know where to go but it is important that the Department of Health actually takes ownership and takes the lead so that we can also help. I can tell you that this hospital in Enga can also assist the whole nation in meeting some of the critical care needs in the country.

As a province Enga has six district hospitals that are functional but they are not up to the very best standards but we are prepared as a province; realizing the big investment that the National Government has made to make sure that this facility is available to the country.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER- Honourable Governor can you make your statement short and put your question to the Minister?

Mr PETER IPATAS – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Not many stood up to ask questions so why don't you just let me keep going for a while? It is so important and critical, this is a big investment so I am asking the Minister. It sure will be a challenge and this is the first one why don't we make this one work to serve the country and then the idea about our government having all these provincial hospitals will actually work.

I am trying to make sure that the Minister does take note of what I am trying to say so that we can take ownership of this big investment.

Mr JELTA WONG – Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. I thank the good Governor of Enga. The Enga Provincial Hospital is the pinnacle of health infrastructure in our country. It will be the number one hospital outside of Port Moresby and we have already looked into specialized products that will go into the hospital as well as looking at the specialized areas where we need to equip the hospital, to use it at its best capability.

The options that we have are both domestic and international and we have already spoken to many of our foreign partners as well as on the domestic front on what will entail to have such a great hospital in Enga which will not only service the whole region but the country as well due to the sheer size of it and the expertise that we are putting into the Enga provincial hospital.

This government has been ensuring that health service is a number one priority and as the governor has said, the government has put a lot of effort into ensuring that infrastructure for health is a priority and with that we are also planning to look overseas to bring in people with specialized skills to make sure the hospital runs perfectly. And we hope by the end of the year, the government puts a lot of money into the provincial hospital as you can see in this year's Budget. and we hope to make sure that the hospital becomes a priority, thank you.

Supplementary Question

Kimbe Provincial Hospital

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker I thank the Prime Minister for his visit to Kimbe where we did the ground-breaking ceremony for Kimbe Provincial Hospital.

Can the Minister update us on the construction of the Kimbe Provincial Hospital through arrangement with European Union funding?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, that question is not a supplementary, it is a new question that you asked. Since you have already asked it, I will ask the Minister to respond.

07/01

Mr JELTA WONG – I thank the Governor of West New Britain for his question.

It is ironic that today we spoke to members from the departments of Treasury, Health and National Planning and Monitoring to ensure that the project goes ahead. We spoke to the European Union people that arrived last week and we have just started up a few issues with the Treasury Department. We will make an announcement as to when they will start work in the coming months.

Kupiano Water Supply

Sir PUKA TEMU – I wish to direct my question to the Minister for State-Owned Enterprises but since he is not here, I will ask the Prime Minister.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is in relation to the Kupiano Town Water Project. Eight years ago, the Abau District Development Authority invested K300 000 to Water PNG in the hope to counterpart the World Bank funding so that Kupiano can have a reliable water supply to its residence and the new hospital that we are about to open.

While I was still in Cabinet, I was informed by the Minister that the Cabinet did approve the action plan for Water PNG between 2008 and 2012 and again in 2018. In that plan was the Kupiano Water Supply. The cost was between K10 million to K14 million so we therefore gave our K300 000 as counterpart funding.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in December 2021, Kumul Consolidated Holding or KCH issued K10 million to the Central Provincial Government for water supplies in Central province for unplanned water projects while Kupiano has been waiting for almost 10 years now.

Mr Deputy Speaker, when will that project be implemented? If not, then can we have our K300 000 reimbursed?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – I thank the Member for Abau for his question. I will get the KCH through to the Minister to find out what has happened. You may not need to withdraw that K300 000 because we will follow up and make sure that Kupiano gets what it was originally earmarked for.

Fix Rabaul-Kokopo Road

Mr NAKIKUS KONGA – I wish to direct my question to the Minister for Works.

At the outset, Mr Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the people of East New Britain and the provincial government, I would like to say thank you to our good Minister for Works for the K13.8 million worth of machines. This has helped us a lot with the program for Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). I appeal to him that he gives a duty direction to the Department of Works so my provincial government can fully utilise those machines.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I think this will be my third time to stand here in Parliament and ask again about our roads in the province. The Kokopo-Rabaul road is an important road in East New Britain and it comes under the National Government. We have heard that we are spending hundreds of millions to connecting Papua New Guinea but this simple road of my province sits unattended. It is the responsibility of the National Government to fix this road.

08/01

After the flooding in 2018, we made a submission to the national government to fix that road.

Of course, some roads from Kokopo to Kerevat are being well looked after but this economic road from Rabaul to Kokopo is deteriorating.

When will the Minister fund this road and fix it because it is a national government road?

Thank you.

Mr MICHAEL NALI – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I thank the governor of East New Britain for these two important questions.

The first question is related to the equipment that JICA has given to us as a grant, especially to the provinces affected by the disaster.

The East New Britain province received its equipment and that will also cater for other New Guinea Islands. This equipment is for the government and does not belong to either the East New Britain provincial government or any members of the districts. It is for us to utilise it. So, if the provincial government and the district government have some money and want to use the PTB equipment, then the provincial works managers, engineers and the officers are there to assist. You can discuss with them to assist you with the equipment with the little money you have.

The Works Department will not release the equipment to do a private work. They are PTB equipment and they are government equipment so government will use the equipment to do the work. All we need to do is, discuss with the provincial works manager and engineers, put some money for fuel and work together with them.

I don't know why my officers at Department of Works in East New Britain are finding it difficult to assist the provincial government and the district governments for that matter. I will find out but the two things we need to do are; firstly, if you have money, go and discuss with the provincial works managers and engineers as they are there to serve you. If you don't have money, then where do you think they will get the money from to assist you. It will be difficult for us to release the equipment for private companies to operate. We will not release them because these are government's equipment and the government has its own operators to operate them. Secondly, the road leading from Kokopo to Rabaul,

Mr Deputy Speaker, we all travel through that road and the governor is correct in saying that this road has deteriorated. Successive governments have not funded enough money to improve this road.

As the Minister for Works, I come in at the end of the government process. My duty is to build a road and the money needed must come from the source of a river and I receive it at the mouth of the river, so to speak. When there is a money, I build a road, if not, it's hard for me. I won't tell lies, if our government had funded some money for road maintenance in the country, then it's not a problem, we would have done all these road maintenances.

Mr Deputy Speaker, when the Gazzelle Restoration Program began, a lot of money went into that road but when you travel through that road, the governor is telling the truth. We have allocated some money to fix the road from Tokua to Kokopo. The government did put some money to maintain the road from Kokopo to Vudal but from Kokopo to Rabaul, it is true that the government has neglected it.

So, Mr Deputy Speaker, if the government allocates some money, I would like to assure the governor that I will assist him.

09/01

I will think of you but I have to inform you that the money that I will allocate will not fully rehabilitate this section of the road, but will only cater for minor work to be done like clearing the bush and grading it if possible. I am just waiting for the Government to allocate some funds for this remaining months before the elections commences. We did receive some

warrants already for which the Government had promised to fund. But it's good that you asked the question at the right time and I will try my best.

As I speak, the Secretary for the Department of Works and Implementation is listening also. We will assist you but we have to discuss and you will have to contribute half and we can put half for the work to commence.

