

FOURTH DAY

Friday 25 November 2022

DRAFT HANSARD

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FOURTH DAY

Friday 25 November 2022

The Assistant Speaker (**Mr Agena Gamai**) took the Chair at 10 a.m.

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

Sitting suspended.

The Assistant Speaker again took the Chair at 10.20 a.m., and invited the Member for Abau, **Honourable Sir Puka Temu**, to say Prayers:

‘God all knowing, loving, eternal and powerful; we are not worthy to come before you this morning but we come to you through the name of your Son our Lord Jesus who made the way for us to call you our Father. Father, this morning we come through our Lord Jesus requesting your presence once again in this honourable House during this session. We commit our Chair, the Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Opposition Leader and all of our Members here unto your caring hands. We also commit our people throughout this beautiful country that you have given us, unto your caring and capable hands. We particularly pray for those who are sick in the hospitals and those who are in prison. We pray that the Holy Spirit will visit them in their time of sadness, illness and we also commit their guardians. We pray that in their situations they will also recognize your lordship. Father we submit this entire session unto your hands. As we submit this session we pray the prayer that your son the Lord Jesus taught us, Amen.’

Mr Luther Wenge - Point of Order! Honourable Speaker, my Point of Order is that under the *Standing Orders*, there must be three translators to translate the three languages used in the country.

02/04

Mr Assistant Speaker, yesterday the Member for Hiri-Koiari prayed in Motu and I am very happy to hear his prayer. However, I didn't understand what he said because I don't know Motu. It is only the translator that will translate to Pidgin or English for me to understand.

Has this service been out of order or the *Standing Order* changed or what's happening? Definitely the *Constitution* has not changed.

Mr Assistant Speaker, can you bring back those three translators before we proceed? I want to hear people speak in Motu because this language is dying out. All of you are acting like foreigners here when I am speaking. This is our country and we must speak in three different languages, but we are only choosing Pidgin and English.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I want you to recruit three translators if the *Standing Order* and *Constitution* permits.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER – Thank you, Honourable Governor of Morobe, your concerns are noted and we will address them in the future.

Thank you.

QUESTIONS

Graduating with more than one certificates

Sir PUKA TEMU – Thank you, Honourable Assistant Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to ask questions to the Honourable Minister for Education.

My preamble to my question to the Honourable Minister for Education is; all of us are convinced that education is a number one priority in any nation. During the graduation ceremonies, one of the phrases that I normally use is 'when you receive your certificate it's like getting a master key for life because it will open doors in Papua New Guinea and the world.'

And so, I know that all the honourable members agree with that and believe in the power of education for any country. This is why our Vision 2050, the first pillar of the seven pillars is Human Resource Development.

And so, Minister for Education holds a very important portfolio and during his tenureship, he will address many of the issues that we have experienced over the last 47 years.

I sat down with one very well-known educationist who told me, that from elementary to grade 12, there is a lot of time for our children to have a second certificate or even a third certificate. If you look at the time our children spend from 8 a.m to 2 p.m and they go home, and from 2 p.m to 5 p.m if we calculate all those hours to grade 12, many hours are being wasted

Mr Assistant Speaker, I am humbly requesting the Honourable Minister, whether he would agree that we should look at introducing not just a grade 12 certificate at the end of 12 years of education; but our children graduating with more than one certificate.

The Honourable Minister can look at financial literacy, or certificate in business, or certificate in hospitality, etcetera, to be included in the curriculum. There are many options there.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I was just calculating, to attain a certificate, you need about two years or even 12 months. For a diploma, we have two years, for an advanced diploma before leaving grade 12 and go to university, we can have two years. So, grade five, six, and seven; one three-year program. Grade eight, nine, and 10; one three-year program. Grade 11 and 12; one three-year program. At the end of the graduations our children can have two certificates. Mr Minister, my question is; can you be able to look into this? And if you want to request for a pilot project, Abau is ready so we can start looking at the curriculum. So, at grade eight our children have a certificate in financial literacy, at grade 12 they probably would have a diploma in whatever stream they choose.

