

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 11 October 2022

DRAFT HANSARD

Subject:

Page No:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS- STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER..... | 1 |
| CERTIFICATION OF ACTS – STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER..... | 2 |
| DEATH OF FORMER MEMBERS - Messrs KEVIN ISIFU, SIR PETER BARTER AND PETER ATU ORESI - STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER | 4 |
| QUESTIONS | 5 |
| Ward Officials Allowance | 5 |
| Equip Districts to Increase Agricultural Produce..... | 7 |
| Konebada Petroleum Park Authority Status Update..... | 9 |
| Mt Hagen General Hospital Board Appointment..... | 11 |
| Ethnic Clash in NCD..... | 12 |
| Lawlessness in NCD | 14 |
| Resettlement Policy - Rabaul..... | 17 |
| JUDGES REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL SYSTEM, 2021 – PAPER – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER..... | 18 |
| MOTION BY LEAVE | 18 |
| LEAVE OF ABSENCE | 19 |
| STRENGTHENING THE INTERNAL SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE & CONTINUED PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY – MINISTERIAL STATEMENT – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER..... | 19 |
| ADJOURNMENT | 32 |

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

CORRECTIONS TO DAILY HANSARD

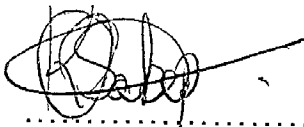
The Draft Hansard is uncorrected. It is also privileged. Members have one week from the date of this issue of Draft Hansard in which to make corrections to their speeches. Until the expiration of this one week period, Draft Hansard must not be quoted as final and accurate report of the debates of the National Parliament.

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Corrections should be authorized by Signature and contain the Name, Office and Telephone Number of the person transmitting/making corrections.

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



.....
KENNETH SEBEPMIN

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 11 October 2022

The Parliament met at 2 p.m., according to the Terms and Resolution of 4 September, 2022.

The Acting Speaker (**Mr Koni Iguan**) took the Chair.

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

Sitting suspended.

The Acting Speaker again took the Chair at 2.40 p.m., and invited the Governor of Chimbu, **Honourable Noah Kool** to say Prayers.

'Merciful and loving God, we praise you in your majesty and holiness, we thank you for giving us this privilege to represent your people in this House. Grace us with the power of the Holy Spirit so that we can judge your people correctly and according to your will. Be with us today, and throughout this week as we deliberate on the pressing issues that affect our country. We believe in *John 15:5*, "*without you we can do nothing*". Amen'.

BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS- STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – I have to inform Parliament that the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings met today and resolved that the National Broadcasting Corporations' Television and Radio will be allowed to broadcast and telecast live coverage of the whole Parliament proceedings as part of their community service obligation to the citizens and stakeholders. And also extend to other radio and television stations if they wish to cover the proceedings for news purposes for the duration of this meeting.

**CERTIFICATION OF ACTS –
STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I wish to inform the Parliament that the Speaker has in accordance with *section 110* of the *Constitution* certified 54 Acts made by the National Parliament, a list of these Acts will appear in today's Minutes of Proceedings.

The list is as follows:

- (1) *Building (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (2) *Business Groups Incorporation (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (3) *Claims By and Against the State (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (4) *Companies (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (5) *Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (6) *Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (7) *Customs Tariff (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (8) *Digital Government Act 2022*
- (9) *Electricity Industry (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (10) *Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (11) *Excise Tariff (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (12) *Excise Tariff (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (13) *Excise Tariff (Supplementary Budget) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (14) *Family Protection (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (15) *Firearms (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (16) *Goods and Services (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (17) *Goods and Services Tax (New Porgera) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (18) *Goods and Services Tax (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (19) *Goods and Services Tax (Supplementary Budget) (Amendment) Act
2022*
- (20) *Income Tax (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (21) *Income Tax Dividend (Withholding) Tax and Interest (Withholding)
Tax Rates (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (22) *Income Tax (New Porgera) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (23) *Income Tax (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (24) *Income Tax (Salary or Wages Tax) (Rates)(Amendment) Act 2022*

- (25) *Innovative University of Enga Act 2022*
- (26) *Insurance (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (27) *Investment Promotion (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (28) *Konebada (Petroleum Park (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (29) *Land (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (30) *Land Commission Act 2022*
- (31) *Land Registration (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (32) *Leadership Code (Alternative Penalties) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (33) *Local-Level Government Administration (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (34) *Lutheran University of Papua New Guinea Act 2022*
- (35) *Manus Special Economic Region Act 2022*
- (36) *Mining (New Porgera) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (37) *Motor Vehicles (Third Party) (New Porgera) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (38) *National Energy Authority (New Porgera) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (39) *Oil and Gas (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (40) *Physical Planning (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (41) *Prices Regulations (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (42) *Resource Contracts Fiscal Stabilisation (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (43) *Resource Contracts Fiscal Stabilisation (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (44) *Rubber Industry Development Act 2022*
- (45) *Special Economic Zones Authority (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (46) *Stamp Duties (New Porgera) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (47) *Stamp Duties (P'nyang LNG Project) (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (48) *Strata Title Act 2022*
- (49) *Strata Title (Management) Act 2022*
- (50) *Supplementary (Appropriation) Act 2022*
- (51) *Survey (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (52) *Survey Co-ordination (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (53) *Valuation (Amendment) Act 2022*
- (54) *Wrongs (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Act 2022*

DEATH OF FORMER MEMBERS-

Messrs KEVIN ISIFU, SIR PETER BARTER AND PETER ATU ORESI- STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament of the death of the late Honourable Kevin Isifu on 13 September 2022. He was first elected as Member for Wewak Open seat in the Tenth National Parliament from 2017 to 2022, and re-elected in the 2022 National General Election for the same seat. During his term, he served as the Minister for Inter-Government Relations, following the formation of the O'Neill-Able Government. He was a Member of the People's Progress Party and then switched party allegiance to the United Resource Party in October 2019.

Honorable Members, I have to also inform you of the deaths of the following former members:

- (1) Sir Peter Lesley Charles Barter on 22 June 2022, a former Governor of Madang Regional seat.

02/01

He was first elected as Member for Madang Provincial Seat in the Fifth (5th) National Parliament from 1992 to 1997. He was elected Governor of Madang Regional in the Sixth (6th) National Parliament from 1997 to 2002 and re-elected to the same seat in the Seventh National Parliament from 2002 to 2007. During those terms, he served as shadow Minister for Civil Aviation, Tourism, Environment and Conservation in August 1992. He was the Minister for Health after the formation of the new Government in August 1994, Minister for Provincial Affairs and Local Level Government in June 1996, Minister for Inter-Governmental Relations and Bougainville Affairs on 13 June 2002, following the formation of the Somare-Marat Government till 3 April 2006. He then moved from Inter-Government Relation to Minister for Health but retained the Bougainville Affairs portfolio. He resigned from the ministry in August 1995 to be the Governor of Madang Province after the provincial government reforms. He was awarded the Knight Bachelor for services to the community, business, government and country, and is a recipient of the 2001 New Year Honours award. He was a member of the People's Progress Party in January 1993 and the National Alliance Party in 2002.

