

## **THIRD DAY**

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**Thursday 24 November 2022**

## **DRAFT HANSARD**

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<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS – STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SPEAKER .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANNOUNCEMENT OF INDUCTION PACK FOR MEMBERS – STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SPEAKER .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>QUESTIONS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Balimo Airport Construction and Completion.....	2
Election Committee .....	5
NID Roll-out Update.....	5
Sogeri Landowners Overdue Payments .....	9
Continuous Power Outages.....	11
Set up Inquiry – Supply of Electricity .....	14
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS – STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SPEAKER .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>OUTCOMES OF THE RECENT SUCCESSFUL FOUR NATIONS INTERNATIONAL VISITS AND ENGAGEMENTS – STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER – PAPER NOTED .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH –THE FIRST 100 DAYS IN OFFICE PRIORITIES – MINISTERIAL STATEMENT – PAPER NOTED.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>MOTION BY LEAVE .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT – ESTABLISHMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>MOTION BY LEAVE .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS .....</b>	
<b>MOTION BY LEAVE .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>LEAVE OF ABSENCE – Mr CHRIS HAIVETA.....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>ADJOURNMENT .....</b>	<b>51</b>

## **THIRD DAY**

**Thursday 24 November 2022**

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

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

Sitting suspended.

The Deputy Speaker again took the Chair at 10.55 a.m., and invited the Member for Talasea, **Honourable Freddie Kumai** to say Prayers,

‘Lord we come humble as we are before you, we pray for wisdom, knowledge and understanding be upon our leaders. Inspire us with the Grace of the Holy Spirit to enlighten this country with love, wisdom and guidance. Give us understanding to guide our people whom we represent. May we serve this country and our people with love, respect and kindness, Amen.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS – STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** – I wish to acknowledge the presence of Grade 11 Science students and their teachers from Kwikila Secondary School of Rigo District in Central Province. On behalf of the Parliament I extend to the visitors a warm welcome to the National Parliament.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF INDUCTION PACK FOR MEMBERS –  
STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, I wish to inform you all that the Induction pack for Members are still available for collection. Please visit the Parliament Library if you didn't collect your pack.

Thank you.

**QUESTIONS**

**Balimo Airport Construction and Completion**

**Mr AGENA GAMAI** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker for recognizing the people of Delta Fly District in Western Province by giving me this time to raise my question.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation and it is in relation to the Balimo Airport construction and completion and the Prime Minister can take note, please.

Mr Deputy Speaker, before I proceed, I would like to provide a bit of background information. Mr Deputy Speaker, in 2013, a contract was awarded to Heda Civil Works by the then CSTB and was approved by the NEC that time. The Balimo Airport project was funded through the 10 per cent equity non CMC fund held in the Trust Accounts by the Department for the people of Western Province.

**02/03**

Mr Deputy Speaker, at that time the funding was not sufficient to attract bigger contractors who are specialized in airport constructions such as Global, Hebou and so on.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I understand that when Balimo Airport was constructed it was in deed intended to be an emergency airport for planes to travel in from Daru to Kiunga, Kiunga to Moro and Kiunga to Mt Hagen or vice versa. Because it is located in a strategic location, whenever there was an emergency while in the air, the planes would always have Balimo Airport where they can land.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the airport construction has not been completed to date after almost ten years when the contract was awarded. Mr Deputy Speaker, the long delays in

getting the Balimo airport completed thus far is really affecting service delivery for public servants, operation of business houses and movement of the general public.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in 2020 our Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape was in Balimo for a cultural show centre opening and saw for himself what the situation was like due to the prolonged delays in the release of non CMC funding and the completion of construction in 2021. While the late member was around we visited the National Airports Corporation office because we wanted Balimo airport to be under National Airports Corporation given its strategic location.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my questions without notice are as follows;

(1) Mr Deputy Speaker, given that Ok Tedi Mining has been and is still the biggest revenue earner in the country, can the National Government direct National Airports Corporation to upgrade the state of Balimo airport and recognize it as an airport instead of an airstrip since it is located in the new Delta Fly district headquarters?

(2) Mr Deputy Speaker, can the Marape-Rosso government step in to fund Balimo Airport project completion possibly through the ADB loan, like all other major airport infrastructures in the country and include it in the national budget.

Mr Deputy Speaker, once funding is secured and made available by the National Government can the NAC make it its business to have their engineers based on the ground to ensure successful completion according to the scope of works. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr WALTER SCHNAUBELT** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I would like to say thank you to the Member of Delta Fly for his series of questions.

To respond to the good member, I would like to highlight some of the process and procedures. Firstly, we need to understand the status of the airport, whether it's an airstrip or airport. If it's an airstrip, then it still falls under the Rural Airstrip Association if it's an airport then it will fall under the National Airport Corporation. But at this stage it still looks like an airstrip, so we need to treat it like an airstrip and if the member wishes to upgrade then there are certain processes and procedures we need to follow. I would like to advise the member through the Deputy Speaker that;

(1) We need to get CASA to survey the airstrip to determine the length, the size and whatever future plan it has. We need to get an engineering scope done.

**03/03**

(2) I am pretty sure since it is an airstrip and it won't be under the National Airport Corporation as yet, but look at the process and procedures of how the National Airport Corporation can take the responsibility for the airport if and when it's upgraded.

So, as we are all in need for airstrips within our respective districts and I don't question the need of Delta Fly having this particular airstrip. In relation to the ADB loan, CADIP two is in the process of signing and there is an allocation for the rural airstrip within the ADB loan.

What we need to determine is which rural airstrip has been identified for that particular funding. The funding in CADIP two is not as big as CADIP one. The other funding within CADIP two is also focused on other infrastructure then just airport. That's why the funding is not big, but I can reassure the good Member that we will happily look into it and assist him and other rural airstrips in other districts as well to try and understand the status of those airstrips.

How best the Civil Aviation, CASA, or NAC can come into play to try and assist to get that airstrip open or upgraded to a specific category that they design. For an upgrade if you looking at bigger planes to land on that airstrip, it will require certain engineering scope to be done.

The costings can come from National Government or it can come from the DSIP or whatever funding is allocated to the Member. But it is important that we get the engineering done and understand the member's aspirations in terms of development on the airstrip. And try to support him to get the necessary fund to get it to the level he wants.

But different aircraft size will determine on the type of engineering and scope of work that needs to be engaged in with that particular airstrip.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr JOSEPH LELANG** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for allowing me to direct my questions to the Prime Minister.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the 2022 National Election was chaotic and the common roll was not complete. Many of our people did not exercise their Constitutional rights to vote under a free and fair environment. We claim that PNG is a democratic country and is demonstrated by the way we as leaders are voted into this House. There are problems

associated with our voting system and we must fix those problems before the next election in 2027.

On this side of the House we do acknowledged that the Government has established the Special Parliamentary Committee on the 2022 National General Election and we are grateful because this is a bipartisan approach to enquire into and report on the conduct of the 2022 National General Election.

### **Election Committee**

Mr Deputy Speaker, my questions to the Prime Minister are;

(1) Do you have a specific time frame that you expect this Special Parliamentary Committee to complete its work so that we can get into the serious business of reforming and tightening up our electoral laws in Papua New Guinea.

(2) While we appreciate the setting up of the Special Parliamentary Committee and while we have respect for the members of the committee. The truth is, we are the same affected party.

**04/03**

Many of us sitting on the committee and here in Parliament are affected by those electoral laws. We are therefore asking if there would be an independent process free from biasness to be included as part of the review process.

### **NID Roll-out Update**

Mr Prime Minister, you have been hinting for the use of biometric voting system in the 2027 National General Elections;

(1) Does the Government have plans to roll out the NID system nationwide to move this nation towards a biometric system of voting?

(2) And will funds be made available for the NID roll out program starting following the 2023 Budget and the years to come to achieve this?

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker and I appreciate the Opposition Leader for raising these very important questions on the voting process. To entrench our democracy is a gift these leaders and this Parliament can pass onto the next generation and I am happy to respond to these questions in a positive manner.

The issue on the Parliamentary committee that we have established; it is a bipartisan parliamentary committee and we want them to be at work. We will give them full

funding from an arm's length perspective. The Opposition and Government members together could take a holistic review into what had happened in 2022 as well as in all other elections. We will have to go back through the entire process to try to cover and put an informed fact-based suggestion for us to go forward into a new voting process; that also generates how we conduct elections in 2027 and beyond.

Another important election that is coming up is the election of our LLG presidents and I just want to clarify that in as much as possible the committee should look at the terms of reference and also what happened in 2022 and other elections. The committee is at a total liberty to establish the terms of reference as it is made up of Members from both sides of the House.

They should go to work right away, from the desktop, establish the template of what needs to be done as well as a detailed work that should commence right away in the early part of 2023. We will consider the suggestion for an independent process and that is very much welcomed. As this is not a matter that belongs to myself or just a few. It is how our leadership could gift to our next generation to secure a better voting process in 2027 and beyond.

And one of the benchmarks that we have set is that in 2025 and beyond as our nation lives beyond 50 years of Independence; this sort of thing could be a better stage especially in the election of leaders into Parliament as it is a very serious business, where we should better the process.

The overall time frame I am looking at is that by 2025 we would have arrived at that process and as a government we have our view on the NID and biometric process that should assist us, but I want to allow the independent process to fully establish what needs to be done. so, it is seen to be coming as an approach from the whole parliament and assisted by our people in the community who can be represented in the independent process that the Opposition Leader is alluding to.

From the government perspective, we will be looking at the biometric system which will be NID based. By 2027, there will be no block voting, clan voting or double voting and all the others that jeopardize the process. We can arrive with one person, one vote and that is what we want to achieve.

Next year we will start the census process and we will carry out a deep population count and onto 2024.

**05/03**

So that by 2025 our Nation is totally certain on our population and we are looking at a country where you are a real person living in our country and not a persona non grata. We will also look at the biometric ID system which is not only useful for voting but for law and order, business registration and SME programs. These are matters that we as the government are proposing but specifically relating to the voting process.

We as Government, will hold back our commentary and get this committee to recommend to us and certainly the consideration of an independent team to also work with this committee can be looked at.