We are approaching 50 years anniversary and the Prime Minister has been calling us to think outside of the box and this one issue to address. This key resource that we have is human resources in our land. Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

03/04

Mr JIMMY UGURO – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. I thank the Member for Abau for his very good question. His questions are in relation to the systems that we have. According to the current education systems, we have two parts to the structure; the academic pathway and the skills pathway.

Trade skills are observe the vocational schools settings. And also in the current reform that we have, those skills are taught in the technical high schools and technical secondary schools where all the trade courses are offered like Business Studies, Computer Science and all those other certificate courses that we offer.

In the academic pathway, the students from elementary all the way to grade 12 get academic certificates. They also get a trade skills certificate if they are good in carpentry, plumbing or business studies, etcetera.

Those who cannot make it through, the government has created the FODE system where they are given a second chance before dropping out from grade eight and ten. Currently the Government is paying school fee subsidies to take them on board.

But if whatever program the member may have with his consultants, he can write to us and contribute that idea so we can incorporate it into our plans and move from there.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker

Invest in Karamui

Mr NOAH KOOL – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, and congratulations on your elevation as the Assistant Speaker. I take this time also to praise my Lord and the people of Simbu to speak on the Floor of this great House. There were 83 of us who stood but God chose me to come.

Mr Assistant Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Trade and Investment, Honourable Richard Maru.

I believe there is a delegation of investors here in the country. If they are looking to invest in the agriculture sector, I want to register Karamui in the Simbu province as a economical zone in line with Marape-Rosso agriculture policy. If they are here for other reasons can you find investors for me and realize the Simbu people's dream of economic empowerment through Karamui.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker

Mr RICHARD MARU – Thank you Mr Assistant Speaker. I want to thank the Governor of Simbu for the important question.

We don't have a team of investors here, however, we are in the process of undertaking a national study to identify potential special economic zones. So far my department and ministry have identified 18 and I'm waiting for treasury to release funding so we can undertake studies for the next four months.

It has been in the paper that we are engaging the Japanese Development Institute, together with local experts to undertake the study, to identify, confirm, screen and rank which provinces and districts have very high potential for special economic zones; where there is major potential for major economic activity.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I can confirm to the Governor and the people of Simbu that Karamui has been identified as one of 18. Certainly there are issues of road access and state land and how to attract the international investors to go in and unleash the potential of Chimbu and agriculture issues. This technical team will assess and determine and put forward a road map on how we can unlock the potential

04/04

This technical team will assess and determine and basically put forward a road map on how we can unlock the potential of this very special district in Chimbu. While they are there, I will also ask them to look at the prospect for the limestone mine in Chuave.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the Government has already spent about K10 million looking at that project when the former Minister for Commerce and trade and former Member for Chuave and the Chief of Chimbu was in office.

At the moment we are not looking at it as an economic zone because after spending K10 million we cannot find an investor and there is nothing much to show for it. So the challenge is on the Governor and the new Member for Chuave to help us unlock the potential of that project.

I can assure this Parliament and the people of Chimbu, I will do everything to support this project. If we are able to find a credible investor and bring them on board and transform it into special economic zone, then we can provide the incentive to bring them into Chimbu and unlock the potential of their province. Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Sinivit Mine Environment Report

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister for Mining and the Minister for Environment and Conservation can take note.

Sinivit Mining in Pomio District was operated by Niugini Gold from August 2007 to June 2012 when it stopped operations. The major cause of the closure was due to environmental pollution mainly from cyanide pollution or contamination. This raised concerns with the local communities.

In 2021, the former Minister for Environment, Conservation and Climate Change announced that the Government was going to commit K9 million to conduct water sampling and to clean up the mine debris and report on the general environment.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the East New Britain Provincial Government also passed a resolution restricting visits to the abandoned mine site pending the environmental report.