- (2) Mr Peter Atu Oresi, on 22 May 2002, a former Member for Sohe Open Electorate in the Seventh (7th) National Parliament from 2002 to 2007. During his term, he served as Minister for Correctional Services from 13 August 2002 to 18 May 2004 following the

formation of the Somare-Marat Government. He was a Member of the People's National Congress Party.

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

(All Members stood in silence in their places as a mark of respect to the late gentlemen).

I thank the Parliament.

QUESTIONS

Ward Officials Allowance

Mr EREMAN TOBAINING JNR – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for Inter-Government Relations and Minister for Justice and Attorney General, and Public Service can take note.

Recently, most of our ward councillors and officials were paid their allowances after four to five months of waiting.

Mr Acting Speaker, the situation, I believe is the same for village courts officials and, magistrates. Many of them complain and I believe that these very people play a vital role in helping us in our respective districts to solve problems in our communities.

03/01

Some passed away while others still continue on, and yet they are still waiting for their allowances. We thank this Government for paying them their allowances for the last four to five months.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are:

(1) Can the Minister inform this honourable House, if there is a plan for our ward councillors, ward members, village courts, magistrates and officials on the government payroll to be paid their allowances on a fortnightly basis?

(2) If so, when will this happen?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr SOROIEOE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, and I thank the Member for Kokopo for asking this very important question.

I concur with the Member's comment, that ward members play a very significant role. They are the face of the government on the ground. They are the ones who mediate and ensure that government services are provided on the ground, which affects 80 per cent of our people. Therefore, this question is vital and very important.

To answer the question of whether the ward members have been paid or not, there are about 6,000 ward members, who were paid their allowances by my department and the Department of Treasury starting from January to April of this year.

Of that 6,000, about 1,000 ward members have not been paid, mainly because of issues with their accounts. Therefore, when the account issues are resolved, they can be backdated to the time that they were supposed to be paid. Otherwise, my department has already applied to Treasury to access funds for the remaining part of this year.

The second part of the issue is, while waiting for their allowances to be paid, some of the members have passed away. Obviously, that question implies that, it would be before the time that the Government has put the ward members on fortnightly salary.

In the past, they were paid monthly allowances. I am told it was about K200 per fortnight. But, the Marape-Rosso Government recognised the importance and significance of these officers and their need to be compensated properly and be put on salaries.

Now coming back to the issue of court officials, they come under the jurisdiction of the office of the Attorney-General. In terms of how the Attorney-General is addressing this issue regarding their salaries, it would only be appropriate for them to answer that question.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

04/01

Mr THEO PELGEN – Mr Acting Speaker, thank you once again for recognising the people of Waing-Erap, Nabak, Labuta and Aihirul of the Nawae district.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are directed to our good Prime Minister and ministers responsible please take note. The Minister for National Planning and Monitoring, Oil Palm, Coffee, Livestock, Agriculture and Works, and Highway.

Mr Acting Speaker, Nawae and our sister districts of Huon Gulf, Markham, Kabwum and Menyamya have the untapped potential to supply the ever-increasing demand of organically cultivated fresh produce, livestock and cash crops.

Mr Acting Speaker, while we appreciate the Marape-Rosso Government's initiative towards the Connect-PNG program and the continuous funding of district roads and capital investment program; we need to do more.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions to our good Prime Minister and ministers responsible are as follows;

Equip Districts to Increase Agricultural Produce

(1) How can we better equip all our districts that have potential to aggressively cultivate cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, copra, oil palm and livestock to boost the economy?

(2) How can we continuously fund the district road program and other capital investment programs in this term of Parliament, so that we assist in connecting the rural farmers to market their produce within Papua New Guinea and the region?

Thank you. Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Let me thank the good Member for Nawae for asking these very important and pertinent questions which are very close to my heart.

As a government, we are focused on districts and rural areas because 80 per cent, if not, a high number of our population are still locked in the enclaves of our districts and in the outback of our country.

The Member's district as he alluded to, and other districts in the Morobe, and right across the country have huge potentials in agriculture that can be harnessed and tapped into. Our people own land and are currently sitting on their land and engaging themselves in subsistence farming. They work to feed themselves and for us to transition this big population towards cash crop for the interest of our country is a major focus of our government policy.

Mr Acting Speaker, every district by way of the funding allocation trend is entitled to what we label as Districts Services Improvement Program. And 10 per cent of that is allocated for the planning and the administrative component of the districts. For instance, Nawae or any other districts for that matter could create their district plan and indicate their priority roads for development.

When you make a submission for a road that a district should fund but seeks support from the National and Provincial Government, the district road must be geared towards opening up the rural economy so that agriculture productivity or other economic activities like forestry, fisheries and so forth can be linked through that infrastructure we will build.

Every district has potential like his district, utilise 10 per cent of the District Services Improvement Funds that come to you. Plan out one or two priority roads. If it is not built yet.

In our Government caucus the last three years, we have tried our absolute best, doesn't matter which side of the House you are on in Parliament, all districts and provinces should have some level of funding regardless of whether you are in government or opposition.

05/01

District and provincial roads; just for clarity, district roads are roads which link one LLG to another, while provincial roads are roads that link two districts and of course, the national roads and highways are those that link provinces.

So, Mr Acting Speaker, if any district through this question has a strategic road that is not receiving any levels of support from the government and you feel that a potential cash crop is there, it is in your interest to liaise with National Planning through submission. Then, we will try our absolute best within the size of the budget to have a hand on it. We will give our best endeavours to assist because these roads assist in delivering the products to the markets.

In another statement, I will indicate to the Parliament our critical focus on roads, cash crops, and infrastructure, to ensure we ramp up our domestic productivity for local markets, as well as our international markets.

Certainly Member for Nawae, we look forward to receiving your submission from your district likewise for the other districts so we can support with one or two roads where our National Budget allows. But, your justification in your submission must convince the National Planning team that the road is linked to economic activities, so we need it to be economic roads and not just social roads.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr KEITH IDUHU – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to ask this important question for my people.

Mr Acting Speaker, being a backbencher, I have not been privy to the information and therefore I seek your guidance to direct this very important question to the honourable Minister in charge of the Konebada Petroleum Park Authority and if not, then can the Prime Minister take note.

Mr Acting Speaker, every day I drive past this big broken signboard which proudly reads Konebada Petroleum Park, and I must say that this is an excellent initiative by the Minister for Petroleum and Energy to make downstream a reality in the petroleum sector.

However, as per concluded investigations of the PAC, NRI, and Transparency International; they have all claimed that KPP's is an enormous scheme –

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I interrupt you on your question and get clarification on whom you can direct your question to.

Honourable Member, your question will be directed to the Minister for International Trade.

Konebada Petroleum Park Authority Status Update

Mr KEITH IDUHU – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for International Trade.

So, this is the sad reality where millions of kina; our people's money, have been lost through this scheme.

Mr Acting Speaker, it is not just any scheme but a big 23,000 hectares scheme where individuals have become millionaires overnight by leasing land or worse still, selling land illegally through direct exchange or shared transfers to companies knitting clothes, selling fish, living in houses as residences while working elsewhere.

06/01

Mr Acting Speaker, this is corruption right before our very eyes. Right before the people of Koiari and Hiri West. We built the PNG LNG project and are now accelerating towards the Papua LNG Commissioning. And yet, we fail to keep Konebada Petroleum Park Authority (KPPA) going, which would have derived us benefits of downstream processing in this sector.

As the host electorate of this vision of our government, I intend to make this park a reality. Our petroleum industry is expediting at an exponential rate and our people deserve to gain benefits in the downstream processing sector. A downstream agenda is a flagship policy of the Marape-Rosso Government and I would very much like to see this come to fruition.

My questions are as follows:

(1) What is the status of KPPA today?

The NEC Decision 15/2018, directed an investigation into this authority and specific instructions to ministers; where is this report? I know our government is serious about fighting corruption.

(2) So, with the assistance of the Prime Minister, can the Minister direct the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption (ICAC) to investigate this entire authority; including all staff and anyone who has rented or bought land?

(3) Can the Minister direct ICAC to acquire the land and recoup all the money that was spent on KPPA by these illegal millionaires using the people's money and resources?

And KPPA has also spent public money equivalent to millions of kina on bogus projects which had nothing to do with petrochemical products. KPPA has illegally sold my peoples land to individuals who had no petroleum knowledge but are just individuals owning paper companies. The NEC Decision 15/2018, directed all land to be reacquired by the Minister for Lands and Physical Planning, which was an immediate directive.

(4) Can the Minister inform us on what has happened to this very clear directive by the NEC?

Finally, concerning illegal operations of KPPA continuing and in order to resolve this issue and make KPPA a reality, there needs to be a concise and clear direction and political will,

(5) With the assistance from the Prime Minister, can we give KPPA to the business arm of my district to manage and own for our people?

Because it is rightfully in our district and the vision and will of our people as custodians. I can assure the Prime Minister, my district through its business arm will ensure KPPA has a hundred percent focus approach. And will ensure the will and ambits of the white paper that give rights to the KPPA legislation should come through fruition. And the downstream processing in the petroleum sector for PNG must see the light of day and should be the vision of this government.

Thank you kindly.

Mr RICHARD MARU – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Hiri-Koiari, for these important questions.

Since I took over this Ministry, the Konebada Petroleum Park Authority, Mr Acting Speaker, I want to confirm that there was an investigation into the affairs of the Authority and I can confirm that land has been sold illegally and has not served its purpose and a lot of people have made a lot of money out of that park.

Therefore, I have made a submission to Cabinet to immediately appoint the board and management of the Special Economic Zone Authority to preside over the investigation and see what we can do and report back to Cabinet within three months on where we can repossess the land and how much money is left and the outstanding bills. So that we can inform Cabinet accordingly, to make a way forward.

07/01

Mr Acting Speaker, I think it is important that the people of Papua New Guinea and Parliament understand the real problems with the Konebada Petroleum Park. The problem started with the way we negotiated the initial PNG LNG Agreement. In that agreement, there was no DMO, there was no provision made for gas to be used in the local domestic industry in the initial project agreement.

We have had investors from Japan sitting and waiting to access gas from the PNG LNG project to process in the Konebada Petroleum Park but the current owners of PNG LNG have not made any gas available because it was never in the agreement. So, the Konebada Petroleum Park from the word go, was never going to serve its purpose. There was no provision made in the agreement for gas to be made available for the domestic petrol chemical industry and this continues to frustrate investors and will continue to be a problem for us because there was no gas available as it was never put into the agreement.

We are going to undertake a review and bring a submission to Cabinet, and then it can decide on the way forward. Unless we are going to have access to cheap gas, we are not going to have petrol chemical industry in the country, its as simple as that.

Mt Hagen General Hospital Board Appointment

Mr WAI RAPA – Thank you Mr Acting Speaker, I want to thank you for giving me this time to speak. I want to thank my people of Western Highlands Province and I also thank God for all of us here for the Eleventh Parliament.

I direct my question to the Minister for Health and it is in relation to the Mt Hagen General Hospital. As you all know, especially the leaders from the highlands will know that Mt Hagen Hospital is one of the referral hospitals for the highland's region. I am sorry to ask this question on the Floor of Parliament, but as you know from reports in the media, this hospital lacks a hospital board. It is an important hospital and with election-related problems, Mt Hagen is becoming so populated and our hospital is becoming too crowded.

(1) Is it my job to choose a new board or do I have to go through the Minister's office to appoint a new board?

Dr LINO TOM – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I would like to thank the Governor for this important question. Let me agree with him in terms of the number of patients going down to Mt Hagen hospital for treatment. Yes, our population is increasing and the capacity to take in patients at the hospital is actually going down. I think it is within the plan of the National

Government to build capacity in all the hospitals in the country and Mt Hagen General Hospital is actually one of those hospitals actually listed.

08/01

That is in regards to the comment he made earlier. Regarding the new hospital board, Governor, I think, there is a process there. If the term of the current board has expired, I think you will need to write to the Health Department and I will look into it. I gave reassurance to some of the leaders from Western Highlands who raised that on the corridors of Parliament that I will look into it as a matter of urgency and we will try and appoint a new board and it should follow the normal board members appointment process. So, in regards to that, I think I also received some written complaints from the hospital management and some of the members. That is one PHA or hospital board we are looking at to make sure that we are bringing in the board members as soon as possible.

Whilst on that, let me also point out that there's other PHAs including the one from Northern and another province that have actually written to us and the submissions are ready. We will bring to NEC and expedite the process of appointment so that we can have hospital boards in place to run our own PHAs and hospitals throughout the country.

Thank you.

Ethnic Clash in NCD

Mr DOUGLAS TOMURIESA – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My question is directed to the Prime Minister and I would like the Minister for Police and Defence to take note.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am very concerned about the recent incidents of ethnic clashes in Port Moresby and the general rise in crime and offences that is going largely unpunished.

Mr Acting Speaker, we see people walking the streets of Port Moresby armed with weapons, bush-knives, machetes, and even guns. We see criminals attacking mothers and stealing their shopping and groceries as they return from shopping. Our citizens are being killed week-in, week-out. We see the recent spate of criminal activities in Port Moresby and the ethnic clashes, which renders our city unsafe.

The impression now is that, our people no longer respect our laws and are even unafraid of police.

Mr Acting Speaker, very recently, last week Friday, the Porebada land owners and villagers were attacked. There were truckloads of an ethnic tribesmen on ten-seater Toyota

Land Cruisers and 5-Doors making their way down to Porebada to attack people at an important LNG site. We also heard about the Baruni land owners very recently and the Saraga land owners.

Mr Acting Speaker, it has come to our attention and we all can no longer deny that the traditional land owners around the Central Province and Port Moresby are no longer respected. As a Papuan leader and other Papuan leaders are sick of this nonsense. We can no longer take it. We cannot tolerate it anymore. Something needs to be done and done quickly. The news coming out from the media each week is very disturbing. The spill overs from the highlands provinces and districts have now tarnished the image of our city. Therefore, something needs to be done to deal with these law and order issues that is affecting our country.

09/01

Mr Prime Minister, it is very encouraging to see you as the CEO of our country, travelling the world and selling our country for investment opportunities. But our local issues, especially law and order needs to be dealt with, if we are to be the country for conducive investment.

And so, Mr Prime Minister, there have been six murders in the recent days in a space of two weeks. The silence of the Government is deafening. Port Moresby is no longer safe.

Mr Acting Speaker, through you, may I ask the following questions to the Prime Minister;

(1) Are you aware, that the majority of the ethnic clashes in the city involves tribesmen, unfortunately, people from your own electorate of Tari-Pori?

We acknowledge that my comments does not include many of our citizens from Hela Province, in particular. Tari-Pori who are law abiding citizens.

(2) Mr Acting Speaker, the *Constitution* allows citizens to travel freely within Papua New Guinea, to do work, raise their families and do business. Our cities belong to Papua New Guineans, but what we want is to know, as the Prime Minister and the Member for Tari-Pori, what steps are you going to take to stop this tribal fights and ethnic clashes once and for all?

(3) What steps will you take to reassure the residents of the National Capital District that your tribesmen will cease from using the city as tribal fighting venues?

Mr Aiye Tambua – Point of Order! Can the Deputy Opposition Leader rephrase his words and ask the Prime Minister, with respect, and do not use any tribal or certain tribes to discuss the situation in Port Moresby? We understand that the current situation is a very delicate situation. Can the speaker rephrase his question please?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, your point of order is in order. I will ask the Deputy Opposition Leader to refrain from naming any particular tribe in his question. Thank you.

Lawlessness in NCD

Mr DOUGLAS TOMURIESA – Mr Acting Speaker, that is why I rephrased and used the word, ethnic group interchangeably.

(4) What steps will you take to reassure our mothers and families who go shopping that they will not have their groceries and bags snatched away?

(5) What steps is your Government taking to ensure that all buses and taxis respect and abide by the traffic rules?

(6) Can the Prime Minister, outline his Government's plans to address the general rise in crime and lawlessness in this country?

Fear is an issue that is in the hearts of our people, especially in the city. We need to assure our people, especially the women that they can trust this Government with this issue pertaining to law and order issues.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Let me thank the Deputy Opposition Leader for asking a very important question.

Safety in Port Moresby and our country is in the interest of all of us and our economy. Firstly, let me reply by indicating that our Government is very serious about law and order as indicated in the manner in which we have restructured our portfolio and the minister responsible for the law and order sector.

In fact, we combined the Police and the CIS under the same minister and we named it the Internal Security Minister to ensure that the left and right hand of law enforcement and the rehabilitation of those who are caught is made easier by one minister having an oversight.

10/01

This is a clear indication to the country that we are very serious in addressing law and order issues in the country.

Whether it is Tari-Pori, I accept the fact that our good Deputy Opposition Leader has labelled Tari and Pori people in his raw naked form and I accept that labelling; but let me also say that not all the Tari-Pori people are engaged in these sorts of activities in the city or country.

The last time I travelled into Kiriwina-Goodenough for a program he hosted, he did inform me that there were no Taris' up there but we also have Tari-type people in this island. Some people holding bush knives stepped out of the bush and tried to block us. May be Taris' are in the greater number in this labelling games and we accept it.

I am assuring you that not all my tribesmen are engaged in these activities but that is not to say we cannot act on this sort of thing. The principle of the question is in order. We must take steps to address these issues.

We have laws that go to the moon and come back. The other day I was telling the Minister for Internal Security and minister that deals with the domestic aspects of our security, we don't need to call the police commissioner every time when an incident happens for him to make an arrest. It is his day or night job. He has signed up to handle law and order issues.

Whether it is a person from Tari or another province, ensure that arrests are made. He has reported back to us on what needs to be done. I told him to get a deputy police commissioner to restore the discipline in the police hierarchy.

Sometimes we are silent because the Prime Minister cannot be issuing instructions all the time, someone is paid to do this job. I'm sure the incident that happened yesterday or last week is not the first time. Incidents in Port Moresby have been happening for the last 30 years as a result of migration into our major urban areas.

We are working. I assure the Deputy Opposition Leader who has asked this important question that we are very serious about addressing law and order. Indication of lack of police ability to police law and order is the lack of arrest happening in Port Moresby. If it is not happening in Port Moresby, God help us, it is not happening elsewhere.

So, we are not trying to approach from a cut and paste piece-meal-approach, we are stepping back in a holistic manner. We have given instructions for police recruitment to commence next year onwards so that we recruit police personnel up to 10,000 in the next 10 years. At the moment, for instance the Police Force personnel is around 6000.

If our population is at nine (9) million, that's one police officer serving 1500 people. That statistics is not good for us and so we have given indication going forward for the next 10 years. We should be systematically recruiting about 10,000 police personnel and working towards this space.

It is an immediate need for us to arrest some of this occasional law and order instances that spiral out of hand. Next year when we conduct a proper census, we will take stock of all the population we have in our country. We will have an ID-based knowledge of every citizen in our country, to assist police to pin point those who cause problems.

Some of these measures may include places like Port Moresby and Lae in urban areas. People who migrate into the urban areas must have a valid reason. If you are coming in for holidays, we have to know where your address is in the city. The re-ordering of our society for proper accountability of people moving around is important. So these are the conversations being currently discussed to make our country a safer place while working here.

11/01

In places like Alotau, Kokopo, and many others, there are a few Taris but there have been spate of criminal activities that have emerged in the last few years.

This Government wants to put a serious pause on this issue and contain it because in the past we have been mistreating the Police or law and justice sectors on a piecemeal basis. As we come to budget proper next year, there will be some serious allocation to the Police Force, especially in the training and recruitment of additional police personnel.

The Minister for Internal Security has already released good instructions to the Police Commissioner, basic police patrols, basic police discipline, and basic calling of police parade every Monday in police station across the country.

And again, I conclude that these are some things that we have to work in tandem. The arrest of criminals is not the responsibility of the Prime Minister, Police Commissioner or Deputy Commissioners, it is for those paid officers to step up and do their job. Whether it is the Prime Minister's tribesmen – Tari-Pori men, for that matter, it must not stop the Police from carrying out their duties in making arrests.

Crimes does happen and it is the Police that must respond; for instance, we have already passed the laws on guns, one of the hardest laws on the face of planet earth whether homemade or factory-made. If you are in possession of an illegal firearm, that will cost you life imprisonment. I have done my job to pass the law and it is someone else's job to do arrests.

I take this time to give assurance to the Deputy Opposition Leader, that I cannot control every Tari-Pori person, there are criminals in Tari-Pori like everywhere else, but we will do our very best in establishing order in our society, starting with the census that will take place. We want to identify everyone by the next two to three years; they must all have an identification card to vote, travel, purchase a ticket, open bank accounts, and even to know their address.

We must stop being too lenient on restrictions of movement and there must be some level of control in our public space so we account for it. Hopefully, down the line, Taris are not being blamed but we pinpoint the lawbreaker as it happens.

Thank you, for this important question and as I conclude, Mr Police Commissioner, I do not need to instruct you to make arrests, it is your job, so get on with doing the work.

Resettlement Policy - Rabaul

Mr GRAHAM RUMET – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for Lands, Physical Planning and Urbanisation and Deputy Prime Minister, Honourable John Rosso. It is in relation to the titling of land under the resettlement policy framework, if there is one under the *Disaster Management Act*.

Mr Speaker, since the Rabaul Volcanic Eruptions in 1994, more than 80 per cent of people in Rabaul District were relocated to six sub-divided, allocated land portions and they are still living there today.

My questions are as follows:

(1) Can you clarify if there is an existing resettlement policy captured under *PNG Disaster Management Act*?

(2) Can you further advise if people living in allocated and sub-divided land in disaster areas are eligible to obtain land titles?

12/01

Honourable Minister, this has been a much-discussed agenda of the people of Rabaul. A land title of course warrants confidence in the people for further development of the land and raising and improving living standards.

Honourable Minister, your direction and advice would enable me to develop a strategic plan to achieve positive outcome relating to the subject matter.

Mr JOHN ROSSO – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Rabaul for his pertinent questions.

The resettlement issue especially in the disaster area after the eruption of the volcano in Rabaul, the people from there were sent up to Seekut and areas behind Kokopo for resettlement.

The resettlement was done under the Kokopo Restoration Authority to settle people there. And in that sense, they subdivided the areas for resettlement and when that was done no one followed up and issued land titles to them.

There is nothing stopping the Authority or the District from working closely with the Department of Lands to ensure that the people of the resettled areas get the relevant titles that

they deserve. The subdivisions and portions were done already and all it needs is for the district to work closely with the Department of Lands and we will help issue titles to these people.

We have also delegated the powers of the Lands and Physical Planning Board to the East New Britain Province, and it's also accessible for them to utilise it there. So, the powers have already been devolved to the province to use. And it is purely an administrative matter. I would ask for the district's coordination with the relevant lands authority which now have the powers to sort out the issue there.

There is nothing stopping the people who are sitting on the relevant portions to get their titles. Should you have any issues that pertain to titles not issued to the people than I am available for you to seek help. So come see me so that I can direct the appropriate people to sort out the issue. I hope that answers your question.

**JUDGES REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE
NATIONAL JUDICIAL SYSTEM, 2021 – PAPER –
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

The following paper was presented pursuant to Statute:

Judges Report on the Work of the National Judicial System, 2021

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

That the Parliament take note of the paper and the debate be made an order of the day for a subsequent sitting.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr RAINBO PAITA (Finschhafen-Finance and Implementation) – I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

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

That leave of absence be granted to Mr Job Pomat (Speaker), Mr Walter Schnaubelt (Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation), Mr Jelta Wong (Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resource) and Mr Chris Haiveta (Governor of Gulf).

STRENGTHENING THE INTERNAL SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE & CONTINUED PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY – MINISTERIAL STATEMENT – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER

Mr JOE SUNGI (Nuku – Minister for Public Service) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, before I proceed to my ministerial Statement, I would like to convey my condolences to the longest serving Provincial Administrator of Enga Province, Dr Samson Amean, a long serving public servant in the country.

13/01

And for the record, I would like to pass my condolences to his people, especially the public servants of Enga province.

Thank you, honourable Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to deliver my statement to this honourable House.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am truly humbled and privileged to present my first-ever ministerial statement to this honourable House in my capacity as the Minister for Public Service. In doing so, let me take this opportunity to convey my sincere appreciation to our Nation's ninth (9th) Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape for having confidence in me and in appointing me again as the Minister for Public Service. I wish to also acknowledge and thank my good people of Nuku for giving me the mandate to represent them again in this Eleventh Parliament. But above all, I owe everything to God Almighty who receives all the glory and honour!

Mr Acting Speaker, let me at the outset assure this honourable House and the people of Papua New Guinea that I have pledged to devote myself to continue making valuable contributions in this important, yet challenging portfolio. I intend to achieve the Government's aims and objectives in "Taking Back Papua New Guinea" under my public service ministerial determination.

I will continue to serve from where I left off focusing on the strategic direction contained in the Prime Minister's Inauguration speech to the Parliament on 22 August 2022 whilst maintaining policy continuity with special emphasis and focus on key priorities from the Government that will enable effective service delivery. My main aim is to address those huge public sector costs by applying smart strategies to minimize costs and to get the public service to be effective and efficient in serving our people.

Mr Acting Speaker, my intentions are the same since taking up the ministry of Public Service in January 2021, which is to mainly focus on

(1) cleaning Waigani first, by getting the basics right, in terms of human resource strategies and business processes;

(2) automating the public service systems and processes for effective and efficient delivery of services and cutting down wasting time by using ICT and modernising the public service;

(3) managing the performance of agency heads and all public servants so their work is worth their pay; and

(4) improving terms and conditions of public servants with the establishment of institutional housing and health insurance policy for public servants and which is already in progress.

Mr Acting Speaker, these are some of the priorities I wanted to undertake aside from the six (6) strategic priorities of the Marape-Rosso Government assigned to the Ministry of Public Service in 2019.

The six (6) strategic priorities have now been translated into six (6) Key Result Areas as a process towards developing a practical, manageable, and achievable implementation plan which has been approved by Government for this ministry. The updates would be in this chronological order, under the respective agencies in my ministry.

Department of Personnel Management

(a) Retirement Exercise

The Government has re-appropriated K200 million through the Department of Treasury to complete the retirement exercise in 2022, and for this year's retirement exercise, a total of

640 public servants from 33 agencies at an estimated budget cost Of K63.5 million are being considered for retirement as the department continues to carry out the exercise.

In summary, since 2019, this continuing Government has spent K 178.4 million on 3,236 retirees (figure inclusive of 2022 retirement figures). This is an achievement by the Government and will continue in 2023.

14/01

In summary, since 2019, this continuing Government has spent K178.4 million on 3,236 retirees (figure inclusive of 2022 retirement figures). This is an achievement by the Government and will continue in 2023.

Mr Acting Speaker, let me also stress outside of my statement that we have also signed an agreement with the private Agri-Business Training Centre which is now training the retirees to prepare them to go into SME in this country. The skills and experience they gain will be brought into the SME and business sectors to grow the economy.

(b) National Identification for Public Servants

Mr Acting Speaker, on the registration of public servants for the National Identity system, as at August 2022, 90 per cent of national agencies have registered for NID in NCD alone. The DPM and PNG Civil Identity Registry continue to work closely to progress this matter in compliance to the NEC decision, to have all public servants registered. A total of 12,536 public servants have registered for NID. There are about 112,399 who are yet to register and most of these are from the provinces. The main purpose of public servants being registered is to ensure their unique numbers identify them as one person, placed on one position and on one pay only, thus implementing the IPPP policy and cleansing the payroll system with the aim of reducing the personnel emolument budget blow-out.

(c) Ascender Government Payroll and Manpower statistics

Mr Acting Speaker, as of Pay No.20/2022, the public service workforce on the Government's Ascender payroll stood at 129,058 and of this, 86 per cent are at the frontline service delivery; health workers, teachers, disciplinary forces, judiciary officials, whilst only 14 per cent are in policy and administration. There are 121 government agencies on the Ascender Payroll.

As of the same Pay No.20, out of the initial 2022 PE Budget appropriation of K4.55 billion, K3.39 billion has been expended to date with a balance of K1.16 billion remaining till Pay 26. Again, this information is only for agencies on the Ascender Payroll system while about 54 agencies have their own payroll systems. These are mainly some statutory bodies,

universities and National Parliament; their figures are not included here but are captured in the 2022 Budget Book.

In terms of distribution of staffing numbers, as of Pay No.20/2022, teachers form the largest number of public servants at 67,846 followed by health services at 16,687, disciplinary forces at 11,848 and the village courts officials and land mediators at 12,954. Following on from there, the National Departments at 12,309, the provincial and district administrations at 6,256 whilst PNG Customs and IRC at 1,160. A total of 110,495 (86 per cent) personnel are engaged at the frontline in service delivery and 18,565 (14 per cent) personnel in policy and administration,

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to inform the House that the figures for frontline service providers in education, health and, law and order sectors are increasing and will continue to increase because of the expanding population and that requires training and recruitment of more of these frontline workers.

In addition to the above, I want to stress that out of the estimated K4-K5 billion gross spent on public servants' wages and salaries and other PE expenditure annually, an estimated K1.6 billion to K2 billion which is 40 per cent of their salary is paid back to the State as tax. Again, these are figures from the Ascender Payroll.

Mr Acting Speaker, the above information is now at my fingertips as of 26 September 2022. I launched the Personnel Emoluments Dashboard which I can now access easily from my mobile phone and laptop.

15/01

This dashboard is updated every fortnight and contains all payroll information for all agencies starting from PE expenditure, unattached officers, new hires, staff strength, new positions created, establishment and vacancy, predictive analysis of pay and others.

I can now tell which government department or provincial administration is trending well and are in the green code, or which is not doing well and is in the red code; in terms of agency heads and provincial administrators managing their staff and their personnel emoluments.

The rollout of this dashboard has commenced and agency heads that have not received their dashboard credentials because they failed to attend the important workshop on 26 September 2022, must communicate quickly with my department.

Mr Acting Speaker, before I go on, I also want to speak outside of the speech. This is very important because we have 121 government agencies, and all those government agencies are headed by a minister or a governor as a political head.

I would like to appeal that you take responsibility to make sure that you oversee and provide directions for those agencies as the political head.

(d) Modernization of the Public Service Terms and Conditions

Mr Acting Speaker, on the public service housing front, NEC has approved the Public Private Partnership arrangement for International Finance Corporation (IFC) to act as the facilitator between the State and the developer.

Portion 1212 at Bomana was released by Correctional Services for public service housing development. The Public Service Housing Project was successfully launched on 14 September 2022, by the Honourable John Rosso when he was Acting Prime Minister, and construction will commence immediately. This land will cater for about 1,000 homes, which will accommodate our public servants, especially those in the lower to middle income brackets.

I also want to inform this Honourable House, that on 4 May 2022, NEC approved the National Medical and Life Insurance Policy for public servants and the establishment of the Public Service Board of Trustees to manage this policy. This is a major policy and is the first ever in the public service where we will see the State through the public servants, own this policy, and will benefit them in the long run and contribute to a proper welfare system.

The establishment has commenced with the Investment Promotion Authority (IPA) through the Registrar, who has approved and certified the creation of the Public Service Niucare Association.

Funding is being sourced from Department of Treasury for the office set-up and this is anticipated to commence in 2023, for all public servants and leaders under the *SRC Act*.

Mr Acting Speaker, at this juncture, I also want to commend the Marape-Rosso Government for recognizing and rewarding our public servants in allocating K42 million in the recently passed 2022 Supplementary Budget, even through this tough economic situation.

The PEA and the Department of Personnel Management, on behalf of the State, had signed the new three (3) per cent pay increase salary fixation agreement on 22 September 2022 for the period of 2022 to 2024 and the implementation by Department of Finance is likely to commence soon.

Mr Acting Speaker, as we move into the future with the public sector reforms and continuous cost-saving approach, the Ministry for Public Service is guided by the 29 resolutions approved by NEC in 2020, on public sector and cost control measures, which I will work in collaborative partnership with the Special Parliamentary Committee on Public Sector Reforms and Service Delivery to achieve our intended results. And that is to deliver effective

and efficient public services at minimal costs whilst at the same time, improving the performance of public servants by improving the systems and processes.

16/01

I will work in collaborative partnership with the Special Parliamentary Committee on Public Sector Reforms and Service Delivery to achieve our intended results which is to deliver effective and efficient public services at minimal costs whilst at the same time, improving the performance of public servants by improving the systems and processes.

Mr Acting Speaker, on the Legislative front, I want to thank the Parliament for passing the amendment to *Section 55* of the *Public Service Management Act* on the resignation of public servants to contest the election, especially the increase in the notice period to resign before issue of writs; from six months to 12 months, which will be implemented in the 2027 National General Election.

Resignation period for Public Servants to contest by-elections would be left open and re-entry into the civil service after losing the National General Elections and by-elections would be after five years.

In the recently concluded 2022 National General Election, a total of 75 public servants tendered their resignations properly to contest the 2022 National General Election. My department has written to the respective Agency Heads advising on their termination from the payroll and to fast track the calculations for DPM's vetting for payout. On the issue of the 40 medical doctors who resigned to contest the elections, the public service election database at DPM indicated that only five doctors out of the 40 had resigned properly following the proper procedures, and complied with the law while the others didn't.

The *Constitution* of Papua New Guinea gives right to every citizen to stand for the elections irrespective of being a public servant. Therefore, public servants are eligible to contest the elections but comply with provisions of the law. The current law is clear that they are allowed to apply back to the Public Service after five years, following the normal selection and recruitment process.

Mr Acting Speaker, with many HR issues, my department is considering placement of DPM HR compliance managers in the department agencies, with more focus in the provinces and districts. The Ministry and the Department wants to make sure that all agency heads are held accountable for the exercise of their delegated HR powers when applying the *General*

Orders so as to reduce large pay overruns resulting from mis-application of the *General Orders*.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am pleased to inform this Parliament that since the launching of the first-ever Public Service Human Resource Development Strategic Plan 2020-2050 on 24 June 2021 by the Prime Minister, work has commenced on developing key policies to address our on-going public sector issues and formulating a road-map to build a new generation of public service leaders of which some of these policies have been mentioned earlier.

Public Service Commission

Mr Acting Speaker, one of my intentions was to clean up Waigani first by getting the basics right in terms of human resource strategies and business processes. If we get the house in order in Waigani, or in our respective organisations and ensure human resource is fully functional, there will be limited human resource issues, and there will be less review cases with the Public Services Commission.

There are approximately 403 cases of terminations, suspensions or illegal sidelining of public servants with most of these being cases based on technical irregularities in the disciplinary process that agency heads (departmental heads, CEOs and provincial administrators) did not follow as per the process outlined in the *General Orders*.

So, if the Public Service Commission determines that these public servants are reinstated and their lost salaries are backdated, this will cost the State a huge liability, and the Government meets the cost, through our taxpayers.

Mr Acting Speaker, I have given instructions to my department to review the *Public Services Management Act* and the *Regulations* to insert a provision to hold agency heads personally accountable for disciplinary decision that they make which have cost implications to State. The State will not meet this costs anymore but individual agency heads will meet these liabilities. On the same token, an independent review is currently in progress to ascertain the proper roles of Department of Personnel Management and Public Services Commission which I will bring necessary legislative amendment to Parliament once this review is completed.

17/01

Pacific Institutes of Leadership and Governance (PILAG)

Mr Acting Speaker, on the capacity building and targeted training for our public servants, the Pacific Institute of Leadership and Governance (PILAG) as the premier institution for delivering courses for our public servants has now set a benchmark through its NEC-approved

policy document, on forging a new generation of future leaders through sustainable, stable and consistent public sector training for improved service delivery.

The policy is a major shift directed toward the human element of public service. The individual public servant in the organization must change in terms of attitude, commitment, and behavior towards work.

The policy is expected to bolster significant improvement in the performance of public servants as mandatory and compulsory training for all new public servants' intake beginning in 2023. The new intake will undergo a 2-year compulsory probationary period beginning with the first year Induction Program at PILAG (similar to LTI for lawyers) and graduate with a post-graduate certificate or diploma in public administration and a year of field placement in the districts and LLGs.

Mr Acting Speaker, this policy will ground the public servants in civil service matters as an important initial and integral phase of their public service career training where in their first 1-2 years of their probationary period, they are taught the values, principles, ethics and operational systems and processes of the government system. It will also be compulsory for any individual who intends to apply for a CEO position to attain the Competency-Based Leadership qualification from PILAG. These are some of the important changes that are being instituted into the Public Servants Training to instil ethical and competency in public service leadership of which the training is tailor-made to contribute to good governance so as to re-install public confidence in the bureaucratic machinery.

Mr Acting Speaker, in conclusion, the updates in the Ministry of Public Service outlined in this statement are linked to the Prime Minister's commitment made on behalf of our Government and are also in line with some of the reforms initiated by the former Government. The greatest challenge in the past and still remains for the Public Service and other State Services at present, is to achieve a balanced personnel emoluments budget.

The Ministry through the Department of Personnel Management has taken on board the directions from the Government to commence activities and develop policies that will eventually achieve this result within the next few years. The recent *Public Service (Management) Act 1995* (as amended) has provided for agency heads performance measurements and accountability, and through the online Agency Heads Performance Management System in place. This will be consistent with the amendments to the *Prime Minister and NEC Act 2002*, to also have ministers and governors accountable in the delivery of their KRAs to the Prime Minister.

In doing so, we will progressively overcome the challenges we face. I am confident that by working together, we will succeed in delivering on the Prime Minister's commitment to this Parliament to "Take Back Papua New Guinea" in the succeeding years of his tenure. But central to this success, is the performance-based political and bureaucratic partnerships that we are creating for the betterment of our country.

Before, I conclude, on behalf of the Department of Personal Management, I would like to point out to this House that the Department stands proud that one former officer is now the current Prime Minister of our country. I would also like to end by commending the Minister before me, in the likes of honorable Sir Puka Temu, Member for Abau, honorable Mr Elias Kapavore, Member for Pomio, and honorable Mr Soroi Eoe, Member for Kikori and Minister for Inter-Government Relations.

18/01

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker for giving me this opportunity to deliver my ministerial statement and may God continue to bless PNG. Thank you.

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE (Pomio) - I move –

That the Parliament take note of the paper.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, firstly, I commend the Minister for presenting his statement on the update of the Department of Personnel Management progress. And also, the Corporate Plan which was initiated in 2019 to 2022, which we launched, and I thank the Minister, Marape-Rosso Government for committing to implement this plan.

I also want to thank the Secretary for DPM and her team for making sure that it is implemented by the current government, which the Opposition fully supports.

My few comments firstly, I commend the Government for paying the retirees; the public servants who have met the compulsory retirement age, and are still in the system and have not been paid for some time. They will now be paid their final entitlements totalling K178 million. I commend the Government for taking this measure. Most of them have reached their retirement age and are waiting for their final entitlements. So, on behalf of the Opposition, I thank the Government for this important measure. I believe that there are many more in the system that also need to be paid.

Secondly, in regards to the performances of the departmental heads; it's one area which I was actually vocal about. We can continue to appoint people into the respective positions, but

it's a totally different thing to actually see whether they are performing or not. We have a system in place to assess the performance of public servants. Those who don't perform, despite several assessments being done, must be terminated for non-performance. In doing this, we can tighten the system to see improvements in the public service sector.

The other point is on personnel emoluments; a report had been presented today regarding agencies that are complying or expanding within the personnel emolument's targets for budgets and some of them have gone beyond their budget.

Which department is within the set mark in meeting their targets in relation to personnel emoluments every fortnight and which departments are not meeting their targets? What penalties will be applied on them? These are some of the issues which we can keep a track of through continuous exposure of public sector personnel emoluments which the Chairman for Public Service Delivery, Honourable Garry Juffa continues to debate on.

I fully support the Minister's comments in relation to the need for workers in the health sector because there is a big demand due to increase health facilities being constructed. Many submissions have been submitted to DPM for approval because of the increased health facilities. One of them is Pomio District Hospital which is under construction and an approved structure is with DPM.

With that I appeal to the Treasurer to kindly commit some funds. Just today, the good Minister for Health and I went to see the new cancer facility at the PMGH.

19/01

They are requesting for staff to man the state-of-the-art facility next year. I believe the Minister will bring in the report soon and we can be able to discuss that and make sure that the Government makes a commitment to fund this important service.

I thank the Minister for being here today and to be able to hear what we have said about health and welfare and safety of our public servants. It has been a concern and it is also an implementation of the DPM's Corporate Plan for 2019-2022. It is something that most of our public servants contribute to every fortnight. It is an important intervention here and we need to have this materialize quickly.

My last point refers to *section 55* of the *Public Services Management Act*. This was presented last year in Parliament and it states that public servants who want to contest the Elections must resign 12 months prior to election and those who do not win must stay out for five years before taking on any new public service roles. This is the point I am not happy about and I want it to be reviewed and have amendments made where necessary.

There are about 70 public servants who were in the highest post in the careers when they resigned to contest the elections. Many of them have attained prestigious qualifications and have vast experiences. They need to be reinstated into the public sector but this law says they need to wait another five years before they can be re-employed. I do not think this should continue and I believe we should have this section reviewed and maybe have it relaxed so they can join the public service after contesting. When they want to join the public sector, they must follow normal procedure to apply and be awarded on merit but the waiting period of five years must be reviewed.

Mr LUTHER WENGE (Morobe) – Mr Acting Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this very important paper. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Public Service for providing the statement for the department for this Parliament's consumption. I want to thank you especially for the two things that you have done in your department.

Firstly, for establishing an insurance policy and implementing it for the public servants. For many employees whether it is in the public sector or the private sector, our salary belongs to the tribe. That fortnight does not belong to that person who is working tirelessly throughout the week. When the family is in trouble or in need of something, they will only resort to their relatives who are working. At the end of the day, that money is exhausted. By the time the new week arrives, the public servant or the working class go out and seek people who are lending money. Many are illegal but people do what they need to survive. Many people are living on payday to pay day, mostly surviving on money lenders to sustain their life.

20/01

They get a loan and live a life of loan in this country. By the time the public servant concerned is sick or injured and he is required to go for treatment, he needs money. At that point, he would have no money because of the reasons I have already stated. Therefore, Mr Minister, by establishing the insurance company and implementing it, there would be an insurance coverage for those who are injured or sick during the course of their employment.

Secondly, when they die, they actually have no money in their bank account to cater for their funeral expenses and that is an undisputable fact of Papua New Guineans. Therefore, the Ministry is doing an excellent job and I want to commend the Minister and the Department for establishing the policy and making sure that the policy is implemented for the public servants.

Thirdly, I want to commend the Minister for the Public Servants increment. For ages, we know that there is a kina devaluation in this country. Our Kina's value is very bad compared to other currencies in the world. Every day, there is an increase in the price of goods we purchase and there is no mercy for Papua New Guinea public servants in the circumstances that I have stated earlier, and with the pay continuing to remain the same.

Mr Acting Speaker, the public servants are suffering. They have a big pressure for maintaining not just the immediate family but extended family or the tribe. Therefore, Mr Minister, for your Department to come up with the increase of salary, you have my unreserved commendations.

Mr Minister, in relation to the retrenchment, I commend you. I speak as a 13-year former public servant. I became a Member of Parliament, say for 15 years and I am here for my twentieth year. But, I served for 13 years as a public servant, a loyal one and a committed one without a doubt.

Mr Acting Speaker, for the retrenchment of the public service, I want to emphasise that public servants are professional people. They are not just Tom, Dick, and Harry from the streets picked to go work in the public service. They are highly qualified people. These days, they are highly qualified intellectuals from the universities. They come out with merits and we must treat them with respect. I fully endorse the statement made by the Opposition's spokesman on the quality of public servants that we have in this country.

Mr Acting Speaker, we must treat our public servants with respect as they are human beings too. They are bound to live for certain number of years and are going to die or get old like myself, but I'm not too old to be here.

Mr Acting Speaker, the fact of the matter is that they are getting old and they are getting sacked, with due respect to them, they have to retire.

There are so many university and college graduates who are unemployed today. They are roaming the streets and causing those troubles. They are young and energetic graduates and we need to employ them. We have to respectfully retrench the old public servants and replace them with these new graduates so that we have energetic, competent, intelligent, young public servants. We can keep the old ones there with respect, but as I said, they must be discharged respectfully. So, I see that we have to do more retrenchments in this country with more appropriation of money in order to do more recruitments.

Mr Acting Speaker, another thing I would like to commend you, Mr Minister, is that you are looking at housing for the public servants. They are not a bunch of birds or animals where you let them sleep anywhere and mistreat them and yet at the end of the day, they still come

and work hard. They are not your dogs where even though you don't treat them and feed them, when you call their names, they will waive their tails and come to you. Our public servants are intelligent human beings with integrity and we have to respect them and provide accommodation for them in this country.

21/01

Why do we not provide accommodation for them?

We don't play games with the public servants because they are the ones implementing the policies of the politicians. We have to look after them. I thank the Minister for doing a good job there.

Mr Acting Speaker, in relation to the public servants, may I extend it to the disciplinary forces as well. They must be formidable because they are the pride of this country.

When the people see the army and the police stand out in a very formidable fashion, the pride of this Nation is restored. If our disciplinary forces do not stand out in the eyes of this country and the international community, our reputation and pride is not in order. We have to improve the disciplinary forces.

Mr Prime Minister, with respect, we made more money. Mr Treasurer declared last time that we made almost K980 million. Apart from repaying our debts, some of those money must be used to build our disciplinary forces.

Mr Acting Speaker, the disciplinary forces are like ordinary public servants and that is not good for this country. If we were to be attacked by Australians tomorrow, we might all die. We must show them that we are a country with formidable disciplinary forces.

I would also like to concur with the Opposition's spokesman in relation to public servants who wish to contest for elections. If they lose, they have to stay for five years before coming to contest for elections again. That is clearly unconstitutional. That infringes on *Section 50* of the *Constitution*, 'the right for citizens to contest for election'.

As the Speaker said, many of these public servants are highly qualified. There are young people who contested for elections and when they lose, we stop them from coming and working in the public sector. I think we are depriving this nation of the services it needs.

Five years is too long. Let me put on record, if this law continues to stay on, we will file a Supreme Court reference based on *Section 50* of the *PNG Constitution*. I want to make that clear to you. I support the Opposition's spokesman on this matter.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to surely commend the Minister for the statement he placed before this Honourable House. Now we know the state of the public servants in this

country and to what degree we can help to improve to make the public service a formidable place for public servants in this country.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

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

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

Paper Noted.

Mr RAINBO PAITA (Finschaffen – Minister for Finance and Implementation) – Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to thank members on both sides of the House for attending our first day of Parliament. As I have always said, Parliament takes precedence over any business that we have. It is comforting to see that we have a fair number of members on both sides attending the first day of Parliament.

So, I put on record, as the Leader for Government Business and thank everyone that has attended. Those who couldn't make it here today, we have given them a leave of absence from this Parliament.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 4.30 p.m.