By 2023 the proposal should have matured to a submission level that can come to the government for implementation.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr KEITH IDUHU** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I direct my series of questions to the Honourable Minister for Commerce and Industry. I ask that the Minister for Finance Implementation and Planning, and the Minister for State Enterprise to take note particularly as the questions relate to land owner benefit sharing structures.

The issues I raise are historical in nature and through the Marape-Rosso Government, Mr Deputy Speaker, we have the opportunity to right the wrongs of the past because previous governments have been unable to do so.

Mr Deputy Speaker, most of us are aware that the water and power supply come from Central province specifically the Koiari area in the Hiri Koiari Electorate. The water that we use to bathe in and make our cup of tea this morning came from that source. This infrastructure was built well before many in this House were born; the Sirinumu Dam was built in 1962. This was prior to there being any real consideration for rights and privileges of landowners in project area sites.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** – Honourable Member, may I interrupt you, sorry I did not hear you mention the Minister you are directing your question to, so can you do that.

**Mr KEITH IDUHU** – Yes, my question is directed to the Minister for Commerce and Industry. So this was before the framework that PNG LNG project was subjected to way before the mining sector was brought on.



Mr Deputy Speaker, water is a resource as is oil, gas and minerals that have value to the end user. But this water is even better in the long-term because this water that comes from Hiri Koiari is a renewable resource and has importance for the well-being of our people and the development of our national economy. In fact, it is graded as world class standards. There are four components of the extraction and use of this resource that cover four land groups as follows:

(1) the Hoger Development company for inland Water sources from Hoger area otherwise in the context of PNG LNG would be the wellhead,

(2) the Sirinumu development Company for the catchment of the Sirinumu Dam

(3) the Central Soger Holdings limited for riverine area and central Soger which the pipeline traverses and the resources pushed to a turbine where the fourth landowner group is owner group is domicile,

(4) the Rouna Development Company which houses the turbine that powers the power and passes the water right down to Mt Eriama.

Over many years a range of MOUs and NEC decisions have sought to address concerns, grievances and of course stoppages and strikes to have the landowners properly recognised for the economic contribution through their resources and land through Eda Ranu and Water PNG

In 2013, the NEC made a decision (No.356 of 2013) that outlined a number of things which included firstly, the establishment of a ministerial committee to be chaired by the Minister for Commerce Trade and Industry; and secondly, it endorsed and approved the proposed sustainable development agreement benefit package for Koiari landowners that would be executed by the ministerial committee. Some payments have been done; K20 million was approved and two lots of payment were done.

In 2015, a sum of K5 million was paid to Sirinumu Development Company Limited and in 2021, Rouna Development Company Received K5 million. Overall thought, what has transpired from the NEC decision have been limited and inconsistent with band aid actions. The ministerial committee never really advanced and the sustainable development package has not materialised.

Mr Deputy Speaker, these landowners do not ask for ad hoc solution, they want legislated security that is developed through reforms that recognised the economical contributions this land makes to the nation's capital and the economy of this country.

**06/06**

Mr Deputy Speaker, as such I would like to raise a series of questions on behalf of the landowners in my district of Hiri-Koiari. In doing so I recognize that this is an issue from well before the appointment of the Minister for Commerce but I seek the good Minister's consideration on this issue as I know he is a man that wants to see clarity in policy. Similarly, while this is an issue relating to finance and making payments under the commitments of the previous government, this is well before Honourable Rainbo Paita's time and the stewardship of his department has been outstanding. Also, there are matters relating to state-owned land –

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** – Honourable Member, I will interrupt you. I would like you to make your statement short and get to your question.

### **Sogeri Landowners Overdue Payments**

**Mr KEITH IDUHU** – My questions are as follows;

(1) When will the Government release the K5 million, that is outstanding for each of the landowner groups? That is K5 million for Sogeri and K5 million for Central Sogeri.

(2) Will the Minister convene a meeting to review the execution of the sustainable development package for Koiari landowners?

(3) And in reconvening this ministerial committee, will the Minister consider reforms to the sustainable development package and then contemplate a proposal for: (a) a long-term benefit-sharing structure and (b) equity, royalties, and infrastructure funds for roads, power, and water for the very people who actually deliver the water that is firing up this country and heart of this nation?

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr HENRY AMULI** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to respond to the questions raised by the Member for Hiri-Koiari.

Firstly, let me thank the people of Koiari for electing a good member in this newly created electorate to represent them.

Mr Deputy Speaker, let me give some clarification on these questions raised by the Member for Hiri-Koiari. I totally agree with the good member that for many years the development of Sirinumu Dam to supply water and electricity generation on various

MOU's, agreements and NEC decisions were made by the National Government and millions were kina were allocated to address the grievances of the Koiari Water Resource Landowners, however, there are no proper records and monitoring due to the lack of proper coordination.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the government through NEC Decision No. 356 of 2013 endorsed the Sustainable Development Benefits Package for the Koiari landowners including the inland catchment and lower Koiari and established the ministerial committee to be chaired by the Minister for Commerce and Industry to oversee the implementation of those funds.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this matter can be addressed administratively by my department and the Department of Treasury in assisting the ministerial committee to ensure that implementations are in order to make a business case for funds to be made available through Koiari Sustainable Development Benefits Package.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the question in relation to the agreements reached among the Koiari Resource Landowners that are organized into four landowner groups and their landowner umbrella companies; 1. Inland Water Source which is within the Ogeri area, Oregi Development Company 2. Catchment Area, Sirinumu Dam which is Sirinumu Development Company, 3. Sogeri Area, Sogeri Central Holdings Limited, and 4. Power and Water installation, the Rouna Development Company. Those are the four landowner companies that are managing the funding that is allocated to the Koiari landowners.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Sustainable Development and Benefits Package is the Government's intervention program in response to Koiari grievances by making funds available to address their development needs as identified by them such as access to basic infrastructure, health, education, and promote SMEs to start development graduates, small to medium business which can create employment and income opportunities for the Koiari people.

**07/03**

Mr Deputy Speaker, in regards to when the money will be released, the departments of Finance and Treasury allocate funds for the Koiari Sustainable Development and Benefits Package as an ongoing fund to ensure that all the Koiari water resources landowners are assisted to establish and undertake sustainable development projects or programs within the resource area.

Mr Deputy Speaker, since (SIDCO) Sirinumu Dam Corporation and Rouna Corporation received their share of K5 million each, Sogeri Development Company Limited and Central Sogeri Holdings Limited, according to their agreements, will be considered for financial assistant once funds are made available.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the ministerial committee will ensure that proper mechanisms are in place for monitoring and evaluation of these funds so that it can have positive impact on the livelihoods of the impacted resources owners of Koiari.

Therefore, more funds will be required for the ministerial committee to monitor the use of these funds.

### **Continuous Power Outages**

**Mr JOHN BOITO** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker before I ask my questions to the good Minister for State-owned Enterprises, let me take this time to thank my people of Obura-Wonenara for electing me the second time after ten years of good holidays.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I also want to congratulate you and I thank the people of Markham for re-electing you and also congratulate you for being elected as the Deputy Speaker the second time.

I also want to congratulate the Member for Tari-Pori, Honourable James Marape, on behalf of the people of Obura-Wonenara, for being elected as the Prime Minister of this country.

I also want to thank the people of Lae for re-electing the Deputy Prime Minister, Honourable John Rosso and also being elected as the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in recent months up till today the country is experiencing continuous power outages on a daily basis and it's happening everywhere, especially in our main cities and towns.

The continuous power outages are affecting business houses, hospitals, schools and residential properties. Business houses are making losses in revenue. Electrical appliances and equipment have been damaged and frozen food items go bad. The effect of continuous power disruptions is felt by everyone as well as the effect of increasing prices of goods and services.

My questions are:

(1) Is the Minister aware of this continuous power outage problem?

(2) If yes, what are you going to do to rectify this problem? Or are we just going to pretend that all is well.

(3) Can you acknowledge that we have a serious problem at hand which is hard to solve by ourselves and maybe privatise PNG Power Limited?

**08/03**

We should not continue to retain an entity that is not serving the interest of our good people of Papua New Guinea.

(4) Could the Minister inform this House and the people of PNG about the current status of Ramu 2 Power Project?

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr WILLIAM DUMA** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I would like to congratulate the Member for Obura-Wonenara for being re-elected by his people.

Mr Deputy Speaker, his questions are very important. To answer his first question, just like all of us, I am aware of what is happening and why we are facing power outages across the country.

Secondly, they are serious problems but can be managed if given time. To start with, we have three major grids operating in the country; the Port Moresby grid which supplies 130 mega-watts of power, the Ramu grid supplies 106 mega-watts of power and the Warangoi grid in East New Britain Province.

In relation to the power grid in Port Moresby, 130 mega-watts of power grid is serviced by two different independent power suppliers that provide about 80 mega-watts and the PNG Power itself supplies about 50 mega-watts.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in the case of Port Moresby, everything was operating fairly well, until PNG Power decides to undergo a major refurbishment and renovation programs for its facilities up at the Sirinumu Toe-of- Dam and the Rouna Dam power plants.

Mr Deputy Speaker, if I can ask all of us to remember, these systems were built by the Australians in the 60s, and since independence there were no major refurbishment programs for those important assets.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the risk was that, if there were no such major refurbishment work being carried out, the machines would completely break down and PNG Power would be then required to buy new machineries and that would take years. As a result,

PNG Power made that very important decision to refurbish those important items that are there.

Mr Deputy Speaker, PNG Power is comforted by the fact that it was able to source power from two independent power producers; NIU-Power and Dirio, as well as 25 mega-watts from Exxon-Mobil. Unfortunately, due to a number of reasons, Exxon-Mobil withdrew its services leaving a gap of 25 mega-watts.

At the same time, on the basis that Exxon was going to provide the 25 mega-watts, as well as power from the two independent power producers, PNG Power also made the decision to close down two important gas powered stations at Kanudi and Moitaka. When this happened, PNG Power has yet to make attempts to re-open the two gas powered stations at Kanudi and Moitaka.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the problem was when stations like those two are shut down, it takes years to bring them back again. It was a decision that also reflect badly on the competence of the people at PNG Power. We have to fly in experts from Korea to rehabilitate those two stations.

I can assure the people of Port Moresby that Moitaka station will be back in full production in two weeks and Kanudi station will be back before Christmas. Our plans are to ensure that we have full power back before Christmas.

Unfortunately, we had to shut down the Sirinumu toe-of-dam and the Rouna Dam power plants generators.

**09/03**

So we have had this difficulty and those issues exacerbated when ExxonMobil decided to cease providing power supply to Port Moresby.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in the case of Ramu Grid, again, we've had issues with the unusual drought and we have had good reports for the last two weeks to the effect that rain has started falling and the dam is continuing to fill up and before the end of December, it will be then back to full capacity and we should manage it. But in the meantime, we have an expensive IPP producer which is providing power to Lae at much higher prices. It is a cause for concern, but these are issues that we are beginning to manage.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we have identified that the cause of the problem is a combination of management as well as technical requirements. However, we have not sat

back but have devoted most of our time in the last 3 to 4 months to fix it so we will be able to have a steady power supply before Christmas.

In the case of Ramu, Mr Deputy Speaker, it is an important project that has been developed by consortium of one of the largest power companies from China called China Hydro as well as another company from Shenahen. They are the two companies which have reputations of providing uninterrupted power to the growing city of Shenahen and one of them was involved in the construction of the Three Gorges Dam, the world's biggest dam. PNG Power as well as KCHL was able to go through a process which resulted in the consortium been selected to build, operate and transfer.

So, once this project gets off the ground, we will see our people of Morobe through the Morobe Provincial Government and the impacted landowners having 20 per cent equity in the project and our people of Eastern Highlands through their provincial government and the landowners having another 20 per cent. Thereby, our people are having 40 per cent equity in this project with the remaining 60 per cent being maintained by PNG Power.

For the first time since independence, the Marape Government has recognised the need of our people. We have had a case where our landowners in Yonki have seen power transmission being put up across the land and they have not been able to have access to power as well as equity in the business.

So, this is a game changing formula that has been worked out by this government and hopefully in the event that Wafi-Golpu is able to agree to take power from this important power source, our people from Morobe represented by their provincial government and the landowners as well as our people from Eastern Highlands will have for the first time equity not 5 per cent or 2 per cent, but significant equity of 40 per cent from the project.

Thank you.

### **Supplementary Question**

#### **Set up Inquiry – Supply of Electricity**

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** – Mr Deputy Speaker, this country continues to face a lot of power problem and the Ministers cannot continue to tell lies to the people of this country. Every day and after every three hours, there is a power cut in Lae city. We need

power in this country to generate electricity for whatever business that we are doing. We really need power and we cannot continue to talk to the leaders and suffer.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** – Honourable Governor, can you go straight to your supplementary question?

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** – Mr Deputy Speaker, I'm coming to the question. I am saying this because the power also continues to affect Markham as well with greatest respect to you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

So, Mr Minister, we cannot continue to tell lies to the country. We need a tangible and drastic action to be taken in relation to the generation and production of power in this country. So, can the Honourable Minister inform the Parliament and can the Minister also set up a commission of inquiry?

**Mr James Marape** – Point of Order! Mr Deputy Speaker, I apologise for interrupting his speech.

**10/03**

I feel that some of the words that the Governor has used are un-parliamentary. I believe that it is insinuation so I would like him to reword his statement with respect to the parliamentary decorum we have in our *Standing Orders*.

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** – Mr Deputy Speaker, with the greatest respect to the Prime Minister. We have a very big problem with this country and it has affected me deeply that is why I had to speak my mind. But, Mr Prime Minister, with respect, I withdraw the terminology that I used today.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** – Honourable Governor, the Chair hasn't asked you to withdraw your statement, but you have gone ahead and withdrawn your statement. Thank you very much, you can go ahead and ask your question.

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister for State Enterprise;



(1) Can you sanction a Commission of Inquiry to investigate why we are facing a very big problem with power in our country?

(2) This country needs continuous supply of power, therefore, can you allow for other power companies to come in and provide power and compete with PNG Power so that we can have a good supply of power to this country.

**Mr WILLIAM DUMA** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I would like to thank the good Governor of Morobe for his important questions and I appreciate the expression for his frustration. But let me say, Mr Deputy Speaker, I have never lied to Parliament, I have always been full and frank in the way I respond to fellow leaders' questions. What we have is a system of incompetence and the issues that have been allowed to remain unattended for a number of years and legacy issues. Not one single Minister can try to solve this problem in one single year or two years.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the question about the sanctioning of the Commission of Inquiry, the answer is no and it's simply a waste of time I indicated earlier to this House that we have worked out where the problems are and over the years, successive governments have tried their best to deal with this issue and when you have an increasing population, the challenge is on the Government and PNG Power to adjust to changing times and advance technology. So this is not the first time that a Government has tried to deal with this issue. For instance, in the previous Government we were talking about trying to solve this issue and we even brought generators from another country and some of them are still there and we are trying to make use of them. It's an ongoing issue and a challenge for any Government, Mr Deputy Speaker.

In relation to the question of whether or not we should allow independent power producers to provide power, yes, things have started. Companies owned by our own people for example Dirua Power, NiuPower and Korean Consortium in Lae. And with the decision by the Marape Government to set up the energy authority there will be a scope and room for those who have the expertise and the know-how to come up with the proposals and provide power to various centres in our country. What we are trying to do now will result in positive changes, and when PNG Power is back creating profitably and nicely, this Government will look very seriously at splitting the company in three parts; generation, transmission and retail. This Government is not blind; we are trying our best to fix what is before us. Thank you

11/03

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS –  
STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** – The Honourable Members, I wish to acknowledge the presences in the Public Gallery from the students of Pacific Institute of Leadership and Governance who are studying diploma in Public Accounting, Woodlagon Primary School in Rigo district, Central Province, Malolo International School in National Capital District, and the members of Morobe Provincial Executive Council.

On behalf of the Parliament I extend to the visitors a warm welcome to the National Parliament.

**OUTCOMES OF THE RECENT SUCCESSFUL FOUR NATIONS  
INTERNATIONAL VISITS AND ENGAGEMENTS – STATEMENT BY THE  
PRIME MINISTER – PAPER NOTED**

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** (Tari-Pori–Prime Minister and Minister for Planning) – Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask leave of Parliament to make a statement.

Leave granted.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise today to provide a Summary of my recent international engagements especially the four nations that I have visited from 21<sup>st</sup> September to 05<sup>th</sup> October. As a Head of the Government those visits were made in the interest of our country and as part of my duty to inform this Parliament for our country to take note of the visit and the meetings that were held in those visits.

Throughout the visits, I was accompanied by the Hon. Justin Tkatchenko, MP Minister for Foreign Affairs and along with senior policy officers from the Department of Prime Minister and NEC, especially in the visit to the United Nations at New York and the bilateral with the USA that was held in Washington DC.

Mr Deputy Speaker, also accompanying me were some members of this Parliament to give them exposure and to know what is happening so that in their own political career they will be equipped to work not just for their districts or provinces but also for our country. Accompanying me were Honourable Michael Marum, the Governor of East New Britain Province, the Hon. Daniel Tindipu, Member for Komo-Hulia, the Honourable Benjamin Mul, Member for North Waghi and the Honourable Casmiro Aia, Member for Goilala.

The Honourable. Richard Maru, Minister for International Trade and Investment, the Honourable. Alan Bird, Governor of East Sepik, and also His Excellency Mr. Sam Abal, Papua New Guinea's Ambassador to Japan, joined me at the Tokyo Sector for the State Funeral of Japan's former Prime Minister the Late Shinzo Abe.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my successful visit to the four nations commenced with my attendance at the Official Funeral Ceremony of our Late Queen, Elizabeth II in London where I also witnessed the ascension of His Royal Highness, King Charles III to the throne. I also called on His Royal Highness, the King and the new United, then Kingdom Prime Minister, Right Honourable. Elizabeth Truss immediately following the Official Funeral Ceremony,

Mr Deputy Speaker, discussions with the King were focused on forest conservation and Papua New Guinea's continued linkage to the Monarchy and the Commonwealth of Nations. In our discussions also, I reaffirmed commitment to the Commonwealth in this instance.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in my meeting with Prime Minister Truss, I congratulated her on her appointment and committed our country to work closely with the British Government to strengthen ties in the areas of military and the public service exchanges, the flexible visa arrangements to allow Papua New Guinea citizens ease of travel to the UK.

Mr Deputy Speaker, whilst in London, I also met with the Chief Executive Officer of the Swire Group of Companies where we discussed Swire's business portfolio in Papua New Guinea.

Mr Deputy Speaker, for the record, this company has been operating in Papua New Guinea since the early 1900's. We spoke in detail about expanding those ties, and our Government's strong intention to facilitate trade and investment especially with our focus on diversifying to our down stream centered businesses in our country.

**12/03**

Following the London Sector, I proceeded to New York where I attended the 77th United Nations General Assembly and delivered our country's statement. Following the London sector, I proceeded to New York where I attended the 77th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA77) and delivered the PNG Country Statement.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I successfully delivered the PNG Country Statement at the UN Plenary Hall on Thursday 22 September 2022. I spoke about forest conservation, climate change and Papua New Guinea's ability to industrialize and invest in downstream processing, whilst building greater levels of value utilizing our vast renewable and non-renewable resources.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in my introductory remarks to the 77th UN General Assembly, I acknowledged the theme that was premised on peace, prosperity and sustainability through multilateralism amid the Covid-19 Pandemic. I also spoke of the heightened climate change threat and increasing socio-economic developmental challenges that the globe continues to face. I emphasized that the time for mere rhetoric has passed, and that what was now needed was transformative and concerted global actions to address these issues head on.

In my address I supported the Secretary General's narrative of, "Our Common Agenda" to progress and better understand how we can effectively address issues to deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which are the global prerequisite to improve the livelihoods of all our people.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I note that Papua New Guinea has made some progress with its Human Development Index (HDI). This must be documented so that we can continue to measure and assess our progress and dispel myths about our nation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I spoke about our initiative to improve governance and education for all. I outlined our policies to decentralize health services and improve law and order. I talked about Connect PNG and our drive to develop high quality economic infrastructure such as wharves, roads, and airports to enable economic growth and market access for every Papua New Guinean. I also outlined our industrialization agenda as we approach our 50th Anniversary of independence, including our desire to become a net exporter of both renewable and non-renewable resources through downstream processing.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Agriculture Sector must be harnessed, particularly at the rural level through price and freight subsidies and nursery support. This will empower rural families to sustain their livelihoods as a revenue source and contribute to growing our rural economies.

I stressed that Papua New Guinea is working towards becoming a major supplier of organic primary and fisheries produce to global markets, and our nearest neighbors in Asia.

I also outlined my strong belief that decentralizing government services and functions to the Provinces and Districts will greatly complement our efforts to achieve the UN SDG's.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I used this occasion to call for greater Foreign Direct Investment and economic partnerships with many of our bilateral and multilateral partners. These are critical as we seek to progress our development agenda and the creation of Special Economic Zones to support Small and Medium Enterprises and spur economic growth. I noted that we aim for Papua New Guinea to be a K200 billion economy by 2025. A target that I believe, given the strong economic policies of our Government, we will achieve.

On climate change, I emphasized the need for collective action to enable resilience, adaptation and mitigation through measures that support land preservation and reclamation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I informed the General Assembly that Papua New Guinea is one of the few remaining countries with a pristine tropical rainforest, and a major carbon sink, totaling over 70 metric tonnes of UN Verified Sovereign REDD Plus Credits.

### **13/03**

I note our intention to bring these credits into the market by the end of this year. In doing so, we will provide significant economic benefit for our nation whilst ensuring that we retain the critical ecological resources.

Mr Deputy Speaker, on the margins of UN Assembly, I met with the Prime Ministers of Israel and Norway and the Prime Minister of Norway informed me that Norway has one of the world's best sovereign wealth fund. We discussed the possibility of also undertaking to replicate in our own sovereign wealth fund our structures similar to the Norwegian experience and we have made an undertaking that in the not too distant future,

Papua New Guinea Sovereign Wealth Fund and could have an exchange and work to understudy them and work in partnership with them.

Mr Deputy Speaker, immediately after UN, I travelled to Brisbane to attend a bilateral meeting with the Australian Prime Minister, the Honourable Anthony Albanese on the side lines of the annual Prime Minister's 13 rugby league match between Kumuls and the Australian Kangaroos on 25 September 2022.

At this meeting, we affirmed our strong and practical commitment to the existing Papua New Guinea-Australia bilateral partnership and discussed furthering educational opportunities for our citizens in Australian secondary and tertiary institutions.

We also spoke of the value that seasonal labour mobility provides to both of our nations and the need to increase quarters to provide more opportunities for our people.

I stressed the importance of increasing trade and investment partnerships to support and compliment Papua New Guinea's desire to industrialise and become net exporting economy to generate revenue to support our national budget as well as meet our domestic consumption and food security needs.

Mr Deputy Speaker, when my official engagements to Brisbane was complete, I travelled with the Australian Prime Minister, we attended the official funeral of the late Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. My attendance at this sad and solemn event was a mark of respect to appreciate the late Prime Minister's personal and long standing commitment to Papua New Guinea. He was a great friend of our nation and it was appropriate that I was there to pay our final respects and on the record, if you all would recall, our government secured for the first time almost a billion kina from Japan direct to our budget support. That was directly because of the late Shinzo Abe's warm reception towards our country and we had to pay him respect.

The Japanese Government through the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is investing high quality infrastructure projects across our nation. This includes the Port Moresby water and sewerage project, the Nadzab and Tokua airports redevelopment projects. At the moment Nadzab is progressing very well and Tokua will soon catch up. The PNG-Australia-Japan-New Zealand-US electrification project is a legacy of the late Shinzo Abe. The Japanese Government must also be commended for providing that K1 billion concessional loan I alluded to in 2021 at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I met with the Prime Minister the Honourable Fumio Kishida where I congratulated him on his appointment and acknowledged the increased and

strengthened bilateral relations in the areas of defence, people to people exchanges and continued development assistance and as a foundation purchaser of PNG LNG.

I also took the opportunity whilst in Tokyo to meet with Chief Executive Officers of three major Japanese Energy Companies, namely Sojitz, JX Nippon Oil and Gas Corporation and LNG Japan Corporation to discuss development of upcoming gas fields and for them to participate in downstream processing of LNG and Petro Chemical products.

Mr Deputy Speaker, after the State Funeral Service in Tokyo, I flew to Washington DC and attended the first ever US-Pacific Island Country Summit at the State Department Building in Washington DC on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

The two-day Summit was officially opened by US Secretary of State Mr. Antony John Blinken at the Franklin Roosevelt Room at the State Department Building.

#### **14/03**

Mr Deputy Speaker, in his opening remarks, Secretary Blinken welcomed leaders from the Pacific Island countries and applauded their attendance and support on issues of common interest. He noted that the inaugural Summit was an avenue for Pacific and US leaders to discuss business, trade and investment, climate change, security, and other emerging and existing issues and challenges that are part of the greater Blue Pacific Strategy.

During this meeting Secretary Blinken announced a US Financial Support Initiative of \$US4.8 billion as part of the US-Pacific Island Country Partnership.

It must be noted that these funds will be allocated based on merit, therefore, it requires that the Ministry and Department of Foreign Affairs analyze and prioritize projects that are available over the next ten years.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this was also my first meeting with some of my colleagues from the Pacific Island Countries (PICS) and the US which included Prime Minister of Fiji, Hon. Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands Hon. Manasseh Sogavare, MP, and heads of Governments from Tuvalu, Samoa, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Federated States of Micronesia, and Nauru.

During the meeting, leaders noted the need to meet regularly to ensure that the US-Pacific Partnership continues to deliver practical results for the region

Mr Deputy Speaker, on Thursday, 29 September 2022, I met with the US President, His Excellency Joe Biden at the White House where we concluded the Declaration on US-Pacific Partnership which aims to strengthen the US-Pacific Partnership through a commitment to bolster Pacific regionalism, by addressing and responding to threats such as climate change, natural disasters and striving to achieve a sustainable regional economic development and growth.

Furthermore, the Joint US-Pacific Islands Countries Declaration will guide the US-Pacific Partnership and promote sovereignty through mutual trust, respect, transparency, and accountability.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my participation at the above international events was very fruitful. They have allowed our nation to forge new partnerships and strengthen existing relations to ensure that they practically and positively impact on our development agenda.

I am content with the fact that we were able to establish effective dialogue and conversation with some of the world's leading economic powers, and through that, we have secured enhanced cooperation and partnerships that will complement our development agenda.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in my one-on-one discussions with Heads of Government from Australia and Japan as well as in the UNGA Country Statement, I was able to highlight the Government's development agenda which is primarily focused on growing the rural economy through improved service delivery.

I advocated for the re-alignment of development assistance towards economic infrastructure, downstream processing of our vast renewable and non-renewable resources, and the creation of economic zones that will increase revenue streams.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is all well and good, but what remains now is to ensure that the outcomes of my discussions are absorbed into our systems and processes and coordinated and implemented by the Departments and Agencies responsible.

I call on all ministers, heads of departments, and agencies to take note of the matrix emanating from the NEC Policy Submission on the Outcomes of my Four Nations Tour and identify issues directly under their respective ambit and ensure that they are properly captured in their respective annual work plans and implemented accordingly.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I commend this statement to the House.



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

That the Parliament take note of the paper.

**15/03**

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH –THE FIRST 100 DAYS IN OFFICE PRIORITIES –  
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT – PAPER NOTED**

**Dr LINO TOM** (Wabag – Minister for Health) – Firstly, let me take this opportunity to thank the Marape-Rosso Government for gracing me with this opportunity as Minister for Health to lead this important life-saving sector. The Health Sector is an integral part of the social sector and contributes to the greater aspect of human development.

On the same note, Mr Deputy Speaker, I would also like to thank the former Minister, Honourable Jelta Wong and those before him that have led the health sector with distinction.

Mr Deputy Speaker as my maiden speech, I will be presenting to the Floor of Parliament my 100-day Plan for the sector and the 18 months thereafter..

Mr Deputy Speaker, the need is huge. The population of Papua New Guinea continues to grow at a rate of 2.7 per cent according to National Census of 2011, with an estimated 9.1 million people in 2020 and 12 million by 2030

Mr Deputy Speaker, we may have already surpassed these figures as suggested by remote sensing modelling that has been done in the recent years. We may be within vicinity of about 13 to 15 million.

Health is a right for these people and the Government has the Constitutional responsibility to provide health care services to its people. As we say in health, ‘health care is from the womb to the tomb’.

The problems of service provisions will be challenged by the country’s growing population exerting pressure on limited government resources, coupled with challenges to revamp the fragile health system to be more vigilant in the provisions of quality health services and at the same time building a system to endure such pandemics that we have faced recently in the Covid-19 crisis. The Covid-19 stress-test exposed how fragile and weak our health system was.

Mr Deputy Speaker, there is an urgent need to address priority health issues like family planning to control population growth in this country.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we have basically out grown our capacity to provide for our people, and population control should be the priority of this Government and we will make it a priority.

The immunisation rate has been low and stagnant over the years and we require support from other sectors in building roads and bridges in order for our health workers to conduct outreach programs to villages and communities. Added to that is the greater need to focus on the emergence of cancer, trauma and injuries and mental disorders.

Mr Deputy Speaker, if we are to meet, by 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and to achieve the Universal Health Coverage of Leaving No-one Behind' we need a whole-of government approach.

This means improved accessibility through our road networks and jetties; increased communication and electricity; building more community water supplies; improved law and order; promoting more health-friendly communities; promoting good housing; and increasing family economic status. These are all what we call social determinance of health.

To address some of the ongoing issues within my Ministry of Health, I will focus on a few key result areas (KRAs) that I would be expected to deliver on and results may not be achieved as quickly as we may anticipate but these are areas I will be prioritising the next 100 days in office and of course the 18 months.

Mr Deputy Speaker, these key result areas are not my own but derived National Health Plan 2021-2030. The main issues identified from this plan are; the acute health workers shortage; chronic drug procurement issues; unequal and limited access to health infrastructure and systems and governance issues.

Therefore, Mr Deputy Speaker I have set for myself the following priorities I intend to achieve within the next 18 months as I progress in this sector:

Number one, Mr Deputy Speaker is to help establish mechanisms to achieve the WHO required ratio of health workforce to population of 4:1000.

We have declined from 1.27/1000 in 2011 to 0.97 in 2018. Our aim is to increase total number from current 11,000 to 23,000 by 2030.

During a recent HR data cleansing exercise, the total vacancies across the sector is about 10,800 inclusive of both clinical and administrative positions.

The NEC approved an additional 5000 positions to the sector, a gap that was identified during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr Deputy Speaker, before we can recruit for the additional 5000, the 10, 800 vacancies must be filled.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the number of health workers is very important in any health jurisdictions. When you increase the number of health workers the health improves and it shown all throughout the world.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will be looking at short term as well as long-term short-term solutions. Short term would be to recruit qualified health workforce from overseas and increase retirement age only for health work force. Long term solutions will be to increase twinning capacity either through establishing new Health Schools Universities to increase output to reach the number as envisaged in the National Health Plan.

In the short term, Mr Deputy Speaker, my Ministry and the NDoH require the assistance from Minister for Public Service and Department of Personnel Management to mitigate the issues with the recruitment process and come up with some immediate solutions to fill in the critical vacant positions.

One such measure would be the devolution of powers of Recruitment back to the Department of Health NDoH workforce is categorised as an essential workforce because it's a life and death issue and the continued delays at DPM in addressing this huge problem of Health staff shortage issue is of concern to the health sector.

In the long term, Mr Deputy Speaker, the NEC approved a standalone Medical University that will train all cadres of health workers and must be established from 2023 onwards. I am happy to say that this Government is recognising the need there and its prioritising this.

I will commence collaboration with Minister for DHERST and other relevant to progress these possible options.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this will definitely take some time but a clear work will be developed to show how we will achieve this; Health is Labour Intensive unlike other sectors and without adequate workforce health services will be compromised or not delivered to our people.

## **Number 2, drug procurement.**

Drug procurement continues to be a big challenge for the sector. Therefore, I will begin a dialogue with the NDoH and development partners to explore options or possibilities to improve drug procurement either by strengthening the current procurement and supply management system or through outsourcing to a reputable independent authority as a matter of priority as recommended by PAC. We have already commenced work on this.

It is my plan and hope to ensure the right medicines are procured in the right quality, the right quantity and delivered to the right place at the right time during my term in office.

In doing so, Mr Deputy Speaker, my first priority in the short term is to ensure that medical supplies and procurement is adequately funded.

This year, the NDoH is faced with a funding gap of K142 million. Although a submission of K303 million was requested, the sector only received K200 million. With the carry over liabilities of the previous years, the sector now request a funding gap of K142 million. The funding shortfall was approved by NEC on 4 May 2022.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will now seek to expedite this process with Minister for Treasury and Finance, for funding to be made available as a matter of priority.

Mr Deputy Speaker, have revisited the recommendations and outcomes from the Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) into medical supplies procurement and distribution enquiry to progress what has already been done and ensure appropriate actions will be taken to implement the recommendations.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I intend to present the update here for all to see.

**Number 3, increase infrastructure capacity to improve access to health services.**

Mr Deputy Speaker, in the inaugural speech from the Prime Minister to the 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament on the 9 of August 2022, he aspires to ensure that every village must have health facility closest to them, every LLG must have a health centre, every district must have a hospital, and every province must have a provincial hospital.

Mr Deputy Speaker, there are 23 hospitals, 18 registered district hospitals, 774 health centers including urban clinics and communities health posts and 2494 aid posts totaling to 3,221 health facilities across the country.

From this only 2243 (70 per cent) facilities are open and about 974 aid post are closed. My plan and request is to re-open these closed facilities as a matter of priority.

Mr Deputy Speaker, all new health facilities and upgrading of existing facilities must be driven by data. Studies have indicated a lot of wastage of resources due to health facilities being built through political whim and convenience that are not conforming to the National Health Service Standards, not fully equipped and no staff to operate these facilities.

Mr Deputy Speaker, such practices will be a thing of the past and I request the support of all Members of Parliament to go by the health standards.

All health facility development projects will be controlled through policy or legally entrenched to prevent such wastage.

To begin, Mr Deputy Speaker, I will pursue the implementation of the national health service standards through the development of the Provincial Health Service Plans. This will include the accreditation of health facilities against the national health service standards, assessment of population needs and burden of diseases in the provinces so that appropriate infrastructure is built to serve the needs of the population.

**Number 4, improve governance and systems.**

Mr Deputy Speaker, the health sector has gone through reforms to strengthen and improving health service delivery systems. The key significant reform being the establishment of provincial health authorities (PHAs) for a unified health service delivery in all our provinces.

One of my key priorities is to strengthen this major reform by ensuring all relevant legislations are reviewed and amended to remove political interference in the selection of boards so credibility is restored to ensure our people's health remain in good hands.

This also goes to the selection and appointment of CEOs. The systems established will have to process candidates and provide a list that will be left for the province to select from, not the other way around.

My Ministry will continue to support the ongoing system strengthening programs supported by our development partners, especially in the leadership and management training and the Public Finance Management training and the system building.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in addition, the review of systems laws, especially the *National Health Administrative Act 997* and the *Provincial Health Authority Act 2007* will ensure appropriate structures are established to fulfill the mandated functions for service delivery.

This reform will also look at the regulatory functions to create self-sustaining revenue for health system and continue the public health legislative reviews amendments and developments.

#### **Number 5-Review and Audit all PHAs**

Mr Deputy Speaker, absolute power corrupts and there is evidence of widespread corruption in some PHAs. It is my intention to review and audit all the PHAs and I have started in my own province of Enga PHAs to set the precedent for the rest of the country; Gulf, NCD and Western Highlands PHAs are now being reviewed as we speak.

**16/03**

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will continue to do regular updates on the progress of my priorities for the sector as we proceed into my first 100 days in office. We don't have all the answers; nor all the knowledge, and so we will do regular consultations with everyone including all relevant stakeholders, and this includes all of you leaders in Parliament.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we all know that funding is also one of the main issues giving rise to our current predicament and I will be upright with this. We can't expect miracles to happen, if we can't put in more money to make things work. The health of our people is the wealth of our nation. Loss of productivity through illness is a global issue and we must acknowledge it for what it is. It's not only the cash crops that bring much needed forex, it's the people that make it happen.

Mr Deputy Speaker, finally, but not the least, only 30 per cent of the health challenges can be solved by the health sector through medicines and injections. However, 70 per cent are outside our domain, such as financing, accessibility, power supply, communication, law and order, nutrition, literacy and accessibility to water supply to communities.

All these play a critical role in improving the health of our people. These are what we call social determinants of health. While I do my part, I seek the support of all the sectors to do your part to improve the health and wellbeing of our people.

With this I thank you all and may God bless you all.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I commend this statement to the Parliament.

Motion (by **Mr Richard Masere**) agreed to –

That the Parliament take note of the statement.

**Mr RICHARD MASERE** (Popondetta) – Before I commend the Minister for Health, let me take this opportunity to also recognize the statement of the Prime Minister and thank him for his very important visits to meet with very important people from other countries, particularly people in status of presidents and prime ministers. I want to congratulate him on undertaking these important visits to create bilateral agreements and discussions to help our country.

I would also like to encourage the ministers, particularly in the areas that the Prime Minister has engaged with foreign prime ministers and presidents. The respective ministers and departments must take note of those important discussions and to progress those discussions to a point where we can start exporting to those countries that the Prime Minister had bilateral discussions with. I commend the Prime Minister on his successful trip.

The 100 days' statement of the Minister for Health is very important. I would like to encourage other ministers to also deliver their plans to this House so we can debate on how important their plans are. A plan sets a pathway for every organization or even for an individual. Without a plan, we are bound to fail. A plan gives us a guidance on what we need to achieve as an organization or as a country.

I am happy with the particular guidelines presented by the Minister. I want to encourage other ministers to partake in those important guidelines that the Minister has presented, but for their respective departments so we participate in those key areas.

Our health sector is very important for the well-being of our country. I thank the Minister for those important areas that he will address.

As the Member for Ijivitari in the last term of Parliament, we found out that it was difficult to address all the sectors. What we did was to put a plan in place and address one sector at a time.

**17/03**

In the last term of Parliament, we set out to focus strongly on our health within our district. Within that period of five years, we built a number of aid posts. We even went to the point that we refurbished two of our health centres. We even purchased a K1 million Water Treatment Plant for our St. Margaret District Hospital as part of our effort to build our health facilities and infrastructure to ensure that we provide the best health for our

people. We even went to the extent to buy sea ambulances for our coastal communities. We bought land ambulances for all our health centres to make sure that we are able to provide the necessary services to our people. So, we did those work in the last five years and what I realise is that, whilst we are building all the health facilities and providing all the logistics to move people from the health centres or aid posts to the hospitals, one of the things we find out is that, there were two things missing in this entire system when the Minister already addressed in his speech; Medical Drugs and Health workers on the ground.

For the medical drugs and medicine, we always say there is a shortage of drugs in the country, but that's not true. In fact, if you go to our medical health store in Lae and Port Moresby, you will find that there is a lot of medical drugs in those facilities, but it's our ability to get those medical drugs and medicines to our aid posts, health centres and hospitals. That is our biggest problem here and if we cannot get these medical drugs and medicines to our aid posts and health centres, I guarantee you that you will find them being sold on the streets. People are taking advantage of our lack of ability to get the medicines and drugs and the people are stealing or there is a syndicate within that system where they continue to remove drugs from those medical facilities and take them on the streets and sell them. Some of these medicines that are been sold are outdated medicines and causing medical threats to the people who are buying these medicines.

My good Minister, we have the medicine in our country. What we should be looking at is, how best can we utilise the systems we have. If the systems in our country, if our people that run hire car companies that deliver these medical drugs cannot do this, then let's look outside. Let's source somebody to deliver our medical drugs in an efficient manner. We are dealing with our people's lives.

In the last term, I brought in one of the Australian companies and introduced them to the former Minister for Health. The company made a proposal, which I believe would have addressed a lot of our medical supply chain issues within the country for delivering medical drugs to our people, and the idea was to use drones.

They were going to use it like the high tech drones used by the US military. They were going use those drones to deliver the medical drugs in our country and these medical drugs would be kept in their facilities. In other words, we don't pay for the medical drugs. They store the medical drugs and they only invoice us when they deliver the medical drugs to our people. This is a high tech way of delivering medicines. So, what they would



do is, they would use drones and GPS. For example, when there is a snake bite patient at the aid post or health centre and they call the facility to assist within the next 30 minutes, with the technology they have, they can deliver the medicines within 2 to 20 minutes depending on where the location is. And because it's a GPS, they will put the medicines on the drone and fly it to the aid posts or health centres where they need them and drop the drone at the specific spot where the GPS locates and it will save a life.

**18/03**

Initiating these type of ideas, we can at least save a life to those living very remote around the country. These are high tech ideas but we can utilize it to our advantage because most of our rural areas are not accessible by land, air or water. We can use technology to solve many of these problems.

I brought this proposal to the Minister and it got lost along the way and I am bringing it back to you. I am doing this because our people's lives are important. If we use initiatives like this I believe we can solve issues faced in our aid posts, health centers and hospitals. Drugs are not an issue, we have them available in the country, but it's the ability to get it to our people that need it the most.

You also addressed the issue of the level of our health workers dropping, that is true. Last year we gave St Margret Medical School some money, but the money was not sufficient to keep the school running. So now this institution has closed and is still closed. If you are talking about training more medical practitioners, why are these medical institutions shutting down? This is a very big problem. I suggest that certain institutions such as health institutions, should be transferred from higher education to the health sector so that it becomes your full responsibility to train them and put them to the health centers.

So I believe, Mr Minister that if we can address these issues we can solve a lot of problems in our health sector. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker

**Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE** (Pomio) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. On this side I would like to support the statement made by the Minister for Health today. Health is an important concern for all of us and we all must take ownership of the health of our own people and making sure that we comply with the National Department of Health Standards and other things.

Thank you to the Minister who presented his 100 days' plan which is an 18 months' plan of what he'll be doing for the health sector in our country. We can say that health is an ongoing challenge and from this side we will support what the Government is doing. It's an ongoing challenge but we will make sure that we will try our best to support the interventions that he has put forward.

Firstly, we are happy to hear about the review on the *Provincial Health Authority Act 2007*. I keep saying that it's an important area that we need to look at. Especially the regulation specifically specified under *Section 56* or *Section 57* that talks about the regulation of the *PHA Act*. It's an outstanding matter that needs to be addressed. At the moment we have the Chairman of the *PHA* boards who do not have any clear communication direction or how do they report or they interact with the Governor of the provinces. This is not very clear at the moment, therefore, the Minister for Health and his secretary must create a dialogue with the Chairman of the *PHA* boards and the CEO. We can improve this or specify this in *Section 57* of the *PHA Act*. We were discussing this with the Department of Health but we would like to see if the Minister can come forward and let us know if this has been done or not.

Secondly, I would like to support the Government in saying that all LLGs must have health centers, all districts must have district hospitals and all provinces to have provincial hospitals, this coincides with the health standards. Take for example, NCD, do we know the districts we have in NCD? Where their district hospitals are? If we ask someone, they will tell you that they do not know where the district hospitals are. If we say that the Gerehu hospital is the provincial hospital for NCD, it does not meet the level 4 or 5 or a provincial hospital.

**19/03**

We acknowledged the fact that there are many specialist SMO's or medical officers working at Gerehu who are not fully utilizing their skills. Many surgeons are there with other skilled medical officers wasting their time. So, I ask the good *PHA* team to work with the Department of Health and get the systems in order. The health system is chaotic when I was the health minister.

At the Port Moresby General Hospital, the doctors there will describe the situation at emergency department and outpatient department as a war zone. We are saying that

PMGH is suppose to be a national referral hospital. We must start looking at specialized skills to treat kidney patients, especially kidney transplant.

The CEO is coming up with the very good facility to address cancer, which is actually killing thousands of our citizen every year in our country. They want to look at all these specific areas, they are now still burdened and bombarded with many of our people. When they are feeling sick, the hospital that comes into their mind is PMGH but PMGH is supposed to be addressing only the referral cases going through the system.

So, I think they could see the Dr Molumi is doing his best but I actually had a meeting with some of our doctors there, and they are actually stressed out. Stressed out because NCD needs to have its own district hospital where all patients will go and get the referral letter and later go to PMGH. That's not happening so I call on the PHA team of the NCD to put our system in order, so that we can relieve the burden faced by PMGH staff so that they can focus on providing a good service expected of a level six super-specialist training hospital of our country.

If that never happens, we will continue to talk about health cancer facilities. We now have a very good heart facility here. In the past when patients experienced blockage in arteries they go to Australia, but now they are doing it at PMGH and so we want to go down this path.

We need to talk about new interventions of health care in our country and we need to allow PMGH to actually be relieved of this and let them concentrate on what they can do addressing the overall health care.

So, I support the Minister, he is doing very well in terms of health. We are with you and supporting you in every aspect of what you are doing. I again call upon the team from NCD PHA to see what they need to do.

The Central and Gulf provinces must have their own hospital because everyone comes to PMGH and giving unnecessary pressure. Some of our good doctors have had discussion with me and mention these issues. I said let's address all these things so that again PMGH is given that rightful opportunity to address the important things that are taken to level six national referral hospital.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** (Morobe) – Honourable Deputy Speaker, I thank you, for granting me the opportunity to speak on the issue of the presentation of the Minister for Health statement.

Secondly, I want to thank my good Minister; you are a medical doctor by profession in the medical field and hygiene. You are the best man to take charge in that ministry and ensure the ministry plays its role so that medical care reaches our people, and also to provide policy or opinions to the doctors and any other people who are working in the medical profession.

So, I commend you, overall, the substance of your presentation has been very useful for the consumption and digestion of the members of the Parliament.

**20/03**

I have couple matters which I wish to raise before this parliament based on your presentation.

Firstly, it is in relation to population and there is no doubt in this country Papua New Guinea that the people are producing people in an alarming rate without consideration for the future of those people whom they are producing.

Mr Deputy Speaker, these are human beings that are being produced and they have needs for food, accommodation, education and all of those things. It is not that we have a shortage of land in this country, we have enough land available for which if we are industrious we can work hard to produce food to sustain ourselves. There are with the greatest respect; particularly people living the urban areas, it is unfortunate that the majority of the residents are reliant on those who are employed in the cities and towns.

The population has increased families are unable to physically feed the children that they are producing and consequently there is a problem in this country where many of our children are not having enough nutritious food. That is, they are not having a balanced diet as what doctors described, it stunts growth. Good and healthy diet will ensure you are physically strong to be able to work or be alive for that matter, so that in the event that you are sick at least your body is able to protect you.

Mr Deputy Speaker, what is happening in this country is that there is the problem of stunted growth. People are eating too much of just one type of food and not a balanced meal. They think they are consuming enough food to sustain themselves but they are not and as a result there are people in this country that are growing small.

I am sacred to say that one day we will come to a stage where our very own tall people will be walking around like dwarves.

*(Laughter in the Chamber)*

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** -That is called stunted growth because people are not consuming enough food. People think that they are growing big but this is not so, they are growing small. In the past when we had plenty of food, the population was small. Today we have land and we can grow so much good food but we are not eating these foods we are selling to buy just one type of food., which is very sad. The other regions of the South Pacific, you see people of Fiji, Samoa, Tonga to name a few are huge in size.

In 1969 when we played Fiji in rugby union we won. Today you can't because the growth human beings in this country is stunted; they are not eating well. This is the biggest problem that I see and if I may I think I can categorize this a sickness worse than HIV/Aids.

I hope that this problem is addressed by carrying out sufficient campaigns throughout the country to tell the people not to produce so many children.

**21/03**

Inform them to be considerate about the number of children they have and how many they can sustain to grow up and be successful, not like the ones we see today. I am very scared to see so many dwarves around in this country. So I hope Mr Minister, with you in charge we will carry out that awareness in this campaign.

Secondly Mr Deputy Speaker, Morobe is like a country within our country, not that I'm trying to sever Morobe from the rest of PNG but it is big and has over one million people. Morobe is a difficult country, we are separated by mountains and tough rivers, we are separated by rough seas and people like to live in the pockets of the mountains. They don't want to come out because that is the land of their forefathers have given them and they feel proud to be living there.

It is our obligation to make sure that we deliver the medication to our people. Mr Minister, I can see that you are doing this to make sure that is achieved. And Mr Minister, for your information, there are so many Morobeans who are educated at the health training centres like Butaweng and other medical institutions in the province and they are qualified

to serve the rural people of Morobe right in the mountains, on the island, in the valleys and everywhere that's difficult in terms of accessibility but it is their place and they love to live there. Our duty is to ensure that the medications are provided to the people. But, what is happening Mr Minister is that the Personnel Management Department is not making sure that those people who are qualified are employed. That is the biggest problem now. So many young people are qualified and are enthusiastic to serve in the area of medication but they are not employed.

I want to propose to the Honourable Minister to take it up to the Secretary for Health and to DPM to make sure that those people are employed in the public service system. So that they are able to provide service to the people of Morobe province. I can't speak for Papua New Guinea but if there is anything going on that is similar to the situation in Morobe then surely my speech here will benefit them.

Mr Speaker, as I said, Morobe is a big country, like it or not, the population is one million which surpasses the population of Solomon Islands and Fiji. Secondly and last of all, with the greatest respect to you, I want to raise the matter in relation to the cobalt machine.

When I was the Governor in 2009, I raised the matter with the former Minister late Sir Peter Barter to purchase a cobalt machine and have it stationed in the Angau General Hospital for that machine to be utilised for cancer screening purposes. This machine as far as I know was purchased and installed at Angau General Hospital but the utility of that machine is not coming to place. The machine is just sitting there and the mothers are dying. They come to me with breast cancer and uterus cancer crying and afraid that they are going to die.

**22/03**

Mr Deputy Speaker, please make sure that the cobalt machine gets fixed because the utility of that machine will save the mothers. Ladies are the ones who suffer from all kinds of cancer and they need to be detected. Many mothers in Markham, Pindiu, and Menyamya are flocking to ANGAU to be tested but they cannot be tested because the machine is not working. The nurses and doctors are telling them that they need the International Organization on Radiation to approve that machine, and I said, "How long are we going to wait for that machine to be authorized, or legalized to be used and utilized to ensure that we attend to the mothers who are suffering from cancer?"

Mr Minister, the Prime Minister has made the right decision by appointing you to this position, with all due respect to those who are not medically qualified; you are medically qualified and that is your job which God has given you.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the answer to that Cobalt machine is to approve the utility of that machine so it can be utilized. Mr Minister, I trust and have confidence in your ability to make sure that machine will come into operation.

And, finally, ANGAU is a referral hospital for all the other provinces and I am happy for people from other provinces to come for treatment at ANGAU. However, I am sad that the machine is not operating because of internal laws on radiation. I trust you to make that machine work to save all the mothers coming from all over the country to get treatment.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for allowing me to speak.

**Mr JOHNSON WAPUNAI** (Ambunti-Drekikir) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for allowing me time to debate on this paper. I thank the Minister for Health for the good presentation that you have presented. Many members have added their views and I also would like to contribute to the debates.

Many of us who have spoken are talking about building new hospitals, new machines, and other things that will help sustain our lives but I think that there is an area that we have not talked about. The Government spends 80 per cent on curative health and many problems occur in primary health where only about 10 to 20 per cent is been given to primary health which is the sector with the largest problem in PNG. If we can address the primary health issues, we will not have to be building big health facilities and this is the biggest failure in this country.

Mr Minister, prevention is better than cure. We have so many Public Health Acts that exist such as the VOC Act, Cemetery Act, Alcohol Act, Occupational Safety Act, and many others but there is no implementation.

**23/03**

It used to be very effective in the 70s and the 80s. There are many political interference and a lot of politicians are now business owners of fast-cook outlets, liquor shops, etcetera that prevents the health inspectors from doing their jobs effectively thus resulting in low health quality.

For instance, there are a lot of street sellers selling their products on the streets which results in a lot of littering everywhere. We need to improve the quality of this place by providing quality services which has been lacking for a very long time and needs to be addressed. The Department of Health needs to put in more money into public health to prevent this.

The quality of the foods sold on the streets need to be determined. Are there any standards met before preparing the foods? It may look nice but we will never know how they were prepared. Does the place that they prepare the food meet the health standards or not?

Many sicknesses we are experiencing in PNG are not from us. They are imported and spread by our behaviour and attitude. For instance, we see a lot of our young people getting fat and dying very young.

My contribution to this debate is; if we want to live longer we need to prevent the source by start enforcing regulated laws. We cannot enforce laws because of political interference into businesses.

We will not stop spending money on building new hospitals or buying new medical equipment because our population keeps increasing. It is about time that we need to address these issues and prevent it from the source so there are less problems and we can live longer.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr PILA NININGI** (Imbonggu-Minister for Justice and Attorney General) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I want to also thank the Minister for bringing this statement because it is important for this country. Health and education are two key policies of this Government.

I want to thank the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister. This Government has put aside a K100 million for funding hospitals. I thank the Prime Minister for trying to build a hospital for every district.

Everybody do not need to come to major centres like Port Moresby, Lae or Mt Hagen looking for better health services. They can stay in their own districts because they will have their own district hospitals.

It will be expensive for people living in rural villages to travel to cities looking for better health services. It will only be possible for the ones that have money. I thank this



Government for at least making it possible for some districts to now have hospitals. Health will improve when there are hospitals in districts. Some districts that do not have hospitals will now have them. Some of our people have passed away because they could not afford to travel to cities for better health. We must bring services back to our people.

Secondly, I want to thank the Member for Pomio for contributing K500,000 to the Cancer Foundation.

**24/03**

My colleague Members and I also contributed funds yesterday. All of you must be aware that this Cancer Foundation is the only one at the Imbonggu referral hospital. The Imbonggu DDA contributed K500,000 towards this Cancer Foundation. It is a referral hospital and I want it to be completed.

To all of us here, we must try to complete one thing at a time. We can have many other small things to do but very importantly, we must complete one project at a time such as this hospital. So, I want to thank those of you who have contributed towards this Cancer Foundation and for your kind understanding.

If we receive K10 million per annum and each Member contributes K1 million, then we will have K118 million to build a big project. We don't need to invest in our own districts alone. Let's not think small. We must think big. If we contribute K1 million each, we will build better hospitals. However, let's give priority to Port Moresby and Lae so that we can refer our patients there.

So, I think committing K1 million each, we can build facilities for cancer or kidney disease. Why should we go to Australia or Philippines for medical treatment? We have the medical doctors here but we are not properly using our resources. We must put the money to where it matters.

So, we must not split up all the money for smaller projects. If we do this, those monies will be exhausted and the project won't be completed. If you want to start a big project and complete it, we must cooperate to achieve it. As a saying goes, 'Rome was not built in a day.' When we take time and do it bit by bit, we will achieve what we want, but if we don't do that, we will still be lacking behind.

People have died from curable disease and they are still dying. People who have money have travelled overseas for treatment and are still travelling overseas for better treatment, therefore, I want to say that, it is good to put aside some money.

So, in my recommendation, I want to say that from the K10 million we receive annually, we should put aside K1 million each and come up with K118 million and invest in a bigger project rather than on smaller projects.

We should prioritise Port Moresby and Lae and then continue on to Rabaul, Hagen and to rest of the provinces and districts where people can have easy access to it.

With that, this is my small contribution to the debate and most times we thought that the money we have is to build infrastructures like roads and bridges which the people will benefit but it will not help them. If we want to build a hospital for the district, we must start and finish it.

Thank you.

**Mr SIMON DUMARINU** (Central Bougainville) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Before I contribute to the debate, I want to take this opportunity to thank the people of Central Bougainville for electing me into this 11th Parliament.

**25/03**

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the Prime Minister who is our leader in this term of Parliament. I also want to congratulate and acknowledge the Deputy Prime Minister, Opposition Leader, all the Ministers, Members of Parliament, and the Parliamentary Services staff too.

Firstly, I will debate on the statement presented by the Prime Minister on four nations tour and also, I thank the two ministers for presenting their statements today. It is important and contributed so much in the direction of the government of the day. So, I thank the Prime Minister, especially in giving recognition to the papers that he presented.

Papua New Guinea, is part of the global family and we have connectivity with other countries in terms of bilateral relationship. The touring of Prime Minister with the four nations is very important and we will benefit a lot from it.

Many times, people from other countries are coming into our country and they get what they want from us, but I think what Prime Minister did was a bit different. Let's offer to other countries what we can give as a potential nation. This is a great thing and a milestone achievement into the future. So, once again, I give recognition to this important tour in these four nations, I believe he did a great impact with our connectivity to the outside world.

Coming back to the health issue, I am admiring the Minister for the arrangement of yesterday's activity conducted after the Parliament session. The Cancer Foundation did an excellent presentation yesterday and the message received is very clear. It's important for Papua New Guinea because cancer is killing a lot of people. He is the right minister and capable to handle it during his tenure with his work experience with his background. He will contribute a lot to the Department of Health during his term as the Minister for Health.

With that the policy statement, I will be speaking from the Bougainville perspective in one area, we are looking at it is administration. Administering and management of the hospital. I am looking at Central Bougainville to establish the health board so that they can manage the health work inside Arowa and maybe Buka. All this are important.

The doctors must concentrate and focus on the patients and the administration will be managed by the boards and control the affairs. The doctors and nurses will continue to serve the sick people coming into the hospital for treatment.

That is one of the areas, I see within the health sector that we need to improve.

**26/03**

I see that it's very important in my electorate and as a country as a whole. Thank you Deputy Speaker.

**Mr BENJAMIN MUL** (North Waghi) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Thank you to the Minister for Health for delivering a very good statement on the health issues in our country.

I would like to touch a little on the management of health and its facilities. We can talk about funding going to the health sector but who will manage these funds. We need to prioritize the health sector and give it to a body who can manage it properly and produce good results and reports to Parliament to deliberate upon.

I suggest we give the health sector to the church to look after and manage. I am suggesting this because Churches are in all parts of the country, even in the remotest parts of the country and they would be in a better position to look after these health facilities in the provinces that they are in. We as members cannot manage these because we have other areas to look after as well. Even the people at Waigani or other provincial offices cannot

look after the hospitals and aid posts in their provinces unlike the churches. The church will give the sector the attention it needs.

The church is able to do this because they are caregivers and if you see it, the church mainly looks after the education and health sectors of this country and I don't see any reason why we shouldn't give them this opportunity. Once we give them the opportunity and the funding needed to look after our health sector I trust that most problems faced in the health sector will be solved.

We have the Bible placed in front of us, which means that we are all in the presence of God.

**27/03**

We have not given anything back to God to show our responsibility. We have shifted our responsibility and the churches are now providing education and health services on our behalf.

How much will we give to the health sector? Are we going to build a huge hospital with state-of-the-art facilities? How many of our clinics or rural health centers will be upgraded? The way we are going we will continue to spend and our efforts will go to the dogs.

Let us focus on the church run facilities, institutions and the churches as a whole. Why I say this is because if we have too many service providers especially in the health and education sector, not everyone will have access to services, so let us partner with the churches and ensure our people receive services.

**Dr BILLY JOSEPH** (Nipa -Kutubu) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker for giving me the opportunity to speak. I wish to take this time to thank the Minister for Health. I being a doctor by profession have faith and believe that he is the right person who will address many of our health issues in the country.

Thank you for the opportunity given yesterday to attend the cancer awareness program that was very informative. The Port Moresby General Hospital is graded as level seven and it's a specialist teaching hospital in the country, this hospital has transformed over the last 15 years that I have been in medical school. The government and the private sector have invested a lot in this hospital and to date we have interventional cardiologist that if you suffer a heart attack or blockage in the arteries the treatment is now available at

the Port Moresby General Hospital. There was no such intervention before and many have sought assistance overseas.

It was expensive, many lives were saved while others were lost but I am happy to say that through the government and private sector partnership this service is now in the country. Hopefully we should have a specialized cancer unit as well as one for kidney. This hospital should become one of the desired level seven hospital in the country.

Thank you to the management and board of Port Moresby General Hospital and also Kumul Petroleum Holdings and the government for always standing by this hospital.

Another issue that affects the delivery of adequate health services in the country is man power. We have the School of Medicine and Health Sciences but it is attached to UPNG, that is why every year it produces about 45-50 graduates and that is not enough for our increasing population. We have about 3-4 per cent population increase annually but the number of doctors we are producing annually is inadequate. We need to seriously look into addressing this issue. There were about 40-46 doctors that contested for the elections and under the electoral law, they cannot go back to work. There is a critical shortage of health workers in the country. and if it means we need to have a separate medical university, we need to consider that.

**28/03**

I am sure there is a proposal somewhere there but I hear that UPNG has taken either NEC or School of Medicine and Health Sciences to court over that matter. So we need to clear that path so that we can have enough health workers for our growing population. The other issue I would like to discuss is the provincial health authorities. Some provincial health authorities are working; others are not working. It depends on the people that are in the Chair. The issue with the way they set up the *Provincial Health Authority Act* was that the provincial hospital CEOs automatically became the CEO of the PHA and they report to a board and the board then reports to a health minister. I don't see how the Health Secretary comes in operationally or functionally, how do they report to the Health Minister.

There is a missing link there so this time with the leadership of the Health Minister, we need to amend the PHA regulations. I think there is a missing link. We don't know what the PHAs are doing. They are not regulated properly. There is no direct intervention

from NDoH because the PHA CEO does not report directly to the Health Secretary. So we need to revisit the regulation and review the way the PHA is set up.

The next issue I want to discuss is on the procurement and supply chain system of the health sector in our country. I also want to remind the House that we have heard about the wastage or back log of medical supplies that have been sitting around for the last six months because of the contracting issues with the supply chain companies. We need to look at the 100 per cent medical kit, it consumes about 25 per cent of the entire NDoH budget every year and that is a lot of money.

Currently, we use what is called the push system. In this system, there is a certain amount of package that the contracted company is supposed to supply to the health centres and the aid posts. They do that maybe three or four times every year. This system is estimated to supply about 5000 persons.

What I see on the ground in the health centres and aid posts is that there is wastage. Most of the medical supplies being sent are not being utilised properly because most of the time the people don't need it or they don't know how to use it but we keep pushing it down. Go to your health centres and aid posts and see for yourselves, they will have so many of these items that have expired and are just there. So who is paying for it? We are using public funds to pay for it and in my view, the only person benefiting out from this system is the supplier. Public funds are being used to purchase unnecessary health goods that are being pushed down the system and the supplier is laughing and going to the bank while we are having issues in the aid post and health centres trying to find out how to discard these things because they don't know how to use it or they don't need it. So we need to go back and examine the contents of this 100 percent health kits and decide if we really need it at this time. This kit has been supplied since 2014 and it is now 2022, that is about eight years of doing these things without review. A review is mandated at this time so that we buy what we need. So instead of the push system we are using, we should go back to using the pull system so that the health centres and aid posts order what they need and we supply.

The other issues I want to speak on is the boards. When you go to America, they have the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Board. In Australia, they have the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). In this country we have a lot of junk medical supply coming to this country without being checked. Whose job is that? The health boards, we have the National Health Board, we have the Pharmaceutical Board, we have

the Medical Board. Also there are a lot of medical workers coming to this country and nobody is checking them properly. I can tell you that the way we are trained in this country is much better than how some countries train their doctors.

**29/03**

Many doctors especially from the Asian region, go to medical school then go direct to specialize in a certain field or if you want to do surgery then they go from medical school and straight to do their residency in surgery alone and they do not learn about the other things.

Yet, we bring them here to our country and attach them to the Accident and Emergency Unit and we expect them to attend to pediatric cases and other medical areas which they have not fully studied. We seriously need proper scrutiny of how foreign medical personnel are being recruited to work in our hospitals.

We also need to look at the medical goods and services that we are bringing into the country. Recently, we had the propofol issue, critical medications being brought into this country without properly being checked. There are some medications that are coming into the country, for example; Augmentin, we say it's 165 on 125, that is what is written on paper but nobody checks if it really is what is written on the package. Who does this?

The PHA or Medical Board needs funding, if you go to the second floor of Aopi Center where the Medical board is located, it is a very small stuffy room. We need to fund them properly so that they can operate. As I speak, I do not know how much funding they need and who's responsible for them.

The second last point is the health service in the districts and rural health. When you look at some countries like Fiji and Australia the national government does not have the capacity to deliver quality health services to the remote and rural areas, that is where most of our people live in this country. I would like to support one of my fellow colleague members who raised something about the church and health services. I think that this is the way to go especially in the remote and rural areas of this country. We need to partner with private medical service providers; public-private partnership is the way to go forward for the remote areas that we come from. I want to put that on the Floor.

And finally, pre-hospital care refers to who looks after the patient before they come to the hospital. If you have a heart attack, you have only three minutes to do something but if you do not do anything within that three minutes you are dead. So, right now we only

have St Johns Ambulance in the city but in the remote areas, there is no pre-hospital system. Many deaths are preventable and people's lives can be saved. I ask this House to consider setting up a national ambulance service so that we can have personnel who actually know how to do the job and can travel to where the patients are, treat them, stabilize them bring them to the hospitals.

Thank you, very much for allowing me time to speak.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** – Honorable Members, I have allowed enough time to debate on the issue.

Motion – That the question be put – agreed to.

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

**Mr RAINBO PAITA** (Finschaffen-Minister for Finance and Implementation) – Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank all the Members for attending this day of the session, particularly this afternoon on the issue of health.

Mr Deputy Speaker, before I move my motions, I thank most of our leaders who have spoken on the issues of preventive health from our good shadow ministers for Health and Finance and our good member for Nipa-Kutubu, who is a learned doctor himself.

Mr Deputy Speaker, these issues have been on the agendas of the government for so many years but in our government, through you, we want to prioritize health –

**30/03**

Mr Deputy Speaker, our Government has prioritised health as a major program thus we have received funding through KPH, PIP programs, Department of Health and particularly, if I can make mention, through the initiative of the House to bring in POMGH to make a presentation on the cancer facility.

The outstanding funding, we need for next year is around K39 million for us to have a world-class cancer facility. That is a big-tick item for the Government going forward, we will retire that just to give some confidence to our members.

I thank some of the members that have come forward in giving some counterpart funding. The good Member for Pomio has contributed K500,000 and some other districts



have shown interest. On the Governments list of priority agendas, health is one of them, and as such, the last funding of K39 million will be a priority ticket item for our Government so that we can have a world-class cancer facility.

At the same time, our good Member for Nipa – Kutubu has mentioned the intervention on cardiology. They need an additional K17 million. That too has to come on board when Government is treating that as priority. Even our eye specialist hospitals, the Minister and the Department of Health have been working with the New Zealand Government on the kina to kina basis where we put K41 million and they will put K41 million to bring it on board.

As some of us have rightfully said, POMGH can be a specialist hospital. There is a need for another hospital in our city, and also for Central Province as well which the government is very sensitive about and we will work towards that.

At the same time, there is a need for us to have a work-force and such things like a stand-alone university, is in our agendas going forward. When the Treasurer and our Government presents the Budget, it will reflect some of those agendas where now we will discuss and appreciate that the government is sensitive to these things when it comes to health.

I thank the Health Minister and would like to give a number given by both the Minister and the Prime Minister before we adjourn Parliament. You will understand that when we have heart issues, most of us travel overseas. We do fundraisings or put notices in the papers to raise funds of K50,000 to K100,000 for us to travel overseas for this type of treatments.

According to POMGH, so far 700 patients have not travelled overseas because there are facilities available now. If you calculate the expenditure, we have saved around K72 million. That money would have been spent if we travel overseas.

We have this facility available in the country now to help our people to be healthy, wealthy and wise and are moving on that space.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I just want to make mention that we are moving in that space and at the same time, we are aware of some of the many issues that we raised in this Honourable House.

## **MOTION BY LEAVE**

**Mr RAINBO PAITA** (Finschaffen – Minister for Finance and Implementation) – I ask leave of the Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

### **PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT – ESTABLISHMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS**

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

(1) That, in pursuant to *Standing Order 25*, this Parliament establishes a Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, consisting of -

- (a) Mr Powes Parkop as Chairman,
- (b) Mr Allan Bird as Deputy Chairman,
- (c) Ms Rufina Peter,
- (d) Mr Marsh Narawec,
- (e) Mr Lohia Boe Samuel,
- (f) Mr Ricky Morris; and
- (g) Mr William Bando.

(2) The Committee shall have the following functions and responsibilities to:

- (a) Inquire into any proposed law or issues referred to in the Committee by the National Parliament;
- (b) Review existing or proposed laws to do with gender-based and women issues and purpose to promote laws and reforms as appropriate;
- (c) Provide oversight of implementing Government policies and programmes related to gender-based violence, and also women issues and empowerment;
- (d) Provide oversight into the Government's implementation of the National GBV strategy, and inputs any update on new strategy going forward;
- (e) Inquire into how women's leadership can be more proactively supported by the National Government, key national institutions such as the PNG Electoral Commission, Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates Commission, political parties and other stakeholders;

**31/03**

- (f) Enquire into the Governments Policy and Programmes to promote women's economic empowerment,
- (g) Enquire into the work of the National Council of Women and Subnational Members Units and others,
- (h) Investigating report on any other such matters as Committee considers appropriate and relevant in promoting gender equality on women's empowerment in PNG in all levels of government and cross sectors.

3) The Committee shall have powers to send for person's papers records to act during this process and finally the quorum of the meeting of this is 4 members.

### **MOTION BY LEAVE**

**Mr RAINBO PAITA** (Finschaffan-Minister for Finance and Implementation) – I ask leave of Parliament to move another motion without notice.

Leave granted.

### **PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER**

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

That Mr Daniel Tindipu be appointed Member of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Works.

### **MOTION BY LEAVE**

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

Leave granted.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE – Mr CHRIS HAIVETA**

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

That leave of absence be granted to Mr Chris Haiveta for the duration of this Parliament due to ill health.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.40 p.m.