Access to COP26 Funds

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. On behalf of the people of Oro, I wish to pass my sincere condolences to the family of the late William Samb, the people of Goilala that he represented very well, the Pangu Party and indeed the people of PNG who have lost a great leader. He was small in size but he was a giant as a leader.

So much negativity has often been said about leaders of Parliament, but I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the good work that the late Honourable William Samb carried out vigorously whilst he was the Member of Parliament in various capacities.

I want to put on record that he was a man who was very punctual and disciplined in the business of the Government. As a leader he was always early and he met the expectations of his electorates and people with dignity and great energy and we will all miss him here. I echo Opposition Leaders' sentiments in acknowledging the type of leader that the Honourable William Samb was and the exemplary leadership that he demonstrated for all of us here.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to direct my questions to the Minister for Environment, Conservation and Climate Change.

In this nation we house the third largest rainforest in the world we own 0.05 per cent of the world's real estate but house seven per cent of the world's biodiversity producing enough oxygen for 80 million people. That's something which we should be proud of. Twenty-five per cent of the world are forest people, we are forest people. And yesterday was International Forest Day and it was designated International Forest Day on the 28 November 2012. I would like to state that we should make an effort to celebrate this day as a forest nation every year. I also want the relevant ministers of Government to take note so that this date can be recorded and celebrated every year as forest people. I know that the good Minister for Forest is taking note and he will ensure that this happens when he returns.

At the COP26, it was announced that a total of \$17 billion Dollars was allocated for forest nations to curb illegal deforestation by putting in place policies to protect, conserve and preserve forest environment.

(1) What efforts has the Minister undertaken to ensure that PNG is first in line to have access to these funds?

Stop Work Notice

The second question is in relation to illegal logging in Collingwood Bay, which is an issue before the court, however this specific matter is not before the court. It's in relation to pollution of the waterways for which I presented a report to the Minister and he actually issued a stop work notice using his powers and a notice was given for the company to stop logging and pay a fine.

10/01

But they have not taken note of this and are continuing to log illegally, continue to trespass and continue to pollute the waters there.

(2) What will the Minister do about this now? Is it now the trend that we must issue fines and warnings but then ignore them when they ignore our laws; what do we do? Can the Minister advise us on what his department is doing about this particular transgression that is continuing and ongoing by that particular company in my province?

Thank you.

Mr WERA MORI – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Governor for asking his questions. But before I do that, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of my family and the people of Chuave to convey our sincere condolences to the late Minister for Commerce and Industry. In fact, he was a Minister that spoke very little but what he achieved spoke volumes.

Coming back to the series of questions, arising out of Cop-26, I have a ministerial statement that I will present during this meeting of Parliament which will basically outline some of that steps that we are taking to address some of the issues that he has raised. But, since he has raised those questions, I would like to inform the members of Parliament that we have concluded our framework as to how the State will benefit and participate and grow from this US\$100 billion that has been allocated as part of global climate funds. Under the framework there will be a structure that is elaborative because today and under Reducing emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) we have brought the voluntary carbon sales arrangements and also we have the compliance arrangements.

In terms of the voluntary carbon arrangements these arrangements are done by the landowners who of course own the resources. They themselves engage with developers outside of the country and come with an arrangement as to how they would want to go and participate in carbon trading. The arrangement that we are advocating and the fact that this will be designed as part of this framework is so that the State will glow back, simply because under the present arrangement the State has no visibility under the voluntary arrangements as well as any other forms of activities going on. This is the reason why we have come up with this framework which I am pretty sure my department will be presenting to CACC to come into Cabinet.

Under that framework, it will spell out whether you go under voluntary carbon sales or under the compliance of valuing value all our carbon stock in this country.

Mr Gary Juffa – Point of Order! Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

The question has nothing to do with carbon trade. In fact, I have a series of questions about carbon trade and how that industry has been fully managing this country and I will ask these questions during this week. But the questions I asked now are in relation to what the Minister is doing now about the US\$ 17 billion that was offered for forestry purposes, forestry nations, etcetera. And the other question was; what is the Minister doing about the stop work notices that he has issued for the illegal logging in my province by a company operating illegally in Collinwood Bay of which the company has completely ignored this notice and continues to work with complete contempt and defiance of our laws; that is evil. If he can just answer these questions and hold his comments for the carbon trading matters for later because I will ask him a series of questions for that particular industry and how it has been fully managed by his department.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, you seem to be repeating your questions again.

Honourable Minister, question time has lapsed.

11/01

Mr WERA MORI - This is how the State will grow and have access to those \$17 B dollars and any other funds that are there out in the world as part of global climate funds. This is the framework that is going to come before Cabinet that will basically spell that out. This

will prevent cowboys from coming in through the back door, through the windows and up to the roof.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in regards to the second question, my department has penalized them. But they are operating with a permit that has been granted by Forestry Department. I cannot assume the responsibility of the Forest Minister and terminate the permits because, this is not within my mandate.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION REPORT 2021 – PAPER AND STATEMENT – MOTION TO ADOPT PAPER

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari Pori – Prime Minister and Minister for Bougainville Affairs) – I present the Report pursuant to Statute:

Electoral Boundaries Commission Report 2021.

I move –

That the Report and its recommendations be adopted.

Mr Deputy Speaker, today marks a significant day in the history of our country where I stand before this honourable House of our people with the greatest humility and honour to present the 2021 Electoral Boundaries Commission reports, recommendations and maps.

Our forefathers in their wisdom in crafting out the foundations of our *Constitution* envisioned in Goal No. 2 of the National Goals and Directive Principles, that it is the goal of every Government to ensure that all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the development of our country.

In doing so, they also foresaw the need for fair representation of our people on the floor of Parliament in light of our growing population by laying the foundation for periodical reviews of electoral boundaries every 10 years under *Section 125* of the *Constitution*. The Electoral Boundaries Commission is mandated constitutionally to carry out these reviews and to make the appropriate recommendations to Parliament.

The first Electoral Boundaries Report and Recommendations were approved by Parliament in 1977 which resulted in the creation of the current 89 Open Electorates.

Mr Deputy Speaker, each and every member of this House has to bear in mind that our population increases after every 10 years. In 1977, our total population was 2.3 million. Currently, it is estimated that our population has grown to over 8 million people, an increase by 300% percent. However, since the first Electoral Boundaries Report and Recommendations were approved by Parliament in 1977, the number of Open Electorates in the Country has remained the same.

Other reviews and recommendations were done by the Electoral Boundaries Commission in 1981, 1986, 1991 and 2006. All these reports and recommendations were rejected by Parliament. From 1977 to 2021, the boundaries of the Open Electorates have not been altered or changed to coincide with the population growth. This has created a situation where successive governments have not been meeting Goal Number 2 of the National Goals and Directive Principles, where all our citizens should participate equally in and benefit from the development of our country.

For example, according to the 2011 National Census, Laigap Pogera has a total population of 158, 873 people, on the other hand, Rabaul has a total population of 39, 837 people.

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With the disparity in population, both electorates still receive the same DSIP funds and National Government allocations. This is the inequality faced because of our growing population at the moment.

Mr Speaker, in June 2021, the EBC started the review exercises on all provinces in the country which was concluded in November 2021. The 2021 EBC Report and recommendation have been compiled and is now ready for presentation in Parliament for Parliament's consideration. In accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government Elections*, the EBC was rolled out in the following manner:'

(a) On June and July 2021, awareness on stakeholders was conducted where their views and submissions were invited.

(b) On July 2021 to September 2021, field work, public inquiries and consultations were conducted nationwide on all 22 provinces in the country.

(c) On October 2021 to November 2021, a draft public inquiry report was compiled and the public was invited to make final submissions.

(d) On November 2021, the EBC compiled its report and recommendations with draft maps demonstrating changes in boundaries.

Mr Speaker, the main consideration in the EBC report and recommendations is the population factor apart from geography. From the exercise conducted, the EBC made a finding that 89 of the current electorates based on population density may qualify for new open electorates. However, given the limited number of electorates allowed under the Constitution and the Organic Law, only the top 13 electorates with the highest population density were recommended for the creation of new electorates.

From these 13 electorates, the EBC has consulted with the Electoral Commission, where the Electoral Commission has indicated that it is not prepared and it is unable to conduct elections for all of the 13 proposed new electorates in the 2022 National General Elections.

After further consultation with the Electoral Commission, the EBC has recommended the following seven electorates to be redistributed and for elections of each of these electorates to be conducted in the 2022 National General Elections: The proposed new electorates to be split from existing electorates, those that qualify with no administrative changes are as follows;

1. Split of Middle – Fly to create a proposed Delta Fly Electorate, of which Balimo Urban LLG, Baimuru LLG, Aramia Gogodala LLG and Fly Gogodala LLG would be created. In 2011, the population was 50,859 in this specific area. The projected population in 2021 is more than 67,000.
2. The second electorate proposed for split is Kairiku – Hiri, for the creation of Hiri – Koiari Electorate. The Hiri Rural LLG and the Koiari LLG would form the new electorate. The population as at 2011 was 63,016. The population projected at 2021 is 87,000, based on a three per cent population growth. The next LLG to be included in the Kairiku Hiri Electorate would have been the Vanapa - Brown. I have omitted that in my recommendation for the split of Kairiku – Hiri.
3. The third electorate proposed would be the split of Ijivitari to create the Popondetta Electorate. The Popondetta Urban LLG, the Oro Bay LLG, the Higitaru LLG in parts of ward 22 to 28 have been recommended. Popondetta LLG population at 2011 was 72,000 and has a forecast on the growth in population in 2021 to be at 74,000.
4. The Talasea Electorate is to be split to create the Nakanai Electorate. The recommendations of proposed LLGs to be in Nakanai Electorate includes Hoskins Rural LLG, Mosa Rural LLG, Central Nakanai LLG and East Nakanai LLG.

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	Existing Electorate	Proposed New Electorate	LLGs and Wards	2011 Population	Projected Population 2021
1.	Middle Fly	Delta Fly	Balimo Urban LLCJ Bamu Rural LLG Aramia Gogodala LLG Fl Go odalaLLG	50,859	67,000
2.	Kairiku Hiri	Hiri Koiari	Hiri Rural LLG Koiari Rural LLG Vana a Brown LLG	63,016	87,000
3.	Ijivitari	Popondetta	Popondetta Urban LLG Oro Bay LLG Higaturu LLG (part) Wards 22-28	72,001	74,000
4.	Talasea	Nakanai	Hoskins Rural LLG Mosa Rural LLG Central Nakanai Rural LLG East Nakanai Rural LLG	122,418	165,000
5.	Bulolo	Wau Waria	Wau Rural LLG Waria Rural LLG Wau Urban LLG	44, 142	55,000
6.	Komo/Magarima	Komo Hulia	Lower Wage Rural LLG Upper Wage Rural LLG	35,604	48,000
7.	Lagaip-Porgera	Porgera Paiela	Paiela Hewa Rural LLG Porgera Rural LLG Porgera Urban LLG Mai Mulitaka Rural LLG	84,242	126,000

The Talasea Electorate will be split to create the Nakanai Electorate. The recommendations of proposed LLG's to be in Nakakanai includes Hoskins Rural LLG, Mosa Rural LLG, Central and East Nakanai LLG which had a population of 122, 418 in 2011 and today it is forecast to be more than 165,000.

A split of Bulolo into Wau and Waria creating three electorates which are Wau Rural LLG, Waria Rural LLG and Wau Urban LLG. They had a population of 44,142 in 2011 to 55,000 plus population in 2021. Please note that this is an important strategic economic district in the context of many activities and the many issues which had happened in this part of our country. They have been given due consideration because they have a big electorate with huge economic activities that are happening there, especially in the Hidden Valley, Wafi-Golpu Mines and the issues that emerges with both Wau and Bulolo. So according to those factors, they were considered and qualified for a split in their district.

The next district recommended for split will be Komo-Magarima which is the host of the LNG Project. Their new district would be called Komo Hulia which will then look after Lower Wage Rural LLG and Upper Wage Rural LLG with a population of 35,604 in 2011 to 48,000 in 2021.

The next big electorate that will split will is Lagaip-Porgera. Porgera Gold Mine will be on its own and the district will be called Porgera Paiela. They will have Paiela Hewa Rural LLG, Porgera Rural LLG, Porgera Urban LLG and Mai Multaka Rural LLG with a population of 84,242 in 2011 and more than 126,000 in 2021.

The EBC has also recommended for the following six (6) electorates to be redistributed and for the creation of the six (6) new electorates below to come into effect in 2027:

No.	Existing Electorate	Proposed New Electorates	LLGs & Wards	2011 Population	2027 Proposed
1.	Alotau	Baniara	Makamaka Rural LLG Daga Rural LLG Weraura Rural LLG	59,142	78,800
2.	Moresby North West	Motu Koitabu	Motu Koitabu Wards	45,365	61,000
3.	Gazelle	Baining	Inland Baining Rural LLG Lassul Baining Rural LLG - Sinivit Rural LLG	59,483	79,000
4.	Angoram	Middle Sepik	Angoram/Middle sepik Rural LLG - Karawari Rural LLG	39,581	52,642
5.	Imbonggu	Mendi Central	- Lower Mendi LLG - Mendi Urban	53,959	71,000

6.	Anglimp South Wa hi	Anglimp	Anglimp LLG	100,306	133,000
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Mr Deputy Speaker, whilst these proposed new electorates have fully satisfied the criteria for distribution, the Electoral Commission has advised the EBC that they are not prepared and are unable to conduct elections for these new electorates in the upcoming 2022 National General Elections.

The EBC has therefore recommended that the elections for these proposed new electorates be conducted in the 2027 National General Elections. It is also important to note the constructional restrictions of the number of open seats and therefore the need for the 11th Parliament to undertake constitutional amendments to allow the total number of electorates to go past 120.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this proposed new electorates have been recommended by the EBC based on the National Census carried out in 2011. However, the projected population has increased over time.

The National Executive Council has also highlighted the need to ensure that proper census is conducted to ensure that the population figures are close to the correct figures for decisions to be made on electoral boundaries.

If approved by Parliament, the elections for the proposed new electorates; Delta Fly, Hiri Koiari, Popondetta, Nakanai, Wau Wari, Komo Hulua and Porgera Paiela will be held in the 2022 National General Elections and these electorates will be implemented and functioning thereafter.

The elections for the proposed new electorates; Baniara, Motu Koitabu, Baining, Middle Sepik and Mendi Central, and Anglimp will be held in 2027 onwards. It is important that in making that recommendation, Parliament is aware that it can only be done once the requisite amendments are made to the *Constitution* to increase the number of open seats from the present maximum of 120 to an appropriate number, in order to give room for new electorates to be created.