Despite this we had several visits by the MRA team frequenting this site without the knowledge of the local authorities.

Mr Assistant Speaker, my questions are;

(1) Can the Minister confirm the release of the K9 million?

(2) Is there an updated environmental report of the Sinivit Mine to date?

(3) If the funding has not been released, can the Minister ensure that this funding be considered as a matter of priority for the 2023 Budget?

(4) Can the Minister assure the local landowners and the East New Britain Provincial Government to put on hold the opening of the Sinivit mine until the complete audit of the environmental status report is presented to ascertain the safety of the mine site?

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Mr ANO PALA – Thank you very much for those important questions regarding funds earmarked for this project and also environmental concerns.

I am not aware of the status of this mine and I am also not aware of the K9 million commitment by the previous government. I will check on the status of that K9 million and the environmental implications regarding the mine and its operation and come back to you. I will take your concerns on board regarding the reopening of the mine. Of course, such occasions are too important to eventuate without your knowledge. At all stages of the mine considerations, you will be informed and be part of the process. I want to assure you that like myself, I am also new to this processes but we will include you and your land owners and the provincial government in all stages of the mine development. Thank you.

Mr SAM BASIL JUNIOR – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for recognising the people of Bulolo.

My questions are directed to the Minister for Finance and National Planning if he is present, otherwise I will redirect my question to the Prime Minister.

05/04

Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER – Honourable Member, since the Minister is not present you may reserve your right and ask him when he is present.

Mr SAM BASIL JUNIOR – Mr Assistant Speaker, it's proper that I direct my question to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Housing and Urban Development, and the Minister for Lands and Physical Planning to take note.

Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER – Thank you Honourable Member, you may ask your questions.

Public Housing and Urbanisation Development

Mr SAM BASIL JUNIOR – Thank you. Firstly, the Bulolo DDA submitted their resolutions to the Minister for Housing and Urban Development on 12 July 2021, I have to rephrase as it relates to both Bulolo and Wau-Waria Electorates and also other towns around PNG.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the Bulolo District holds one of the first historical towns known for many first searches as gold, forestry, tea, coffee, rugby league, busiest airport and host major agriculture forestry and mining projects in the country.

Furthermore, we have so many ethnicities and since 2005, our people from Sepik Province have all been relocated to the front of the police station in a refugee camp which has over 2000 people living without water, sanitation and shelters.

All government infrastructures including residential houses in Bulolo are over 60 years old and would now be used as part of the historical relics. We can preserve some for heritage purposes and others need a complete demolition or reconstruction work.

Furthermore, public houses in Bulolo are at an unrepairable stage. Therefore, Bulolo needs immediate public housing and urbanisation development.

Mr Assistant Speaker, in view of escalating rural urban migration and the PANGU-led Government focused on delivering social and economic impacted projects, we request that the National Planning should pilot public housing and urbanization program in the Bulolo District.

(1) Can your Ministry coordinate the resettlement of over 2000 people from the care center established in 2005 and relocate them to a permanent service allotment in Bulolo or elsewhere?

(2) Will the National Planning and Government continue with the ten houses per district roll-out plan that has not reached Bulolo and should be increased to 50 houses for Bulolo?

Mr Assistant Speaker, the Bulolo and Wau-Waria districts host the two oldest towns of Wau and Bulolo. There are agricultural business such as Zenag chicken and Vitis. In forestry, we have PNG forest products; in mining, we have Hidden Valley, Wafi-Golpu and alluvial

mining, and host many national functions such as Bulolo Forestry College, Bulolo Technical school, Wau Small Scale Mining school, Wau Ecologist Institute, District Court and National Court circuits, officers for National Housing Corporation, PNG Power Limited, Mobile Squad base and Department of Mining and Works and the National Forest Authority.

(3) Can the Minister build 200 houses for the public servants and 100 for the private sector as a pilot project in PNG that can be replicated elsewhere?

(4) Can the Government transfer all the old government houses to the district so they can refurbish and sell it to the permanent residence of Bulolo District who cannot go back due to various reasons.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, I want to appreciate the Member for Bulolo for asking very important questions.

Since it's the first time I will be answering his questions, I take this time to congratulate him for winning this important seat. We split the Wau/Bulolo seat and he now takes custody over Bulolo seat. I am happy to see that he is working closely with the Member for Wau-Waria, in that part of one of the oldest economic hubs in our country.

06/04

It has been attracting investments and business activities since the 1920's up till today and it remains a very important part of our country and its resource activities with the latest emergence of Waffi –Golpu, which is also a melting pot for people moving into Wau, Bulolo, Mumeng as well.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I acknowledge the importance of his district and sister district in trying to convert what we have in Wau, Bulolo, and Mumeng into some urban facelift, and next week Tuesday as we hand down the Budget you will realize that there will be an allocation for land mobilization and land urban areas extensions so certainly Wau and Bulolo can feature in this consideration to modernize, expand and refurbish some of our towns and cities in the country.

On the issue of properly relocating the settlements, we could properly plan out and look to fix the place mentioned. Wau and Bulolo are important economic districts and they contribute a lot to our country.

In relation to one of the questions he raised about the old houses, Minister for Housing is working on a program for us to give away the old houses that Papua New Guineans have been living in for a long time. So, once the Minister has completed this program, hopefully

before December ends, it will not only apply in Bulolo but throughout the country. We are looking at a giveaway scheme at a very low cost in repaying all the rent that is due and that could be part of the program that Wau and Bulolo public service house can be considered.

So, certainly, re-ordering and refurbishment of the Wau and Bulolo urban areas can be looked at in the context of what we are doing as far as the national urban areas and the land program is concerned going forward for next year.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Development Strategy for Rugby League

Mr MUGUWA DILU – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for giving an opportunity to the people of Kundiawa-Gembolg.

My question is directed to the Minister for Sports and it is in relation to rugby league, a sport that we really love in this country. The Rugby League World Cup is over but it has exposed PNG's stand internationally. Now, for a country that has been playing rugby league for almost four decades PNG performed badly compared to the other Pacific countries. The Government is entertaining another idea of bringing another team into the Australian NRL and this could be a bad joke considering our standards and that is not a development pathway for the development of rugby league.

Do we have a development plan for rugby league in this country? If not, we may have to refocus on strategizing into other sports which attract an international audience. In this time that we are facing so much law and order issues in this country, it is important that we create a good pathway for sports development.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Mr DON POLYE – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. This question is very important in regard to what we call the national game of the country, rugby league. I do not want to abruptly answer a question when the rugby league culture has developed although without much success. There has been a lot of publicity and work that has been put into it as he has alluded to the PNG's bid to the NRL in Australia. So, what I have done is that I tasked the Sports Foundation to select a special committee to look at how we can strategize on playing that sport in Papua New Guinea. So, I will be presenting a policy implementation on rugby league and other sports in Papua New Guinea in the next Parliament sitting.

07/04

We will re-look at the approach that we have taken and we will change to develop it better over a time period so that we position rugby league in a most competitive manner to compete at international standards.

On other sports under the Marape-Rosso government, we are using sports to making sure we mobilise the youth of Papua New Guinea from the rural level up to the competitive or high performance sports level. We are applying a strategy called 'go rural to go global' and that is also being put in together.

The policy of sports was launched by the Prime Minister recently. I am devising the strategy as to how I can implement that policy to making sure that sports becomes a culture in Papua New Guinea. When I present the strategy at the Sitting next week, I can answer some of the questions relating to the sports industry in Papua New Guinea.

Thank you.

Increase Police Manpower

Mr WILLIAM HAGAHUNO – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. