

FOURTH DAY

Friday 14 October 2022

DRAFT HANSARD

Subject:

Page No.:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS – GRADE 8 STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF GOLDIE RIVER PRIMARY SCHOOL – STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER	1
QUESTIONS	2
Establish Papua New Guinea Embassy in Jerusalem	2
Shortage of Doctors for Bulolo Hospital	4
Drought in Eastern Highlands	6
Mining and Tax Benefits - Kutubu	7
UBS Inquiry Recommendation Status	8
UNRE Popondetta Campus	11
The roll-out of the STEM Education	13
The Price of Internet	13
Early Childhood Education Policy	15
ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTION	17
GRIEVANCE DEBATE	19
Funding for Rural Airstrips	19
Members Absenteeism	20
Monitor Fraudulent Land Deals – Lands Department	20
Lawlessness in our Country	23
Uphold Functions of the Legislature	26
Establish Ombudsman for Public Service	29
The Reporting Structure of the New Departments	29
Funding for Cancer Treatment Facility	30
Include New Britain Highway Bridges – Connect PNG Program	31
Eviction (Morata and in PNG)	32
Funding for Establishment of Hiri Koiari District Administration	36
MOTION BY LEAVE	37
LEAVE OF ABSENCE	38
MOTION BY LEAVE	38
SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS	38
PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS	38
PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS	39
SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT	40
ADJOURNMENT	40

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

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Corrections maybe marked on a photocopy of the Daily Draft Hansard and lodged at the Office of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter, A1-23 (next to the Security Control Room).

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

Amendments cannot be accepted over the phone.

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



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KENNETH SEBEPMIN

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FOURTH DAY

Friday 14 October 2022

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

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

Sitting suspended.

Mr Acting Speaker again took the Chair at 11.05 a.m., and invite the Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture and the Member for Samarai-Murua, **Honourable Isi Henry Leonard**, to say Prayers:

'Our Heavenly Father, we take this moment to take our minds away from the distractions of this world and what surrounds us, we bring our mind back and raise it to you this morning because mighty God, we need you and seek your guidance today. We come before you as mere human beings who are weak and have shortfalls. We ask you for your forgiveness this morning, cleanse us with the blood of Jesus and redeem us so that you can answer our prayers. We acknowledge you this morning to rain over us and to fill us with your Spirit as we go into this very important session. We commit to you, our leaders who are present here this morning. May you bless our Prime Minister, the Opposition Leader and also the Speaker of this House. Mighty God, bless each and every one of us. Take charge of this occasion and lead us with your Spirit. Mighty God, may we sincerely discuss and bring forth into this House the important issues that affect this country of Papua New Guinea. Mighty God, bless us this morning. Amen'.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS – GRADE 8 STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF GOLDIE RIVER PRIMARY SCHOOL – STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I wish to acknowledge the presence of Grade 8 Students and Teachers from Goldie River Primary School who are

seated at the Public Gallery today. On behalf of the National Parliament, I extend a very warm welcome.

QUESTIONS

Establish Papua New Guinea Embassy in Jerusalem

Mr LUTHER WENGE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I rise to direct my questions to the Prime Minister, the Honourable James Marape.

Mr Acting Speaker, on the 16th of September 1975, we declared this country an independent nation amongst other nations of the world. We declared unreservedly in the guiding hands of God, that God is the God of Israel, the God of Hebrew and Judah.

Mr Prime Minister, I want to commend you without reservation. You have taught this nation and delivered to the nation in an unambiguous term by declaring to the rest of the world that this country is a Christian country. You declared and said quite clearly that you wanted to amend the *Constitution* to accommodate that assertion.

Mr Prime Minister, by virtue of us accepting the God of Israel and God of Hebrew as our God, we are saying that Israel as a nation are our brothers and sisters.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are as follows:

(1) Can the Prime Minister negotiate with the Prime Minister of Israel to establish a Papua New Guinea embassy in Jerusalem?

02/04

I want to make it clear that our nation has almost 100 per cent of its population who are Christians, compared to all the nations in the Pacific. Even Australia has a smaller number of Christians, and because we have the highest number, we should declare this nation as a Christian country?

(2) Could you liaise with the Prime Minister of Israel to give us permission to establish an Israel embassy in Papua New Guinea?

(3) Could our Prime Minister also invite the Prime Minister and the Government of Israel to establish an embassy in Papua New Guinea?

Currently they have an embassy in Australia but Australia has less number of Christians compared to us and it is right for the Israeli Government to establish its embassy in our country.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I am happy with the questions raised by the Governor of Morobe in relation to our relationship with the nation of Israel. Before I answer his questions, I would like to say here that in relation to PNG being a Christian country; when our forefathers and mothers when the Constituent Assembly was adopted on 15 August 1975, they did acknowledge that we are a Christian nation, therefore from the amendments that we are working on, we just want to entrench that without compromising or stopping other religions from practicing their beliefs in our country.

In regards to the establishment of an embassy in Jerusalem, I think in 2013, the then Prime Minister, the Honourable Peter O'Neill led a delegation to Israel and there was a convention around that issue. The Israeli Government from our brief gave indication of a land in Jerusalem to accommodate our embassy.

In my recent United Nations engagement, I spoke to his Excellency Yair Lapid, the current Prime Minister of Israel, he was very pleased and he did acknowledge Papua New Guinea's support to Israel on many occasions. There was also a conversation on me visiting Israel and him visiting Papua New Guinea. That will flow into our bilateral arrangements. It is not just our religious affinity that should connect us to Israel but also for the fact that it has a knowledge-based economy.

Israel has an economy that exports agriculture that is grown using the hydroponics technology. As we speak, it has eight flights per week dedicated to the export of vegetables and fruits produced which is almost half the size of Angoram district. They are thriving on agriculture in a rocky environment and are exporting worldwide.

We can learn a lot from them and our bilateral relationship should not be solely on our religious affinity but more importantly in the area of technology, and learning more from them. That conversation is timely and I thank the Governor for his questions.

I did meet the Prime Minister of Israel in New York and we had that conversation. I look forward to our officials progressing on what the political leaders did so that we do not leave it to waste, as it is an opportunity available in entrenching a bilateral relationship with the nation of Israel.

Mr Luther Wenge – Point of Order!

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member for Bulolo, resume your seat and I'll entertain the Governor's point of order.

Mr Luther Wenge — Point of Order! With due respect to the Prime Minister, I have specifically asked him whether he could ask the Prime Minister of Israel and his Government to establish our embassy in Jerusalem. My second question was specifically on whether he could ask the Prime Minister of Israel to establish an Israeli Embassy in Papua New Guinea. He hasn't answered these questions yet.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER — Honourable Prime Minister, I think, I heard you answer him in a diplomatic way but I think the Governor wants you to be more specific on the questions so I'll ask you to reply.

Mr JAMES MARAPE — Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I thank the Governor for raising a Point of Order for me, to be precise. We have established meetings amongst the leaders already. The issue of establishing a PNG embassy in Israel and Israeli embassy in PNG will include a bilateral exchange.

Mr Acting Speaker, what my Government and the Israeli Government will do is discuss that and hopefully next year, I will visit them first and then they can visit us. The establishment of an embassy in PNG and an embassy in Israel will be part of this bilateral discussion.

Thank you.

Shortage of Doctors for Bulolo Hospital

Mr SAM BASIL JNR — Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker for recognising the people of Bulolo. My question is directed to the Health Minister, Honourable Lino Tom but since he is not present, I will redirect it to the Prime Minister.

The question I want to ask concerns our hospital. I had a chat with the good Minister already and hope he is ready to give me a positive response today. The hospital itself is very attractive with furniture and medical equipment. However, the problem we have is manpower; we don't have medical doctors there. I just want to ask if there is any way to bring in doctors to reside there. The staff housing facilities are already provided and I have to

thank the PNG Forest Product company for assisting us with the hospital's infrastructure. The hospital is situated in the premises of the company.