Mr Deputy Speaker, having said that, with the greatest honour, I now present the 2021 Electoral Boundaries Commission Reports and recommendations and the maps before Parliament for tabling and approval.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

14/01

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA (Vanimu-Green) – I move –

That Parliament take note of Paper.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I appreciate the Electoral Boundaries Commission Report 2021 and the presentation by Prime Minister to the Parliament. While, I appreciate the good intention of the Prime Minister and his government. I wish to ask very critical questions.

Firstly, I do not know which census report on our population the Prime Minister or the Electoral Boundary Commission is basing their statistic on. As far as I know, we have not conducted any census to be able to ascertain what accurate population is found in those existing electorates, wards, LLGs and in the country. Even on the Floor of Parliament, we work on a guess work. Some of us say, we have eight and half million people, others say we have ten million people. We do not know the accurate population of our country. We are just basing our numbers on guess work. That is how successive governments and this government have failed our people, to be able to tell us the exact and accurate population of our country.

Mr Deputy Speaker, to be able to develop any country, we must have accurate census and data of our population, so that we can distribute those services to our people. We have not conducted a national census; we do not know exact population per wards; we do not know exact population per LLGs; we do not know the exact population per districts in our country. So, how can we deliver equitably the resources of our country.

I have seen and witness in the last 15 years of my tenure in Parliament that sometimes or if not, all of the time, some electorates are getting more money than other electorates; some wards are getting more money than other wards; some LLGs are getting money than other LLGs. Here, we are trying to create extra wards, but look at reality. Just today, I asked the question about our Head of Mission needing funds to function.

Creating new wards, LLGs and districts involve cost. Where are you going to get all these monies to fund new wards, LLGs, and districts. And here, we hear the Prime Minister telling us through this report that some of these electorates are going to hold elections this year.

We have to create a new office of the new Member of Parliament and the create new district office for the new CEO of the district to function. We have to create new office for the new district finance manager and all the public servant involved and it all involves costs. How can you be able to budget appropriately? We have not even captured these electorates in the 2022 Budget. This just a wishful thinking.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we have not even captured it. Now we are asking Australia to fund our 2022 National General Elections. For goodness sake, we are an independent country, we have been independent for the past 46 years.

Mr James Marape – Point of Order! With respect to the very lenient Opposition Leader, Australian is not funding our national election. They are assisting us in some aspects of the National Elections not more than five or six percent of what is required for election. They are just assisting us and not funding the national election.
Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – The Honourable Opposition Leader, please resume your debate on the statement presented.

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – If they are not funding then, we are going out there and trying to borrow to fund our election.

Mr Deputy Speaker, but the fact is this, we can't deliver the DSIPs and PIPs on time. Well, if they do get it on time then maybe they are the members of the government side and not the members on the opposition side, let me get this straight.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we cannot deliver the existing roads, just today, the Minister for Works has said, he had no money, in response to the Governor of East New Britain Province.

This not about creating new districts, LLGs, and wards. It's about the prudent financial management of a government of the day.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we have to define the standard of financial management in our country. It's not about creating new districts, so we can deliver service. Papua New Guinea has not expanded in size, population may have grown. Prior to Independence and after Independence, airstrips were maintained, there were very good roads, hospitals were functioning and there was no passing of big Budgets.

Today, we are passing K17 billion to K18 billion, and this year is K22 billion, yet we are still looking for medicines in our hospitals, there are no beds in our wards, our schools are suffering, even the teachers and health workers are not getting paid on time.

Here, we are trying to create new seats for Members of Parliament. Its not about creating new seats for Parliament or creating new district headquarters. It's about the lack of prudent financial management in our country by successive governments.

15/01

We have created too many white elephants in the SOE. We are creating jobs for the boys, I never did that because, I was never a Prime Minister. I was only in there for less than 12 months. Who created all these and now that is becoming costly. Creating jobs for the boys, let us look at the agriculture sector, there are too many boards and too many CEOs in that sector alone.

You have no idea, Mr minister, you are just carrying the title around and you do not know your job.

(Members interjecting!)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Order! Order! Honorable Members, let the Opposition Leader finish his statement.

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – Mr Deputy Speaker, I will debate against creating any new electorate, new districts and new wards in the country. We have to first get the management of our economy straightened. Our first priority should be the management of our economy. For instance, when building a road worth K10 million we are raising its value to K100 million, so we can get cuts out of it and so that is where all the money is going.

And when we are building a hospital worth K3 million we inflate the cost up to K15 million, this is a fact that is dragging us down.

Mr Rainbo Paita – Point of Order! He shouldn't be making allegations and insinuations. If he has facts about a hospital being built and there is inflation of that contract or any other contract for that matter, he should present the facts. He can't just make statements or allegations like that on the Floor.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honorable Minister, your Point of Order, is in order. I will ask the Opposition Leader to.

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – I will give a fact. About K2 billion is parked under his discretion for this years' budget. This K2 billion is unbudgeted, it is not itemized but this amount is parked under the Minister for National Planning.

Mr Salio Waipo - Point of Order! Can we not start pointing fingers on the Floor of Parliament? Can the Leader of the Opposition talk about his electorate Vanim-Green? Please help build that hospital, we are both from Sepik, I have assisted to build my hospital, what have you done for your electorate?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Member, you have not raised a point of order but you are trying to debate against your colleague Member.

Mr James Marape -Point of Order! The Opposition Leader, said that K2 billion is parked under the planning Minister's discretion which is not true. Can he correct himself. These are program funds and there are no discretion funds for the Planning Minister to that amount. Can the Opposition Leader rephrase or correct himself?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honorable Opposition Leader, since the Prime Minister has clarified this; can you get your debate around the point of the electoral boundaries.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – Mr Deputy Speaker, if I have not read the budget books, correctly, there is K2 billion in National Planning under the discretion of the Planning Minister. Any way let me get to the point. We are here worried about creating new LLGs, new districts and new wards but I do not know how we are going to fund these new creations as we have a debt of K53 billion and we are now creating another cost.

We are going to be worried about the cost of paying new Members of Parliament and creating new public service, the new district administrators who are coming in, new finance managers and all the staff that are involved. I do not know where we are going to get the money to cater for all of these when we have not facilitated the Papua LNG to come on board and you have stopped the operational mine in Porgera and gold price is US\$2,000 per ounce. And when we have stopped the low hanging fruit; can I borrow these phrase from the Prime Minister from Waffi-Golpu; where are we going to generate the revenue from?

We are living on borrowed time and borrowed life; we are in ICU as a country.

Mr Tomait Kapili – Point of Order! The Opposition Leader seems to be arguing on issues surrounding the economy of the country. A country's economic base is on its population, the people. Here the presentation is on the Electoral Boundaries Commission, this matters to the population of this country.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Honorable Member, if you are trying to make a statement regarding the economy of the country.

(Member interjecting!)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honorable Member, the Chair is still talking. If you want to make a statement in relation to the Opposition Leaders statement I will not allow you to do so.

Mr Tomait Kapili – Mr Deputy Speaker, I just want to let the Opposition Leader know that the agenda here is Electoral Boundaries not on the economy or other issues of the country.

16/01

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - I will allow for other members to debate later. For now, I will give the time to the Leader of Opposition to make his debate.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA (Vanimu-Green) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The need here is not about creating new wards, LLGs and districts. The need here is about fixing police barracks, fixing military barracks, fixing the living conditions of our teachers and health workers throughout the country, increasing their salaries and their living standards. It is about lifting the standard of their accommodation, fixing the classrooms, fixing the health centres, making sure that there are enough beds in the wards, making sure that there are enough medicines. That is the need.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the need is not about increasing LLGs, wards and districts because we are just increasing costs. We are not worried about our public servants who have been crying for better conditions in this country. This is where the real need is.

It is not about Honourable James Marape being the Prime Minister and increased wards. I want people to remember that when Honourable James Marape was the Prime Minister, he fixed all hospitals in this country. He fixed the roads in this country.

(Yeah! Yeah!)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – We have a Point of Order. Honourable Member for Ijivitari, what is your point of order?

Mr Richard Masere – I think the creation of these additional districts is to address these issues that he is talking about. If you look at Ijivitari, it is 12 700 square kilometres as opposed to Wabag which is only 1 090 square kilometres. We are trying to address these issues across the districts by allowing the new districts to come in which would allow us members to correctly service these districts.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I will allow you to make your debate later as your electorate has been mentioned in the report. The more you all raise points of order; you will make the Opposition Leader repeat himself so please allow him to finish his debate. Thank you.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – That point of order that you just ruled out of order is a total fallacy. It is a false belief.

Mr Deputy Speaker, what I am talking about is reality. You go into Gordon Police Barracks; it is in an appalling state. Go to the Murray Barracks, it should have been condemned a long time ago. You cannot live in those barracks. Our personnel do not even have three pairs of uniform to wear to perform their duties. We just pulled out a mobile squad from Hela because they have not been paid their allowances. These are the facts that I am talking about.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am appealing to all you Members of Parliament to not support this Bill. Don't support it because you have to follow the Prime Minister. You have to look at it very carefully and at the cost involved in creating these new electorates and administrations. It is not a joke but the reality of where we are. We can't even manage the existing problems that we have and now we are creating more for ourselves. When we cannot deal with our problems, we tend to blame successive governments. Let us stop blaming the successive governments and start doing something about our problems. Who was in the successive governments? Let's ask those questions.

(Members – You!)

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – I was there for 12 months only. I did not have the benefit of seven years or three years. It is on record and everybody knows how long I was there. Give me an opportunity and you will see how I will run this country.

(Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!)

Mr BELDEN NAMAH – Give me that opportunity because I will start to address the real needs of our people and not create problems for them. We are looking away from our people's need. Our kids cannot attend school. This year, we put K600 million and we had to ask our foreign partners to assist in funding those free education program.

17/01

We will continue to borrow and borrow. As a country, we are like the patients at the ICU that are living on life support. This is not fun, it is fact. You don't have to be an accountant or an economist to know all these.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we should stop all these nonsenses of creating too many costs for ourselves. We should look at the reality on addressing our existing problems and improve the standards of our people's lives. We need to make sure that we build hydro facilities so we can supply both water and electricity at the same time, not creating a new Member of Parliament. It comes with all the facts and privileges. That's where the cost is going to be. You said, you going to use this to deliver service, I tell you on this Floor of Parliament on 22 March 2022, you will never fix those problems. You will just create more problems, mark my ward. You want to create more problems for ourselves as a country.

Let's look at the reality, conduct a proper census, based on the proper census, you have the data then distribute the services equitably. It's not building one hospital in the country and leaving the rest out. Not building roads and sealing one section of the road in the country and leaving the rest out. We have to be equitable. It's in the preamble of our *Constitution*, fair and equal distribution of wealth then we improve the standard of lives of our people. It's not about creating new wards, LLGs, and districts. I go against it. Our roads are in bad conditions and that's where the money should be going.

We should be cutting down some of those jobs in Agriculture Department. We should be cutting those white elephants in SOEs. There's no need for them. We appoint CEOs and chairman and they are living in luxury and yet our teachers, health workers, police personnel,

Defence force personnel, CIS personnel and our foreign missions are still crying for money. They don't have the services, telephones are cut and now we are trying to create more problems.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am really sad that Prime Minister, in his wisdom could bring this paper to the Floor of Parliament. I would have rejected it outside before even bringing it in, because there is no point to bring this to the Floor of Parliament.

The new seats that you said are going to have elections in 2022, where is the office of the new Member of Parliament? You have to relocate this Parliament again. Where is the office of the district administrator in that district? Jiwaka and Hela provinces are still struggling to create a province. There is no headquarter in Jiwaka as we speak. I flew over it. You only saw a grading over there, trying to create the Jiwaka Provincial Government. There is no building and infrastructure. It's a joke in its part 12 or 15 years ago to create Hela and Jiwaka provinces.

Mr William Tongap – Point of Order! Mr Deputy Speaker, I just want to make mention here that I have a province existing. It is ten years old and I have functions of all government operating. I have a provincial headquarter and I have everything other provinces in the country have. Its misleading for the Opposition Leader to make this statement on the Floor of Parliament.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, your Point of Order is in order. I'll ask the Opposition Leader to correct his statement as you have alluded to.

Mr BELDEN NAMAHA – I don't know if there is a provincial headquarter in Jiwaka but I've flown over it just four weeks ago so I don't know where it is. I have seen some ground work by some bulldozers and graders and some dumping of gravels but no provincial headquarters.

What I am saying is, why create all these new electorates and new districts when we cannot fully function the Jiwaka and Hela provinces. When we cannot fully function the existing provinces and the districts.

18/01

We cannot even fully equip our hospital, universities, teachers and nursing colleges. We should be discussing about these issues and allocating funds rather than creating new wards, LLGs and districts in the country.

It's simply a waste of money with no benefit to our country. It creates more costs and will put more burden on the next government to borrow more money to ensure that all these respective offices function. But no benefit will come from this creation of new LLGs. The idea of building new roads and schools is just a dream. The current hospitals and schools are not functioning and yet, you are trying to create this new white elephant in our country.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will vote against this bill because it's a bad legislative amendment brought to this Parliament, knowing fully well that we are on life-support at the ICU.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr SAM BASIL (Bulolo – Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Commerce and Industry) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Before I proceed, I acknowledge the Leader of Opposition's statement. The Opposition Leader is paid be negative and he is doing a good job.

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order! I will tell you honestly my friend, if I were in the Government side, I will still vote against this bill. It's not about being paid by the Opposition but I am talking about reality in this country. You are saying that because you are sitting there. You would be debating with me if you were on this side. But for me I will still oppose.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – I will rule you out of order.

Mr SAM BASIL (Bulolo-Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) – Mr Deputy Speaker, I will speak on Bulolo and not on Vanimo-Green.

Before I go on, I acknowledge the Boundaries Commission for Morobe Province. About four Parliaments ago, they made the recommendations to the Department for endorsement but it has been delayed. It's the wish of the Morobe Provincial Executive Council and the people including the Bulolo District to consider these amendments. And I want to highlight some of the situation in the district so Member for Vanimo-Green can understand.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the 2011 figure stated that we had 101 000 population. But when you consider the three per cent increase over the past 11 years, we will be on 160 000 but because we have migratory-citizens that fly-in and fly-out because of the alluvial mining, the population has increased to 200 000 in Bulolo District alone.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we have a total of 110 ward areas and three towns and we should have three mayors representing these three towns; Wau, Bulolo and (Zenang or Mumeng urban, yet we don't have mayors representing these three towns.

We have thousands of workers employed by Zenang Chicken in Mumeng and PNG Forest in Hidden Valley, Bulolo and Wau town as well. And soon the Wafi-Golpu project coming up will attract investors and people to go and work there.

Therefore, my district will be flooded with people if we allow this trend to continue. Therefore, we have to honor the wishes of the Morobe Provincial Executive Council and the Boundaries Commission of Morobe and I want Parliament to support these amendments.

There may be some minor issues in relation to separation of boundaries from the landowners. We can still deal with these minor issues today or in the future but I believe that this Government has the balls to bring it on the table to deal with today. The past Government never had the guts to do it.

Mr Belden Namah – Can you ask the learned Deputy Prime Minister to withdraw the unparliamentary language, you know we all have balls but that's not the right language to use on the Floor of Parliament.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

19/01

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Honourable Deputy Prime Minister, you mentioned earlier that the Leader of Opposition is always out of order but I think he is in order.

I will ask you to withdraw that.

Mr SAM BASIL – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

I will withdraw that. I cannot imagine that his imagination has gone far beyond, but I withdraw that word.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I believe that other members of parliament will be affected and their electorates will be affected and they will have something to say and I am sure they will support this.

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is timely now that this Bill is brought forward. The past parliaments were too scared to deal with it and the past members of parliament belonging to those districts were also too scared to deal with it. I say that we deal with this now because the next Parliament will have other matters to deal with. Our electorates have more than 30 000 and there are some electorates that have bigger land mass and more population or smaller land

mass and more population and I believe that in introducing these electoral split today will also fix those problems going forward.

I understand that we will have challenges as the Opposition Leader has said but I believe it's the job of the government to make sure we allocate resources and we make sure those people are fairly represented on the Floor of Parliament.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we are dealing with almost 200 000 people in my district and with K10 million, it is very difficult to throw resources everywhere to satisfy those 200 000 people. I am sure there are some electorates that have 50 000 or less and for sure I know they are happy.

Mr Deputy Speaker, for us in Bulolo, I have been struggling for the last 15 years to deliver services to my people, especially the Waria people of Garaina and the upper-Waria people that boarder with Goilala and Central Province and the Watut people that are bordering the Gulf province to Nukewa and Tekadu.

Mr Speaker, it will be many years before we put roads into those areas. The mountains are so rugged and I believe this split will enable them to have a representative on the Floor of Parliament and will enable them to benefit from the DSIP funding and also will enable them to take the responsibilities in building the roads in those areas. I tried for 15 years, I think it's about time now that my district deserves this. I ask all the Members of this Parliament to support this because the new Parliament will only deal with new matters. These matters belong to the old parliament and it's about four parliaments now, 20 years ago when the electoral boundaries of Morobe province were recommended but it was never taken on board. So I stand for the people of Waria and upper-Waria, Waururu and Wagang. I say we support this Bill.

Mr RICHARD MASERE (Ijivitari) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Before I contribute to this debate, on behalf of my people of Ijivitari, I convey our deepest sympathy and condolences to the people of Goilala and Central for the passing of our leader, late Honourable William Samb. He was a great leader, great character, someone that we can emulate through his character leadership styles and the way he conducted himself in Parliament.

So, on behalf of the people of Ijivitari, I would like to convey our deepest sympathy to his wife, children and his extended families and his people.

To add on this, I would like to support the statement of the Deputy Prime Minister concerning the split of the seven districts of this country. I think it's about time, it has been too long, the demand of our people is growing, the population of our people is growing and the

leadership must consider some ways of addressing the people needs and another way is to look at certain districts in order to support the demands of our people in this country.

The good Opposition leader might think that it is an expensive exercise but this is an exercise that has been vetted by the Government and the court has looked at it and by only introducing seven and not fifty is a manageable approach. Financially, it is achievable.

So, I support the Prime Minister in introducing these additional seven districts. I do not know about the good Opposition leader but in my district the land mass is about 12700 km². And if you are in a particular LLG, the other LLGs are crying out that they are not receiving services. I do not know about him but I just recently invited the Tourism Minister to accompany me to open several infrastructures within my districts. Even though, they may not look a lot but it is not a lot because of the number of areas we need to cover for our districts. We opened new police stations, new health centres, new aid post, new classrooms and this can be achieved when you have a good leader and we need a lot of good leaders to be able to achieve this. But, with the large district like Ijivitari, where we have 12 000 km² it is a challenge to address every need in terms of education, infrastructure, health infrastructures, law and order issues. It is important that we look into the possibility of splitting some of these districts, so that some of problems can be addressed by new members or the existing members that are representing the electorate.

I am supporting this particular bill because it is important. Ijivitari borders Milne Bay, Morobe and also Central provinces, so our land mass is quite huge and service delivery is a massive challenge.

20/01

I think if the Leader of Opposition is talking about our people, well, this is it.

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order! I didn't debate about landmass, I said the landmass has not increased. I'm talking about population and the ability by the government to deliver service, it's not about landmass. It's another fallacy from this member of Parliament. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr RICHARD MASERE – When we talk about the landmass we cannot subtract the population, because it goes hand in hand, it's growing. So, what is he talking about? Maybe we should ask the people of Vanimo Green, what he's built?

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order! The Member for Angoram and Member for Ijivitari are talking about Vanim Green, I have the best roads in the country than those two districts. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker

Mr RICHARD MASERE – It is important, the country is forty-six years independent and some of these changes are important and are critical to address in our daily needs on the ground. And I feel that as a government if we cannot recognize the needs of the people and do not address this, please, then we are contributing to the issues on the ground.

And when we look at Oro Province in terms of its landmass, we have about 22 000 square kilometres with two open members and a governor to work and try and address the needs of our people. It's complicated, it's difficult. Some provinces like West Sepik, have maybe four or five MPs from that province. Some other provinces have six MPs from their province, my province has only three and when you compare it with the landmass, it needs an additional two or more in order to support and provide the services to our people.

I am supporting this Bill today because Oro definitely needs another district and we are supporting it, my people are supporting it. As a member representing the people, we are supporting this Bill today to make sure that Oro has an additional MP that provides service to its people.

Another point that I want to raise is the work of the Electoral Boundaries Commission, I believe we must commend the work that we have done. In the background, they have done a lot of work, they must be congratulated for the work they have done and this process has been going on for three four years now. They have done an in-depth assessment. They have gone down and spent time on the ground, talked to the people, assessed the landmass of the district, assess the population in the district and they have come with these recommendations to the House.

If we were a government that didn't care, we would have divided in maybe twenty other districts. But we are a responsible government so we are taking it one step at a time, introducing seven districts now and maybe another seven in the next term of Parliament, progressively gradually increasing leadership representation on the Floor, so that our people have a good representation here on the Floor of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, on behalf of the people of Ijivitari and the people of Oro Province, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for bringing this very important Bill to the Floor of Parliament and we will support this Bill on this Floor today.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau)– Thank you Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank the honourable Prime Minister for presenting this very important Electoral Boundaries Commission report to this Honorable House and I stand to support it. With the greatest respect to the Leader of the Opposition, I have a completely different view point, which I would like to debate.

When I decided to come into politics in 2002, my reason was that services to the rural areas were in a terrible state and, therefore, for the Abau district, were really suffering and trees and shrubs were growing on the Magi highway. We were cut off from communication.

Second observation was that the funding was stalled at Waigani and whatever was going to the provincial government was disappearing. Every ten kina that was going to Provincial Government through warranting, only two kina was going to the districts.

21/01

So, when I won the election and Bart Philemon became the Treasurer, I begged Bart Philemon to move the treasury from the provincial headquarters to the districts. Because access to funding is a critical issue, the then honourable Treasurer, Bart Philemon, moved the treasury office establishment throughout the country.

And then, when the Honourable Peter O'Neill became Prime Minister, we pushed K10 million as DSIP, just picked up a figure without proper assessment.

My third point, Mr Deputy Speaker, was that I felt as a nationalist, that the distribution of seats on the Floor of Parliament was not very equal. There are some regions who are over represented while other regions are under-represented. So when it came to vote-of-no confidence, the ability for some regions because of the numbers will move the government. And those of us who didn't have, we were just watching.

I thank the Prime Minister for these recommendations for the seven electorates to be implemented immediately, four of them are from the Southern Region. Motu-Koita and Bania are for later but that brings us to 25.

Mr James Marape – Point of Order. Sorry to make an interjection but just for the record and Hansard, three for the Southern Region or Papua in this report. Let me remind him, Hela has always been part of the Papuan side. So we got four on the Papuan side.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Thank you Prime Minister. Honourable Member for Abau, now you can recognize Hela as part of Papua Region.

Sir PUKA TEMU – But as part of this, my concern is about the equal representation of the many different tribes in the country. I think the equations that have been used all the time, population for example, may really need to be relooked at. And that's a debate for later on.

My fourth reason is; I see Motu-Koita as an electorate recommended by the Electoral Boundaries Commission. I thank you, because it's about time this particular group of people are represented on the Floor of Parliament. I did debate this at one time and I'm really thankful that Motu-Koita people have been now recognized.

You know we have been talking about population growth, et cetera. I want to strongly recommend, Mr Deputy Speaker, that we entrench by law that census must be conducted every ten years. Every ten years, the nation and the government of the day must provide that budget early in the term of Parliament so that the census, as well as demographic and health survey which always help together are held by law. Any leaders or any institution can therefore sort this very important population information so that no guess work is done and the debate by the Honourable Opposition leader is actually in order.

But we know, if you look at it these seven electorates they are over-populated. It's about time that Parliament is now given the privilege to make a decision and say we are going to create these new electorates because we know that these are very difficult.

There is a principle which I would like to share, Mr Deputy Speaker, and that is the principle of how far can you go, because we cannot keep on growing. We cannot keep on saying, this number of electorates must be created because this House will be full. Two people will sit on one chair and we do not want that.

22/01

Mr Deputy, there has to be a principle and while I have the chance, I want to share this principle. For example; Kairuku-Hiri has two districts already, but it is under one electorate. When we were debating over K10 million for DSIP, we were basing it on electorates. But imagine if we based it on districts, Kairuku-Hiri will receive K20 million with one member representing them.

That principle really needs to be re-looked at very seriously by the Electoral Boundaries Commission so that we do not have too many politicians coming to the Floor of Parliament,

but we increase the redistribution of wealth. We then create another vehicle rather than the Electoral Boundaries Commission target to see whether an electorate could be broken, but administratively they deserve to be two or three districts according to their population and be represented by one member. That principle would be okay with me.

Therefore, we do not have too many politicians all over the place because, we have not yet brought the debate of how we are going to address the women representatives on this Floor of Parliament. Now our limit of 126 is already close and we may have to debate on whether we should have a bicameral system which I have been advocating.

So as we head towards 2025 and 50 years of Independence, I strongly recommend that the incoming Government must establish a team of constitutional legal officers or experts to relook at the structure under which Governance is developed and electoral boundaries commission is one of them.

I have also expressed that maybe as we go down the provinces, we shouldn't be arguing to create another province but we should be looking at how we can have regional governments, so that we have less members of Parliament at the provincial level but we then therefore regionalise and plan the infrastructures to link PNG. For example; we may link Central, Oro and Milne Bay by building highways so that they may become one region, create the infrastructures accordingly and maybe become one legislator. In this way we are cutting down the number of legislators at the provincial level.

The amendments to the *Organic Law* on the Provincial and Local Level Governments should have that type of concept, where we can agree to merge provinces and districts because too many players will always spoil the soup. But in that process, we are distributing wealth rather than creating positions and it is better that way.

Therefore, we must put enamours focus on institutional buildings on how districts, provincial or regional governments are structured so that they can deliver services efficiently and effectively in a timely manner.

Those are the debates that we really have to undertake in this Honourable House, particularly in this debate. But I for one believe that this is a time for us to agree that the country needs more electorates because of the issues that we are all worried about.

I am very happy that in this part of the country, the southern region, there are actually five being recommended and two to be implemented later on including Motu-Koita. In Hela, there are four.

But I for one, Mr Deputy Speaker, representing the people of Abau, support this Bill.

Thank you.

Mr PETER ISOAIMO (Kairuku-Hiri) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I rise to also debate on the Electoral Boundaries Commission report.

23/01

In Central Province there are five districts that make up the province; Abau, Rigo, Goilala, Kairuku and Hiri district. Unfortunately, I so happen to be head of two districts in one electorate; Kairuku-Hiri.

My experience in the last seven years is that, it's been impractical for one member to deliver to ethnically two different districts altogether. Whilst, I agree with the Opposition Leader on his debate on costing, I guess this is a matter of government to look into it.

But in terms of service delivery, it's pretty unfair for many of us bigger electorates in Central Province like Kairuku-Hiri. I give some examples from the east to the west from Waiwai village in the east at the Rigo border to Kivori Mauri in the Central/Gulf border, it's well over 200 kilometers apart. Even from the coastline all the way up to Nadori village bordering Sohe electorate in Oro Province. Mt Koiari is only 20 minutes flight but it's inaccessible by road for various reason.

Of course, the Australian government forced our government not to open up the Quadrum mine and want to preserve their iconic Kokoda Trail, so in our times it's pretty impossible for road to be put through along the Kokoda Track corridor.

But, I am thankful to the government agencies especially the Kokoda initiative that helps my electorate to build some of the infrastructure in the rugged terrains of Kairuku-Hiri in Koiari LLG area and the LNG benefits are also helped along the impacted LNG villages.

What I am trying to say here is that, we have six Local Level Governments in Kairuku-Hiri and 112 wards to service. When, I came into Parliament in 2014, I tried asking the government that if allocation of DSIP funding was done by districts, I had two districts in my electorate and I ask for additional K10 million, which never got recognized anyway. I was told that you are the host electorate of the LNG and much of your LNG benefits are going through provincial government, so you should be really working with your Governor to squeeze funds out of there.

I must admit that in the last term of government, I did receive some funding like the sealed road from Papa, Lealea, Boera, Porebada and Bune water supply. But for this five year, I've got zero benefit from the LNG proceeds.

When this happens, it's difficult to spread our DSIP money equally right across a vast electorate like Kairuku-Hiri, with the land mass of over 10,820 square kilometers. We are an electorate, half the country of Singapore or maybe Israel as well.

So, on behalf of my people of Kairuku-Hiri, I think it's long overdue. In fact, the last Electoral Boundaries Commission report in 2006, we expected our leader then and member to support the report. Unfortunately, I was sitting at the Public Gallery, when he was the first to stand up and object saying that there were discrepancies in the common roll and ghost names, so the report got thrown out, but it's long overdue for Kairuku-Hiri to be split.

24/01

I am of mixed parentage of Kairuku and Hiri and politically it will be a hard decision for me to make as to where I should contest. My mother is a Hiri woman and my father is Kairuku man but putting all the political convenience aside, practically, the electorate must be split and I am thankful the governor and I gave consent to the boundaries commission to do its work both in Hiri and Kairuku district thus determining that the electorate must be split.

I am therefore grateful to the Electoral Boundaries Commission and the government through the Prime Minister for bringing forward this report today. And of course, we have issues of legal and administration implications and I know there are some electorates who were not ready with housing and every other infrastructure that goes with it. From my electorate as the Prime Minister has alluded, it's like putting the scissors now because I have two separate district administrations and I have two CEOs reporting to me.

Every one of them try to pull off their limited DSIP funding for their own districts all this time. Having to split, at least they'll have to go to their own Member to take more to develop and put in more infrastructure in the two separate electorates.

On behalf of the people of Kairuku-Hiri, I am grateful to the government and I will support this bill.

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL (West New Britain) -Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this debate. I would like to sincerely thank the Marape-Basil government for finally bringing the Electoral Boundaries Commission report.

A lot of terms of parliaments have gone and a lot of times the report has been rejected. The aspirations of our people have been captured but for political convenience we cancel it, and even the last report which was tabled in 2007.

It is very heartening to see that this government has finally brought in the Electoral Boundaries Commission report to consider especially the first priority of the seven districts which qualified in terms of population.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is not the question of qualification; even in 2007, Talasea has been mentioned; not for just one district but three. With due respect to some of my honourable learned members, you called some of the districts. Rabaul is a district that has a population of 50, 000. Talasea has close to 270, 000 population and an LLG which has a population of 100, 000. You talk about Bialla which has a huge economic development which is run by the Hargy Oil Palm, whereas the Kimbe side of it has New Britian Palm oil running it.

We have planted 150 000 hectares of oil palm which attracted people from every single province to live in West New Britain. On behalf of our seven major tribes from West New Britain and all the brothers and sisters from every part of the country living in West New Britain, they are West New Britain Sepiks, Centrals, Wabags, et cetera, but they are the citizens of West New Britain. On behalf of them, I thank the Government for finally bringing this report. It does not matter whether the elections are closer, I do agree with all the points shared in terms of the administrative difficulties, I thank the honourable Member for Talasea who has already paid K5 million to build a beautiful district headquarter, aside of Kimbe already having an established headquarters. Like Kairuku Hiri we have a clear district headquarters available, Kimbe being the headquarters for Talasea and Bialla being the headquarters of the new Nakanai district. The Member has already invested in terms of administrative structures and all of the infrastructure which need to qualify as a district.

I would like to thank our senior Member Honourable Sir Puka Temu who has mentioned some of the valid points that if you are not really serious about bringing additional members then we should recognize those additional districts. With due respect, we proposed this one and I remember when the former Planning Minister Honourable Charles Abel acknowledge Talasea having a population of 300,000, so they gave additional support grant of K5 million, but it was only for a year and after that it stopped.

When you do not have the representation on the Floor of the Parliament you are not going to really honor it. it is also unfair for our people not to be represented on the Floor of Parliament. You imagine one MP who represents even LLGs with more than 130 wards

25/01

One member representing seven LLGs with more than 130 wards is quite unfair. This is because the real representation is not here especially for my people in Talasia. This will be the new LLG in Talasia LLG, Kimbe Urban LLG and Balivito LLG. The politician will always look for where the numbers will be. Whether they have a fair representation will always be a challenge for us.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the population in Talasea alone is more than 300 000. The last census was done in 2011 but we cannot always need census to tell us the numbers, we also have our common sense to guide us. The last census in 2011 had a population of 289 000 people. Now if you do the math of a 3 per cent increase then it would be something around 400 000 plus people.

Mr Deputy Speaker, with or without the numbers we all know that the population is huge. With the oil palm development, we have attracted people from all parts of the country. Should any of you Members of Parliament come to my place, I will have someone who can speak with you in your own language. I have a diverse group of people living in Talasea. It is a mini-Papua New Guinea. Our people have truly practiced this unity in diversity and this is a way we can honour them by giving this representation for our people in Talasea. We also have the economic means to run this district. We can talk about the issues of teacher's salaries but this is an issue that has always been around and we have not done anything about it. By creating this additional seven districts, it is not going to blow up the K22 billion Budget.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am begging all Members of Parliament to support this Bill. I can't eloquently debate this issue like how Sir Puka has debated. But I know for fact that having lived in West New Britain for 25 years, my people have been suffering.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you cannot expect one Member of Parliament to represent over 300 000 people. It is just impossible. Other districts have around 40 000 people to 50 000 people and that is nothing compared to what I have. We are about six times bigger than those places and therefore we deserve to have a representative of our own. Like I said, my district has people from all over the country who are there working in the oil palm plantations. We deserve to have our own district and additional funding to cater for the services of these Papua New Guineans.

Mr Deputy Speaker, if we have a system that can assure funding for our people then it would be okay but with our experience it never happens therefore, we need to have a representative to fight for the needs of our people. I am appealing to all Members of Parliament

to put aside the politics and see this issue from our point of view. Over the years, this issue was put aside because of political interest of sitting members. They never wanted to separate the electorate in order to secure their voting strength. I however, I am appealing that this is not about politics but for the welfare, fair representation and fair governance of our people.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you will feel sorry for my people in Balivitu. They live in an island which is a six-hour boat ride from Talasea. Their means of earning is fishing which they sell at the Kimbe market. I am also guilty in not developing Balivitu Island. It is a highly populated area in my province. It is, however, very difficult to reach because of the remoteness of the island.

Mr Deputy Speaker, even the Kandrian-Gloucester district needs to be separated. Their population sits around 100 000 people. It had a population of 74 000 in 2011 but with the estimated 3 per cent increase it would have already gone up by now. In fact they were also recommended in the 2007 report for separation. This is due to the geography for service delivery to the people.

26/01

You talking about Gloucester in one location and Kandrian coastal and inland on another location. The two are different so if a Member comes from Gloucester he's going to focus on Gloucester and if a Member comes from Kandrian then he will focus on that particular LLG where it gives the support.

I'm all for this bill for the benefit of our people, for the benefit of service delivery and also for the fair representation of our people's welfare on the Floor of Parliament, I sincerely appeal to every Member of Parliament sitting on both sides of the House to support the Bill. This is not about politics, but it is about the fair representation.

Thank you.

Motion – That the question be put – agreed to.

Motion – That the report and its recommendations be adopted – agreed to.

Paper adopted.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr RAINBO PAITA (National Planning – Finschhafen) – Mr Deputy Speaker, before I move to adjourn the Parliament, on behalf of myself, my family and my people of Finchaffen, I would like to pass my condolences to the family, people of Goilala and Central and Pangu Party as well as this government for sharing the time, jokes and the moments together on this Floor. Late Honourable William Samb, Minister for Commerce and Member for Goilala was my close friend and a mentor and we began our politics together with other colleagues on this Floor. We have shared time, jokes and moments together when we were on this Floor. Everyone will greatly miss him and I want to place my condolences on record as someone whom I shared the Floor with.

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

Parliament adjourned at 5:00 p.m..