This hospital is not for Bulolo alone. The hospital also serves Menyamya and Wau-Waria as well. So, to serve the people of these three districts, we need some doctors there. I am aware that two big mining are coming up and I do not want the people to travel to Angau Hospital in Lae. It's risky traveling there. I want my people to enjoy and benefit from their hospital there.

One of the reasons, I raise this question is because some of people there don't have proper housing. For example, the Bulolo-Sepiks. They are living in care centres and if there is any disease outbreak there, we will have a problem.

Thank you.

Mr JAMES MARAPE — Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Bulolo for asking that question. I also to want commend and congratulate him for winning the Bulolo Open seat. I think this is your third or fourth time to stand on the Floor to ask questions. This is the place where we stand to talk and ask question; and you can stand and ask questions on behalf of your people. If the Government doesn't respond well or forgets to respond, you can ask again. Just because we are in the Government doesn't mean that government members must keep their mouths shut and sit quiet.

04/04

I am very happy that the Member of Bulolo, asked this question.

I take note of your question, the Minister is not present and he sent his apology. He is attending to the death of the Administrator of Enga Province. I will ensure that he can attend to posting a doctor to the Bulolo hospital.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr EKIME MEK GOROSAHU - Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to ask my questions on behalf of the people of Daulo. This is the first time; I rise in this honourable House. I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as the Speaker of this honourable House. I would also like to congratulate the Prime Minister for being re-elected as Member for Tari-Pori and Prime Minister, the Opposition Leader and his

Deputy Opposition Leader for forming the Opposition, and all the ministers who have been appointed to a ministerial portfolio.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are directed to the Minister for Defense and Disaster and it relates to the prolonged drought in the Highlands Region. We have been experiencing drought for almost three to four months –

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order! Can you ask the good Member, to direct his questions to the Prime Minister because the Minister for Defense and Disaster is not present?

Thank you.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Your Point of Order is in order.

Honourable Member, the Minister for Defense and Disaster is not present so direct your question to the Prime Minister.

Drought in Eastern Highlands

Mr EKIME MEK GOROSAHU – Yes, I re-direct my questions to the Honourable Prime Minister.

In the Eastern Highlands, especially in my electorate, we have been experiencing drought for the past four to five months and our food crops are not growing well. So many people have been asking how the government can assist the people during this time.

How can the Government assist my people in the situation that we are in?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to thank the Member for Daulo, for his question and also for rising for the first time on this Floor.

I would like to also apologize that the Minister for Defense and Disaster, and other ministers are not present because they are attending to court cases and some of the Eastern Highlands members are attending the funeral service of the Managing Director of PNG Ports which is today so they have been excused to go.

Back to your point, I was also informed by the members of East New Britain about the extended drought that they are experiencing in their province. The Weather Office has reported that places like New Ireland, Manus, Morobe areas will also possibly experience this so we are looking at how best we may give relief support.

In the meantime, if there are other resources that can support then we should use them but the National Government will have a holistic approach on the issue of this prolonged drought experienced in the northern part of our country, including the New Guinea islands region.

I assure you that we are going to look into it and have a program to assist our people in drought-affected areas.

Thank you.

05/04

Mining and Tax Benefits - Kutubu

Dr BILLY JOSEPH – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for the recognition. My questions are directed to the Prime Minister. I understand that two days ago, we agreed not to direct all the questions to him, but my questions deal with issues relating to National Planning, so the Minister can take note.

The Kutubu Oil project in my electorate commenced in 1992 and today it has passed 30 years. My electorate is in dire needs of basic services, I see that many governments in the past and present are neglecting us. Chevron, Oil Search, and Santos wanted to seal the roads from Poroma to Kutubu since 1992, but even to this day, the road has not been sealed.

Yesterday, the Minister for Works and Highway presented the ministerial statement on the Connect PNG Road Program and this road has not been captured. Santos is using this road and when P'nyang LNG comes on board, oil will be transported back to Kutubu via this road.

I see that Mt Bosavi LLG is located in Nipa-Kutubu, and in Hela, they have Mt Cesar. Even to this day, these two LLGs have no road link. This is unfair because it is not captured in the Connect PNG Program. I just want an assurance from the Prime Minister to assure the people of Nipa-Kutubu, especially Mt Bosavi and Mt Cesar where these important projects are located.

Mr Acting Speaker, my questions are as follows:

(1) Do we have any plans to connect the roads from Mt Bosavi and Mt Cesar, and seal the road from Poroma to Kutubu?

I also thank the Government for increasing the tax credit scheme from 0.75 per cent to two per cent. I had discussions with Santos, ExxonMobil, and other development partners and they are not aware of this increase.

(2) Can the Prime Minister direct the National Planning Secretary to write to the development partners advising them that the tax credit scheme has been increased from 0.75 per cent to two per cent?

(3) The Kutubu agreement has passed 30 years; is there any plan for us to review this agreement because we don't know how much tax has been paid to the government for the last 30 years.

We know that for gas, from 2014 until today; almost eight years, the PNG LNG project has paid K14 billion in tax. This year alone PNG LNG will pay a K5 billion tax to this country.

(4) How much, out of that K5 billion and K14 billion, did the Government spend on the project footprint electorates and provinces? Because in my electorate I don't see any developments there.

UBS Inquiry Recommendation Status

To conclude, yesterday we had discussions about the UBS inquiry and I come from a project host electorate.

(5) The UBS inquiry report has been tabled so when will the Government take appropriate actions against these recommendations and findings?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to respond to the questions asked by the Member for Nipa-Kutubu.

He asked four questions; to the people of Mt Bosavi, Mt Cesar and the people bordering Hela, Gulf, Southern Highlands, and Western Province, you are not missing out on this Connect PNG blueprint. Similar to the people of Karamui, and all the last frontiers of Papua New Guinea including Gembogl, Bundi, Baiyer-Ramu; some have been mentioned and others we have put together in the next tranche where we identified the need for link roads.

The Mt Bosavi area is featured in this and I will ask Works Department to ensure that it is included in the Connect PNG Program. We will utilize the tax credit funds to build this road.

Mr Acting Speaker, just to inform Parliament this is an important strategic area in terms of integration of Papua New Guinea where LNG Project is concerned.

06/04

It links the Juha and Muruk fields, and it continues up northwest to P'nyang. The Southern-Papuan Fold Belt area is home to our many gas resources. These pipelines from additional fields will be linked back into the central processing facility in Kutubu.

The areas in Southern Highlands, Hela, Gulf and Western are also important and are in the Connect PNG Program. If it is not clear before, I hope it is now. I assure the Member for Nipa-Kutubu, that I will make sure this road is cleared.

For the tax credit project; I want to inform this Parliament that we have approved two per cent for the tax credit interventions. The one per cent is for project areas where the projects are some of our key enabling projects to link these areas in our country to be attended to.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Member mentioned the state of the roads from Kutubu to the Highlands Highway and it is just embarrassing. After 30 years of oil and gas production, this road has not been sealed. I want to assure the good people of PDL 2, PDL 5 and PDL 6 area in Kutubu, that we have talked with Santos and ExxonMobil to utilise the tax credit facility, so that the one per cent can be used to start up some work for the next few years going forward. Just like how we negotiated with Ok Tedi and utilised their tax credit facility to seal the road from Kiunga to Tabubil.

We have harvested this resource for the last 30 to 40 years and we have not ploughed back into permanent infrastructures in those areas. Hopefully, the combination of utilising tax credit can assist in restarting some of the roads in the Connect PNG Program in those areas.

On the Kutubu Agreement review, the Petroleum Minister is here, and if the provisions allow for the agreement to be reviewed, we will certainly look into it.

As for how much was given to the project area; I will ask our team to check the records, and I can later write to the Member. I can also inform the Parliament on how much have we given back to the project areas, in terms of development of these projects areas since the project started in 1990.

Mr Acting Speaker, in response to the UBS inquiry, it will not collect dust. We are assembling teams, and one specific team will be responsible for the criminal prosecution domestically to mainly deal with law breakers in our country. On the other hand, we are investigating beneficiaries of the UBS transactions.

The inquiry has found out that, the UBS has knowingly facilitated the transaction of the loan, disregarding the laws of our country and not clearing the transaction. We are now

working with international lawyers and are putting together a credible team to ensure that we recoup some of the money back.

We will also file a lawsuit against UBS and others involved in the transaction that saw Papua New Guinea lose money in this failed transaction.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, and hope I answered some of the questions that the Member asked to the best of my ability.

07/04

Mr RICHARD MASERE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Firstly, while I have the Floor, let me take this opportunity to thank my people of Popondetta Open for giving me the opportunity to represent them again in this House. I would also like to thank the people of Ijivitari for the opportunity they gave me in the last term of Parliament to serve them on this Floor of Parliament. I would also like to congratulate you on your appointment as the Deputy Speaker.

With that, I would like to direct my question to the Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, and Sports and I would also like to congratulate the Minister on re-election as the member for Kandep and also on his ministerial appointment. I know he is a capable leader and I look forward to working with him to address some of the issues concerning higher education in my province.

I wanted to raise some questions on your statement yesterday. I was very pleased with the '60-day plan'. I can see that your statement targets the '60-day plan' which are key areas to address labour force in this country. A lot of our education institutions in this country are spitting out young people into the society cannot find a decent job. There are about 15, 000 young people out of tertiary institutions every year, out of that only about a thousand find employment.

We have to target certain areas, particularly where we can harness and put young people into those areas. I believe agriculture is one of those important areas that we need to target as a government. In the past, we produced a lot of intellectual people within the space of agriculture when we used to operate the petty colleges, in the seventies, eighties and nineties

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honorable Members, we have limited time for question time so make your question.

UNRE Popondetta Campus

Mr RICHARD MASERE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, but it is important that I flag these important issues, while I have this opportunity.

My question to the Minister is, the UNRE Popondetta Campus is secondary to Vudal Campus, Vudal is the primary university, and Popondetta Campus is the secondary university attached to Vudal. Most of the funding sent from the Department of Higher Education goes directly to the Vudal campus and it is from there that distributes the funds to the university in Popondetta. So the university is facing quite a lot of issues but is unable to address them because of funding being restricted to the Vudal Campus.

(1) Can the Minister, look at separating the Campus in Popondetta, to run independently, although it is aligned with the Vudal Campus, can it be given independence to operate and function administratively? So that funds are directly sent to that university.

(2) And if so, can it also be given the power to recruit academics to teach students about agriculture?

08/04

Right now, they are only offering diploma and certificate courses.

(3) Can the Office of Higher Education upgrade this Campus to also offer degree programs for students so that we can start contributing to society in terms of agriculture?

Mr DON POLYE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I want to thank the Member for Popondetta for his important questions in relation to whether the Popondetta Agriculture College can be granted university status to offer degree courses, yes, we can do that.

The second question is whether it can be considered as an independent university; I will give priority to the existing universities first before creating new universities. However, I will have to seek ways for it to be financially independent so that it can operate properly.

I will grant independence. But I will –

Mr Richard Masere – Point of Order!

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – What is your Point of Order?

Mr RICHARD MASERE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, just a clarification, I understand it has a university status as in, University of Natural Resources. And I don't think he can seek further from outside. It has already operated as Popondetta campus as an arm of the university.

Thank you.

Mr DON POLYE – Yes, I understand that but we cannot consider making it an independent university, that won't be possible and I reject it. We can give it autonomy to exist as a subsidiary college to the University of Natural Resources and Environment (UNRE). We can provide the necessary resources in terms of finance for them to manage and operate properly.

The third question is in relation to staffing and courses taught there, particularly in agriculture which must create jobs and the students must have the skills to perform. I can assure you that the Marape-Rosso Government's main focus is to make sure that the graduates find employment. And I mentioned that in my presentation yesterday.

Otherwise, these are very relevant questions and we will deal with them.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JAMES DONALD – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I want to ask a question in relation to the Minister's statement yesterday, in relation to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, it seems that you are trying to ask a new question. The question we have is in relation to the Popondetta Campus of UNRE.

Mr James Donald – I understand that but the Member asked questions in relation to his statement yesterday.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, since you have the Floor, I will ask you to consider your question as a new question.

Mr JAMES DONALD – Thank you, for allowing me to ask a new question.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member before you do so. I ask all members to take note of that and not to use Supplementary Question time to ask new questions.

Mr JAMES DONALD – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, my question is in relation to the Ministers statement on STEM. which is science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education.

09/04

STEM is encompassing the future of Papua New Guinea. And if we were to bring that curriculum quickly, I am an avid fan that wants to see that curriculum being rolled out quickly.

The roll-out of the STEM Education

So, when will the department or the Ministry bring that into reality so that it can be rolled out nationwide?

Mr DON POLYE – In relation to the Member's question, I would like to say that I made it clear in my statement yesterday. The Marape-Rosso Government is awake and we are doing our best to have such programs rolled out.

The Price of Internet

Mr MARSH NARAWEC – Thank you, Acting Speaker, for acknowledging the people of Wau-Waria by giving me the opportunity to speak. My question is directed to the Minister for Information, Communication, and Technology.

Before I ask my question, I would like to congratulate him for his very informative ministerial statement which he presented a few days ago.

He has really taken the department to the next level by creating several policies and acts in the ministry, and the ICT sector is on the right footing under his leadership.

My question relates to renaming the ITC sector to the Digital sector. Central to the digital sector is the internet which is the main component of the digital sector and central to the internet is the internet pricing, access, and speed.

We have for the last couple of years invested a lot of money into connecting the Coral Sea cables that connect the internet with Australia and the Kumul Submarine cables that connect Vanimo with Port Moresby, East New Britain, and all the provinces in country. A lot

of money has been spent on these connections. We have also been promised that internet pricing will drop after such connections but right now that is not so. The price of using the internet in PNG is very high compared to other regions and maybe the world. Internet is no longer want it is a necessity in the digital sector.

Can the Minister please tell the people of Papua New Guinea what his department is doing to bring the internet price down?

Mr TIMOTHY MASIU- Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, and thank the Member for Wau-Waria for his question relating to the internet pricing in the country and the region.

It is true that we talked about dropping the internet prices and this is one area that we are still having discussions on. This is one big issue at the moment because everyone is now using internet technology to carry out business, education, travel, and just about everything. We are doing our best to try and reduce the price of internet usage in the country.

10/04

There are some contributing factors that are causing the cost of the internet to remain high, one of which is the gateway for the internet. The internet gateway we have in Papua New Guinea is only one and that is a technical area. If I want to describe this technical area, it is time consuming so let me say that it is like a highway where vehicles are speeding back and forth. There is a big main highway and there are also some other small feeder roads for vehicles to move back and forth as well. Imagine using the feeder roads to come out to the main highway, if there is traffic so you wait and give way to the speeding vehicles. That is the simplest explanation I can give to make you understand how the internet works.

Right now, we have only one internet gateway and we are in the process of creating another gateway for the country, so that internet access is at a speedier phase, not like the way it is at the moment.

I am also looking at how we could bring internet services to districts and provinces at a speedier phase. We must understand that in districts, we have a financial system that works with the internet and if we don't have internet connections in our districts, the IFMS will not function.

We will also have some issues with the internet pricing. Right now, my Department is working on it and we will announce it when the time is right. We are doing all we can to make sure that the internet price is dropped and the internet speed is faster.

In addition, the internet is a foreign way of communicating with systems of computer networks and it is new to our people. I have to be very frank that the internet brings with it a lot of issues; such as cyber security, cybercrime, cyber abuse, and other cyber-related issues.

As a Minister, I must look at how best our people can access the internet service and that the internet service is fast and cheaper. There are also too many people using the internet today for things that are not right and as Minister responsible, I must look into it. There are a lot of terrifying things like criminal activities taking place through the internet. We are therefore building our cybersecurity at the department and for the Government to make sure that we protect our citizens.

Our people must be literate on how to use the internet services and how best it can benefit them. Literate people are using the internet properly and with a purpose while illiterates do not understand the usage of the internet. They access it through their devices and when they use it, they abuse it.

Therefore, in response to answer the question, I want to say that we are working to upgrade the internet service and reduce the cost. It's not an easy thing to do overnight. There have been questions on reducing internet costs for businesses.

11/04

I apologize to the business communities that the price of the internet is still high but we will get there.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Early Childhood Education Policy

Mr BENJAMIN MUL – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for giving me time to ask my question to the Minister for Higher Education, Honourable Mr Don Polye.

I commend the Minister for the report that he presented yesterday, but there is something missing.

On 28 July 2022, NEC approved a new policy for early childhood education in PNG, but in the Minister's report, he didn't mention anything about this policy; early childhood education is very important for this country.

We are only talking about big things but if we really want to change our country, especially the mindset of our people and reduce all kinds of evil, we have to start off with early childhood education.

Many times, we talk about primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions but not early childhood education. If we have a program for early childhood based on biblical or Christian principles, then I think that we will have a better country.

Yesterday, when I looked through your report, I did not see anything on early childhood education but I know that the Prime Minister and NEC have already approved the Early Childhood Education Policy and implementation.

My questions are as follows:

(1) Have you seen the Early Childhood Education Policy? and

(2) When are we going to implement this policy?

Thank you.

Mr DON POLYE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker; these are good questions that the Honorable Member for North-Wahgi, has asked. Yesterday, I presented the platform of the Marape-Rosso Government under the Department for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology Ministry which covers the students who come out from Grade 12 and can further their studies in tertiary institutions, colleges, and TVET; these are sectors that I make policies for.

Now from early childhood up to Grade 12 they will come under the Education Ministry and I believe that the Education Minister will bring the Early Childhood Education Policy and align it with the policy I presented yesterday. It should address early childhood education as per 29 July 2022, NEC Decision.

Under the Higher Education Policy, I presented yesterday, there is TVET training where the teachers colleges come under, and that is the sector I am in charge of. This is where we want to train teachers to teach quality early childhood education which will come under the Minister for Education.

I just wanted to clarify that there are two components; higher education and general education.

12/04

Mr Acting Speaker, the issue raised by the Honourable Member for North Waghi is very important. I believe that we must address this issue and it will be addressed adequately by training teachers in early childhood. Also, for the policy under the Minister Jimmy Uguro; how will we articulate this as a government going forward in the next five years. So, we

believe in the value principles; we believe in enlightenment of the human mind; we believe in awakening in our systems, and we will make sure that we train that in the early stages of the child's education.

If the past generations failed to do this, then we will focus on the new generations to develop it. So, I advise the Member to work with me and the Education Minister to develop this policy together.

Thank you, very much Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – The Honourable Members, I understand that we have many members who wish to ask questions but our time has lapsed.

ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTION

Mr HENRY AMULI (Sohe-Minister for Commerce and Industry) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I ask leave of Parliament to answer questions raised by our good Member for Menyamya yesterday.

Thank you.

Leave granted.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to answer questions raised by Member for Menyamya yesterday.

Mr Acting Speaker, the questions directed to me related to the lack of control on the influx of substandard or unsafe products being imported by traders in our country which are put on shelves and sold to our people. National Institute of Standards and Industrial Technology (NISIT) is the body responsible for developing standards for products and services in PNG.

However, it is concerning to see that many low quality or sub-standard products are flooding our markets.

Mr Acting Speaker, the question was if NISIT has developed Papua New Guinea standards for foods and non-food items coming into the country, and if the *NISIT Act 1993* has sufficient provisions or treatment and regulations to control the imports to ensure only

standard products are entering our country and find their way to the shelves of the traders in our country.

Mr Acting Speaker, these are very important questions raised by the good Member for Menyamya. We all go to shops to buy things and many a time we are not assured whether what we wear, buy or use is a standard product or not.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Honourable Member for Menyamya is correct in raising the issues that the current *NISIT Act 1993* gives provisions for NISIT to develop voluntarily standards only and provide commercially-driven quality services for calibration, accreditation, and certification; which covers product certification of exports and products verifications of imports.

Mr Acting Speaker, the current *NISIT Act* enables the core functions for NISIT to operate as a service provider of Government but has no explicit regulatory powers when it comes to the enforcement of standards.

The *NISIT Act* allows market forces to dictate only a quality of goods and services.

13/04

Over the past years NISIT has experienced that consumer behaviour has led our markets and the business houses to an all-time low on the expectations of the quality in products and services. The cheaper standard products that find their way into our markets are preferred by our consumers.

Only a limited market for quality product exists. To reverse this market, NISIT had to carefully work on reviewing its *Act* to add in an optional pathway for development of standards.

Mr Acting Speaker, the revised *NISIT Act* has major reviews that has new inclusions which are not in the current *Act*, and they include; voluntary standards development, mandatory standards development, and necessary enforcement provisions and penalties for non-compliance in items of its conformity assessment schemes.

NISIT will roll out a compulsory product certification and product verification program. NISIT will have a compulsory accreditation scheme for testing laboratories. All laboratories must be accredited or they won't operate.

Mr Acting Speaker, all government regulators will be subject to compulsory accreditation for their inspections and surveillance functions, to ensure that regulations are in line with the PNG standards set for the sector.

NISIT has worked on the draft *NISIT Act* for the last two years, and the finalised draft was submitted on the 15th September to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for their input.

Mr Acting Speaker, this revised law will give NISIT the required provisions to act with its stakeholders to bring PNG's market standard problem under control. Hence, we must support NISIT to have its new bill passed for it to discharge its duties.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Question proposed –

That grievances be noted.

Funding for Rural Airstrips

Mr WAKE GOI (Jimi) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I want to raise some points regarding rural airstrips. Because of the changes in aviation, one-engine planes have been done away with. We now use caravan planes that travel much faster. All our airstrips in the rural areas need to be upgrade to accommodate bigger planes.

I understand that we are now preparing for the Budget, so I want to raise this concern so that the Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation can take note. We need to increase the budget for rural airstrips, as it is part of linking rural areas to the urban areas.

We are only concentrating on roads and have forgotten about the airstrips. For places like Jimi, Middle Ramu, Western, Gulf and Obura-Wonenara are places, that need planes to reach them. These areas are very isolated and might need K10 million to K20 million to build, or upgrade airstrips. We do not travel by cars anymore but by chartered planes. We do not use all our airstrips, but only one or two, like the ones in my electorate.

14/04

I use an airstrip and therefore have concerns over rural airstrips. I not only speak for myself but for other members who have rural airstrips in their electorates. If there is a way that we can all work together to have a budget ceiling for rural airstrips to submit to RAA for an increase, that would really help and solve the missing link of air transport for the transport

of cargoes, coffee, passengers, sick patients, drugs, education, and health supplies to be flown in and out of rural areas. Thank you.

Members Absenteeism

Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – Thank you, Acting Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to say a few things, I have a few grievances that I wish to talk about.

Firstly, I would like to just point out for the benefit of our people and for the media to take note that a large number of our members of Parliament are involved in election petitions and have been required to turn up in court even during Parliament sessions therefore they are absent. So, in case the people or the media report that certain members of Parliament are absent, the fact of the matter is that they have been taken away and are attending to court matters. I want to make this point so that it can be reported and clarified to our people. That is one point I wanted to make on behalf of myself and all other colleagues who are attending this election petition matters.

Monitor Fraudulent Land Deals – Lands Department

The other issue I want to raise is and I want the Minister of Lands take note. An incident occurred which has been reported on of our daily newspapers in regards to a policeman who was shot during an eviction exercise that took place in Port Moresby. I just wish to make a few points about this.

This incident should not have happened if the responsible department was performing its duties to manage this very vital asset; the land for which it is responsible. Especially, State land although it is also responsible for traditional land. Depending on what statistics you read, between 10 and 15 per cent of land is available as State land for investors and for government business so forth.

I would like to point out that the Department of Lands has not been doing a good job at managing this very important asset. As a result, you will see that a lot of this land has been illegally occupied by our own citizens who are here because of urban drift. This is an issue that we need to resolve, why is this happening? We need to understand this and counter active measures. In some instances, there genuine investors involved in taking up State land for development purposes, we have no problem with this. In fact, any law abiding person will have no problem with this. If they are following the laws that strictly dictate how they should be performing in acquiring and developing that land. If it's an individual, then obviously for what purposes? If it's a company, is it a legitimate company registered for tax purposes

registered with the Investment Promotion Authority; and how it has been performing as an established company.

15/04

We have an issue here and I want the Minister for Lands, Physical Planning and Urbanisation, the Ministers for International Trade and Investment, and Commerce and Industry who is responsible for the Investment Promotion Authority (IPA) to take note.

There are a number of companies who are not genuine in how they operate in our country. They are using Papua New Guineans as fronts to illegally obtain land for whatever reason or purpose. The fact is that, since they are using PNG citizens, we need to be concerned.

Firstly, they are avoiding taxes and secondly, they are actually engaging in fraud. Many times Papua New Guineans are engaged as directors and shareholders but the details are in the bank accounts. Are they bank account signatories? What happens with the bank accounts for these companies?

Although they might be listed as directors and shareholders, the fact is that the bank account details will tell you who the real owners are. And under the pretext of being a Papua New Guinean company and enjoying certain tax benefits, they are able to carry out these activities and one of which is land grabbing.

There are now significant reports coming out on social media but it has to be verified because not everything can be trusted let alone print media news. Can we review the information that is coming out? Certain companies and individuals have been named. An investigation needs to be taken by both your departments, including the police because these are matters of fraud.

They should be interested now that one of their own has been shot while executing his duties. Is this company a genuine investor? Are these Papua New Guinean shareholders and are the directors signatories to the bank account and the actual dealings of that company? That is what needs to be investigated.

As Chairman of the Special Parliamentary Committee on Public Sector Reform, we will be issuing letters to the heads of the departments asking them as to what they are going to do about this particular instance. It's happening throughout the country and it's not just foreign companies that are doing it. It's also Papua New Guinean companies that are using fronts to go out and grab land. This does not excuse the people who are unlawfully squatting

on that land. That in itself is also in breach of various laws. It also highlights the facts that the Department of Lands is failing to manage this very vital asset.

I want to commend the Deputy Prime Minister for carrying out a magnificent job. I would like you to look at an IT system that was developed for Lands which cost this country more than K40 million. That was a scam by the way and it should be investigated. At a cost of K40 million for such a system, you think we would have a very effective asset management mechanism in place to prevent this sort of issues from occurring.

In regards to the matter on IPA; Mr Acting Speaker, IPA has become a mere rubber stamp inviting anyone and everyone into this country and registering anyone who wants to do any type of business in here. All these government departments and entities have a responsibility to protect the economy of this nation and the interest of our people. They have a vital role to play as enforcers of the laws that they are supposed to be administering that.

Often times, we are always blaming the police for not doing their job, not doing enough, or not doing it properly, but the fact of the matter is, many of these government departments are simply not stepping up in doing their jobs.

16/04

In the instance of IPA, they are not doing a survey of companies operating in this country to see if they are actually sticking to what they had registered to do in terms of business in the country.

Many of them come in to do a particular business and suddenly they are in another part of the country doing something completely different from what they initially registered to do. Many of them are using friends, Papua New Guineans, and avoiding certain taxes because they are deemed to be PNG companies. The IPA cannot be just a rubber stamp. It must vigorously protect the interest of Papua New Guineans and Papua New Guinea. These are my grievances to this particular matter. I thought that I would share them today.

Thank you.

Mr ALLAN BIRD (East Sepik) – I wish to raise grievances on the issue of lawlessness in our country. I thank you for the opportunity to make a statement firstly in direct contrast to what the good Governor of Morobe was saying.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Sorry to interrupt, Honourable Governor, but I just want to clarify this for our Hansard record. Please address the Chair as Acting Speaker, thank you.

Lawlessness in our Country

Mr ALLAN BIRD-My Apologies, Acting Speaker. I want to make a direct reference and contradiction to what the Honourable Governor of Morobe said in his preamble to the question that he raised to the Prime Minister; *"We are a Christian Country,"* I have an issue with that because we are now the second most lawless country in the world based on official figures. The only country with the worst criminal issue in the world is Venezuela. Papua New Guinea is number two and we cannot dispute that. For instance, in my province we are struggling. We have a recent trend where young men produce their own weapons. The weapons were initially used now they carry them around publicly just waiting for trouble so they can use it on each other.

We have so far lost five people through the use of these new weapons which were used for fishing. We are also losing people to bush knives. At our hospitals, the rate of trauma is over 60 per cent.

What does that mean? This means that the people who get injured by things like wire catapult, bush knives takes up 60 per cent of the hospital's resources. I am sure if you check the other provinces they will have similar statistics. We had a crisis meeting to try and deal with these issues. In East Sepik, we have a 160 policemen and women who actively police 4 million hectares of land with a population of 600 000 people. We do not have enough police manpower.

I checked our budget figures for this year and I note that our police are going to get K360 million in the budget allocation passed last year. Out of that K285 million is going to wages and emoluments. We need to do something when the new budget comes in. I personally want to see an increase in the new budget for the police. We can't play around with this anymore. Our young people are restless. They do not respect the authority of elders in the village anymore. They are running around looking for fights and its not just in my province; I think it is in every province.

We may sit here and talk about investments or go out of Papua New Guinea and talk to foreign investors inviting them in and we also want the private sector to invest and create jobs but none of those things are going to happen if there is no law and order. I

was discussing with a certain foreign partner about the possibility of getting volunteer teachers from their country to come to my province to teach, particularly the STEM subjects.

Now the good ambassador kindly and politely told me; 20 years ago they had volunteers in every province in Papua New Guinea, overtime they started withdrawing all of their volunteers and they now have volunteers in only two provinces; East New Britain and Milne Bay.

17/04

But they had to pull out of East New Britain and just recently they pulled out from Milne Bay'. They no longer have any volunteers in Papua New Guinea and the simple reason is law and order.

We can build classrooms but they are going to burn them down. We can build roads but they are going to dig it up. We can go and put all kinds of projects but they are not going to work because there is general lawlessness going on. I had a bridge burned recently in East Sepik right next to my village and I had to go down there to try and talk to the people because of criminal activities.

First of all, I would like to see that we bring in amendments to the criminal code. That we make the penalty for the use of wire-catapult, bush knives or anything that is used in committing a crime, a minimum of 10 years, just like we did for guns. I want to bring those amendments to the Floor; enough is enough.

We have to build a bigger prison whether we like it or not. In East Sepik, we found out that if we arrest 20 people, we don't have the cells to hold them, we don't have the space at Boram. Therefore, we have to look at building new cells.

I have asked my own open members and told them that next year if the National Government funds doesn't support, we all will put K5 million from the DSIP and build our cells and police houses in our districts and I will build the accommodation at Boram from the PSIP. We have to take serious action because our young people don't care anymore. It is not safe driving around Wewak. When there is a fight, they don't just stick to the trouble makers; anybody who is a spectator is a fair gain. It's happening here in Port Moresby too. We saw some recently at the overpass.

We need better prosecution and any new money to the police must involve the recruitment of competent lawyers who will become police prosecutors. When these culprits

and perpetrators are arrested and taken to court, we know that 90 per cent of the time we will get a conviction for imprisonment.

We need police officers to be better trained and skilled. We need to bring in non-lethal weapons as well. We need to give them guns only. When men are misbehaving on the streets, police will either fire in the air or shoot their legs; and if somehow a perpetrator loses blood on the way to hospital and dies, what happens? All the police officers who were involved are sent to jail for 20 years. That doesn't help the police officers. That is why they don't want to do their work properly because their chances of going to prison is very high and Judges are taking hard-line as well. We are losing on all fronts. Our police need to be better disciplined but at the same time, we need to amend the laws to give protection to police officers. In the event of carrying out their duties to protect the public and properties; and if they accidentally kill a person, the law needs to provide immunity to the police officer. He should not be sent to prison.

We are just making things harder for ourselves. We need more police officers and East Sepik needs at least twice as many police officers. We don't have enough police officers.

In closing, Mr Acting Speaker, in my research, I found out that America has the largest prison system in the world. They have the largest incarcerated population and I thought to myself; that's because America is supposed to be the freest country on earth.

In here, I think we are the freest country; we have so much freedom, you can do whatever you want. If you want to murder a man or want to rape a women or if you want to go and destroy somebody's property or have a tribal fight in the middle of the city, you can go ahead and do it.

18/04

They can come and do it again tomorrow because no one is going to carryout arrests.

However, if they carry out arrests, there is no space in our prisons. We need to build prisons because with great freedom comes great responsibility and since our people have a lot of it, we need bigger prisons like in America. We need to take this seriously and police our freedom. If we do not exercise our freedom responsibly like we are doing, then that is when the State needs to exercise its powers to protect the innocent. That is what we need to do.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, that is my grievance for today.

Uphold Functions of the Legislature

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to air a few issues that I have observed for the last 20 years as a member of Parliament.

I thank my people of Abau, for continuously voting me back and this is my fifth term. There are very few us that are here, so I would like to share my observation in this first Grievance Debate of the Eleventh Parliament.

The first one is in relation to the honorable House, Mr Acting Speaker that you are the Chair. Given the separation of powers of the three arms of government, the Judiciary maintains the separation of powers. However, the issue lies with the Executive and the Legislature.

We are a unicameral system and some of us are advocating for the bicameral and hopefully over time through constitutional reform, we will move into the bicameral system.

Under the unicameral system, the honorable House headed by the Chair, like yourself has very important Parliamentary Committees. Currently, there are 17 permanent parliamentary committees and so far in the Eleventh Parliament, we have selected two special committees; hopefully some more will come.

I was the leader of Government Business in 2002 when I first entered Parliament, and I thought that it was always right that the Leader of Government Business under the Executive Arm of the Government, move motions to appoint members of the Parliamentary Committees. I have realized that we need to relook at that because I think we have been doing it wrong and therefore bordering on the separation of powers of the three arms of government particularly the Executive and the Legislature.

Mr Acting Speaker, I believe that you are the most powerful person, not the Prime Minister because your parties can call the Ministers of State, like the Public Accounts Committee can call anybody even the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. However, our practice has been that Parliamentary Committees are appointed by the Executive Government, and they are interfering with the House.

Mr Acting Speaker, I think that as we are embarking on our 50th Anniversary, in three years' time we need to look at this. Our people work very hard and I welcome the new members of Parliament who have been elected as members of the National Parliament which is the highest House.

However, I have observed that the Executive Government has always interfered through this Legislature. For example, how many constitutional laws have gone back to the Supreme Court only to be declared unconstitutional? Why? Because the Executive Government uses numerical strength to get the number required and I think that is playing down the role and power of the Chair.

Mr Acting Speaker, I strongly suggest that you relook at this arrangement because we have been doing it wrong.

19/04

This is why in this honourable House, in the absence of the bicameral, with the Legislature and the Executive, many times hold hands.

Let me give another example; I believe that the Private Business Committee at the moment; there are seven members. That Private Business Committee for instance, always looks at the Motion of the Vote of No Confidence.

Unfortunately, when we try to come on the Floor on the vote of no confidence process whoever has the numbers recommends the establishment of the Private Business Committee members. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker are members of the committee and five others are mainly from the government because the Leader of Government Business recommends to the Floor who should be members of the Private Business Committee. And so, we play politics and the agenda doesn't come to the Floor of Parliament.

Mr Acting Speaker, it is a constitutional motion, which should be entertained on the Floor of Parliament. The Legislature arm is the most important, not the Executive, or the Judiciary. They should not play with that constitutional motion.

And so, I suggest that the constituents of the Private Business Committee should be the Chairman, which is the Speaker, and the other six members; three from the Government and three from the Opposition to balance it out. And so, as legislators, we play our roles.

Mr Acting Speaker, I strongly recommend that we relook at this so-called practice that we've been practicing since Independence. I strongly believe that the members of the Parliamentary Committee should be appointed by the Speaker without fear or favour.

There should be balance in the parliamentary committees, I also believe that Parliament's Budget should never be interfered by the Executive Government. Once the Speaker presents the budget, nobody should touch it; likewise, for the Judiciary. They are

independent arms. Who is the Executive Government to play around with the Judiciary and Legislator's Budget. These are the areas that I have observed.

Mr Acting Speaker, we fought to occupy a seat in this honourable House but when we come, the power of the Executive Government many times overrules the work of the Legislature. Please pray about it, and let's have more debate on it, through the Parliamentary Standing Committee or yourself as the Chair of the House, to relook at this matter. I think it is time for a change.

The Executive Government comprises of only 33 ministers of State, the rest of us are members of Parliament. We shouldn't be succumbing to the directions of the Executive Government. We should freely express ourselves in terms of dissecting issues on the Floor of this House. It should not happen as such that just because we did not vote for this law, we are denied our DSIP funds. I have seen this practice and have played it too.

Mr Acting Speaker, it's about time we raise the bar in this honourable House. It is my humble request to relook at this matter for the operations of the honourable House.

Firstly, the 2023 Budget of the Parliament, must not be changed by the NEC. Your committee must be fully budgeted. They must operate and every day the citizens of this country must see the committees of the honourable House working in public media. Then, we can address the issues of law and order, the issues of inefficiency service delivery around the country. This Parliament must demonstrate leadership through the parliamentary committees.

Mr Acting Speaking, I worked very hard to be a Member of this honourable House but when I come, I compromise and somebody told me, politics is the art of bending backwards. As long as you don't break, I don't want to bend backwards anymore. I think we should put the honourable House in its rightful place.

20/04

Mr Acting Speaker, as the Head of the Legislature in this honourable House, you are more powerful than our Prime Minister, our Deputy Prime Minister and any governor or minister of State. You can do it by firstly, controlling the members of the parliamentary committees.

The parliamentary committees are not from the NEC but from your Parliament, and you are the head of the legislators. The NEC has its own committees. I thought I needed to make this statement.

Establish Ombudsman for Public Service

My last comment is for the Public Service Minister, before I sit down, we have a parliamentary committee on public sector reform headed by the honourable Governor of Northern, who has been doing a great job. That means that we are always worried about the delivery arm of the nation, which is the public service.

I strongly recommend through you, Mr Acting Speaker, the honourable Minister for Public Service, to change the Public Services Commission to become the public services ombudsman. The Public Service Commission is just worried about the aggrieved public servants. They go back to the commission and try to get the departments to reinstate them.

We need an ombudsman of the public service. This ombudsman when established, must call out every departmental head, provincial administrator and district CEOs on why the service delivery is not working.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

The Reporting Structure of the New Departments

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE (Pomio) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I would also like to contribute to this Grievance Debate with three topics or items.

Firstly, with my capacity also as Deputy Chairman of the Public Sector Reform Service Delivery and the shadow Minister for Public Service, I would like to point out something to the Minister for Public Service about the priority of the Government.

The Honourable Prime Minister recently appointed three other ministries to support the Department of Agriculture and Livestock; we have the Ministry for Agriculture, Coffee, Livestock and Oil Palm.

The question I was going to raise during question time was; we need to know the reporting structure and the channel of communication in these new departments. It must be made clear to us and to their secretaries as well.

If we look back, our priority goes back to agriculture, which is a very important sector. There will be members wanting to see the respective ministers and they must be informed about the proper channels to go through to have their concerns met by these respective departments that were newly created.

I want to commend the Prime Minister for the appointment of the ministers. I just want to know who to report to when I want to meet certain people, especially in regards to the secretaries and the staffs of the respective departments.

Funding for Cancer Treatment Facility

Mr Acting Speaker, my second point is; on Tuesday, I accompanied the Minister for Health and HIV to Port Moresby General Hospital. We found out that the only cobalt-60 machine that was used for cancer-related services for our people in Angau General Hospital has been non-operable for the last three years.

Mr Acting Speaker, it generally means that, at this moment if a person has cancer and needs to go for the radio-therapy treatments, he or she cannot be treated in PNG. Only those with money can travel overseas for treatment.

But, Mr Acting Speaker, the good news is that, a lot of good things are happening at PMGH. That is a positive news and a way forward for cancer treatments, according to the PMGH CEO and the management team there.

On behalf of the Opposition, and as the shadow Minister for Health, I said we need to put politics aside and support him. We will be celebrating our 50th Independence Anniversary in next three years. What have we got to celebrate? Are we still going to send our people overseas for treatment? Every year we are losing our mothers, sisters and daughters to cervical cancer. Is that the news we want to get for the next couple of years or more?

21/04

Two mothers die of cervical cancer every year. Is this the news we want to hear in the next couple of years or will we make a change?

Firstly, I would like to commend the Port Moresby General Hospital CEO Dr Paki Molumi for a good job there; with a very clear way forward about what needs to be done regarding cancer.

They needed some funding which I thought the Minister for Health was going to mention in his ministerial statement this week but unfortunately did not. For now, I would like to speak about the issue on the funding of K50 million for the Cancer facility to be completed in this year's budget. Unfortunately, only K23 million was released and K27 millions still remains. I would like to know if this money is still available because it is very much needed to complete this cancer facility. I know that the good Prime minister is aware of this. It is a priority at the moment. Let's complete this project and make our people happy. Let us not waste money on unnecessary trips overseas.

The second point is that if someone you know, has a heart attack or some pain in the chest, blockage in the artery, or blood vessels in your heart, all these can be treated at the Port Moresby General Hospital. Some 700 patients who had these conditions were treated successfully at the Port Moresby General Hospital. These are such success stories that show that we have the technical capacities.

Mr Acting Speaker, we have a lot of good doctors available, trained and very highly qualified people who are doing these jobs and they just need the support to continue to serve and ensure that we get these type of services in this country which the Opposition fully supports.

The facility that the CEO has set up at the Port Moresby General Hospital needs to be completed. Therefore, I am asking the Prime Minister and his team from the Government, if we can ask all the members of Parliament to make a commitment of K500,000 from our DSIP's to support this project. The Pomio district will be the first to commit. Let us put our actions where our mouth is and make this happen.

Last week, I received two phone calls saying that two relatives died of Cancer. We cannot continue to allow this to happen, some of you may have received similar calls. So I believe, we need to commit K500,000 from the DSIP funds for this project. And if all the 118 members commit K500,000 we will have K59 million. That is enough to complete most of these projects, get one done and tick it off and get the people treated in our country and look at other things to support.

Include New Britain Highway Bridges – Connect PNG Program

Mr Acting Speaker, finally, I would like to speak in relation to the statement made by the Minister for Works and Highway during yesterday's Parliament session. I would like to thank the Government on considering the south coast corridor starting from Kokopo to Pomio and then to Kandrian Gloucester, that's about 240 kilometers of coastline. I was upset last year when the Connect PNG Bill did not include Pomio, the south coast corridor and the northern part of the New Britain Highway and some parts of West New Britain. I know that the Government is now aware and has included the South Coast in the Bill.

I can also say today that most of the cocoa, coffee and copra coming to Kokopo are coming from the South Coast part of the New Britain Island, which is Pomio and Kandrian Gloucester District. So rightfully, if we have to commit funding, it must be to areas that we will get an economic return. Therefore, I would like to thank the Government for supporting our roads and bridges. There were 10 or 12 bridges given to the New Britain Highway.

Mr Acting Speaker, I didn't see any listings for the bridges in the south coast but I believe that next year or so there will be some contribution made to some of the bridges in Pomio, Kokopo and Kandrian Gloucester. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Eviction (Morata and in PNG)

Mr JOHN ROSSO (Lae-Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Lands and Physical Planning and Urbanization) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I would like to join the debate taking the queue from the Honorable Governor Juffa, regarding the issues on the eviction at Morata and some other parts of the country.

22/04

For the recent one at Morata, that huge portion of land was granted title in 2011, and it is an ongoing issue.

When that portion was possessed, the people issued a court order stating stop work notice. So, the company namely Sixth Estate went back to court and recently, the Supreme Court granted an order to carry out this eviction.

When this order was granted, the Governor of NCD, Honourable Powes Parkop and I tried our best to set aside this issue but in 2017, before I became the Minister for Lands Physical Planning and Urbanisation, the Department of Lands Physical Planning and Urbanisation tried to intervene but Sixth Estate took a Restraining Order against the department.

That order is there so the department can't intervene on forfeiture in relation to this portion of land. I had a discussion with Governor Parkop, but it's now in the hands of the Supreme Court and I don't want to be held in contempt.

But generally, I want to inform our people and members in this Honourable House that, that's the situation now. Many people have been residing on this portion of land and are very affected.

When I became the Minister for Lands Physical Planning and Urbansiation, three years ago, I have made it a point not to issue major titles to places heavily congested with people.

Therefore, you will notice that in the last three years, we have not issued any major titles to lands which many of our people live on because companies can easily evict them.

And we have been screening our land titles very carefully especially on major portions and UDLs.

But in relation to the recent one, it is a major issue and it's very sensitive because we are dealing with human beings; we are dealing with all kinds of people.

One point which we all must know is that most people live on land without proper titles granted from landowners. Every portion of land is owned by people; for instances, customary land is owned by landowners and the land in cities and towns is owned by the government or the title lease holders, so it is pretty sensitive for us to sort out. As for me, I grew up in a settlement area so it's very sensitive for me too, knowing the hardships that we go through in the settlements.

Thus, we have tried to elevate this problem by addressing our housing issues where our people are forced to go and live-in the settlements, not through their own faults.

There isn't any cheap affordable housing mainly in our urban centers. When this Government came into power and I was appointed as the Minister responsible for Lands Physical Planning and Urbanisation, we made some intervention through the medium cost housing, part of it is to partner with private enterprises and traditional landowners. One of which I explained earlier this week, to put in a subdivision township at Tuhava, to build 4,000 houses for our middle-income earners. The Government won't assist with any funds but will work closely with developers and traditional landowners.

The other intervention is to partner with super funds; for example, at Taurama, Comrade Trustee Services Limited partnered with the Defence Force, to build 2,000 houses for middle income earners. And the other is partnering with Nambawan Super, to build 2,000 houses at Nine Mile.

We have also partnered with Comrade Trustee Services in Igam, Lae, to elevate and create suburbs and build 1,000 houses for middle-income earners. So all in all, we are looking at between 9,000 middle-income earners homes that we will build through partnership with super funds and other developers. So they put in all the necessities such as water and street roads and recover their money that way. But the planning part of it will be done by the Department of Lands Physical Planning and Urbanisation.

23/04

I have made it very clear to them that you have to keep the prices below K500,000. Tuhava will be averaging between K300 - K400,000. In Lae, it will be also between K300 to K400,000, so as Taurama, that is for the market for the middle-income earners.

Three weeks ago, I was fortunate to launch the public service housing scheme that was set up by the Minister for Public Service in Bomana. There are 1000 allotments that will be developed. We have begun the process of acquisition and we are looking into another 5000 allotments in Nadzab where we will be building a brand-new city designed by Papua New Guineans.

These are interventions that the Government is doing where the government itself has not spent a toea; we are thinking outside the box, because the government has no money to spend. A lot of similar interventions have been done over the years but only four or five houses have been built and the rest have not even materialized and a lot of money has been wasted.

This government has not wasted any money and we have not contributed towards the PIP program. We are partnering with the people who know best; like the private sector and we are doing what the government does best in terms of policy and planning.

Similarly, on the concerns raised on the wastage of money on the IT programs within the lands department, I was also concerned when I was the Minister for lands. I heard that there was a huge gross wastage of nearly K50 million used without any good IT system in place in the department.

When I took over as the Minister, we also thought outside of the box; and partnered with a new company called New Pay and this company fixed all the IT systems including, registrations and payments online. It helped us with the revenue system so that we were able to produce titles that cannot be forged or tampered with.

We want to do away with duplication of surveys, titles, registrations and so forth. The good news is that, that system is now working and I was pleasantly surprised as normally lands department contributes about K1 million towards the budget annually, but in the first half of this year, the department through this new system has collected K21 million.

We are therefore heading towards our target of increasing revenue to put towards the budget and by the end of this year, we are expecting K40 million and my target is K100 million for Lands Department to contribute to the budget. Every single department should be doing that; we should not come and ask the government for financial assistance or what the

government should give, we should look at ideas and be innovative and increase our revenue capacity.

It should not be about picking up money, and through this program, we are addressing and will be rolling out the program. Thanks to the Prime Minister for giving this back to the department as we have unfinished plans that we have made. We have started the program and we are working closely with the new Housing Minister to roll out titles for our people.

Many have waited for more than 30 years to obtain titles. In places like Tenth City in Lae, some parents have died waiting for housing titles and now their children are also waiting. I am happy to say that last year we were able to hand over 400 titles to home owners at Tenth City.

We have continued this exercise at one mile, two mile and four mile areas in Lae. I wish to inform everyone and complement the Member for Popondetta, who was one of the first to have an audience with me and we were able set out a working program where we will soon deliver titles of ownership to residents in Popondetta.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Deputy Prime Minister, your 10 minutes' time for debate has lapsed.

Mr JOHN ROSSO – These are some of the programs that I would like to inform the Parliament on. I also want to commend the debate made by the Governor of Northern.

24/04

I support the Governor as the Chairman for the Parliamentary Services Committee and I request that he does his job diligently and hold us all accountable. This includes the ministers and the departments. This will enable us to do our jobs efficiently and attend to our people a lot more efficiently.

I don't want to comment on the issue at Morata because it is now with the Courts, but we are working closely with the good Governor of NCD to try and alleviate our low-cost housing scheme. For now, we are attending to the middle income earners, but we need to also consider the low income earners.

Mr Luther Wenge – Point of Order! Take into consideration the time.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Ruling! Honorable Governor, I have already informed the Deputy Prime Minister. Deputy Prime Minister, would you sum up your debate

Mr JOHN ROSSO – Thank you Acting Speaker, thank you my Governor for your Point of Order. I will clarify it and discuss it in the next Grievance Debate, but I assure you that we are working on it.

Funding for Establishment of Hiri Koiari District Administration

Mr KEITH IDUHU (Hiri Koiari) – Thank you, Acting Speaker, I would like to just register some grievances. I speak from the premise of a representative of a very new electorate which sits at a very grim position to consider how to establish the district. I come from the background of a very resourceful electorate.

I take particular note of commentary made by the Member for Nipa-Kutubu earlier this morning during question time. His questions are that he is very much overwhelmed that the road allocations or infrastructure has missed their path. This is a sentiment not only limited to roads but general infrastructure as well that is common throughout the nation.

Mr Acting Speaker, it has been three months into this new role and I have received a lot of messages and letters from constituents particularly from the areas of Hiri West where the plant site is domicile. Questions are being raised about the distribution or the disbursement of PNG LNG proceeds since its inception, particularly in the benefits relating to the infrastructure development grants which have lapsed over time. Over ten years has come and gone and that prescription is now gone. But the development levies are still available and will crystalize from time to time as they fall due, the provincial government will receive. The biggest question I'm always asking time and time again is where are these benefits? Where have they gone? I am in a position of trying to build a new district administration at Bautama. My planning is in process but my burden is, how I am going to finance it? Yes, there is the PIP avenue there. Yes, there is DSIP funds to initiate the planning processes but these electorates are privileged. Nipa-Kutubu is one, there are others, Hiri-Koiari hosts the conditioning plant and yet I am seated here wondering how on earth am I going to service my district's initial capital. Perhaps this is something the Public Accounts Committee could seriously consider. The breakup; where did this money go, where is it sitting and who ate it? Why was it used without infrastructure being built? IDG's I thought, had a premise, had dictates under planning for where the money should be going. These are

confined to infrastructure, where is the infrastructure now, you can take a camera out to Hiri Koiari and I assure you, will find none, a very grim and very sad state that we have been left with. We now have the development levy to work for, where will it go? Unfortunately, when the Organic and Provincial laws was set up, Section 23 promoted the establishment of a district development authority.

25/04

In my view, a reform would have been appropriate so that the District Development Authority receives under *sections 98 and 99* under the same legislation, so that it pulls apart the chair at the dining table when the pig is being cut for its people. It is ludicrous that a local-level government should dictate or receive these benefits.

And as I say this, I am reminded of the Treasurer's statement yesterday on the Economic Update. I have flipped through this situation and I am concerned, Mr Acting Speaker, if this country will have a responsible revenue management system in place so it will create a sustainable process going forward. Because when the gold, oil and gas runs dry, what do we have, or how are we going to finance our budget into the future?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I will interrupt you here. According to our *Standing Orders*, when it reaches 1.p.m., the Grievance Debate will have lapsed, I therefore would like to interrupt you and stop the debate for now, as our Grievance Debate has ended. I will allow you time in another debate. Thank you.

Motion – That the Grievances be noted – agreed to.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Prime Minister and Minister for Planning) – I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That Leave of Absence be granted to Sir Julius Chan, Governor of New Ireland Province for his medical review for the duration of this meeting.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Prime Minister and Minister for Planning) – I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent me from making appointments to the Permanent Parliamentary Committees on Education and Communications.

PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Prime Minister and Minister for Planning) – I move –

That in accordance with *Standing Order 25*, Mr Benjamin Mul to be appointed Chairman, Mr Simon Kaiwi as Deputy Chairman, Mr Johnson Wapunai, Mr Patrick Basa, Mr Peter Isoaimo, Mr Michael Marum and Mr Anderson Mise be appointed as members of the Permanent Parliament Committee on Education.

The functions of the Committee shall be:

(1) Consider and report to the Parliament on all matters referred to it, as provided for by,

- (a) the Standing Orders
 - (b) the Parliament
 - (c) the Minister
 - (d) on its own initiative.
- (2) Consider any matters of national importance within its jurisdiction and function and report thereon to the Parliament in accordance with the *Permanent Parliamentary Committee Act*, and
- (3) Report on the functions of the Ministry as determined by a resolution of the Parliament from time to time.
- (4) The committee has the power to send for persons, papers, and records to meet from place to place and to act during recess.
- (5) The quorum for a meeting of the committee is four committee members, one of whom shall be either the Chairman or Deputy Chairman.

PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Prime Minister and Minister for Planning)
agreed to –

That in accordance with *Standing Order 25* Mr Marsh Narawec, Mr Sam Basil Jnr, Mr Sasindra Muthuvel, Mr Alexander Orme, Mr Ricky Morris, Mr Ereman Tobaining Jnr and Mr Simon Dumarinu be appointed members of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Communications.

The functions of the Committee shall be:

- (1) Consider and report to the Parliament on all matters referred to it, as provided for by, (a) the Standing Orders
 - (b) the Parliament
 - (c) the Minister
 - (d) on its own initiative.
- (2) Consider any matters of national importance within its jurisdiction and function and report thereon to the Parliament in accordance with the *Permanent Parliamentary Committee Act*, and
- (3) Report on the functions of the Ministry as determined by a resolution of the Parliament from time to time.
- (4) The Committee has the power to send for persons, papers, and records to meet from place to place, and to act during recess.

26/04

(5) The quorum for a meeting of the committee is four committee members, one of whom shall be either the Chairman or Deputy Chairman.

Mr Acting Speaker, these are the two committees that we are setting up. I commend the comments made by Sir Puka Temu, under the Grievance Debate and I think that it is a very timely submission for Parliament to consider as part of the reforms that we are working on leading up to the 50 years of Independence.

But in this instance, these are two more parliamentary committees that we are setting up to be functional. We will give resources to the Parliament and make sure that these committees hold the Executive Government accountable.

Mr Acting Speaker, with this, I ask Parliament to support these appointments.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That the Parliament at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 22 November 2022 at 2 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1 p.m.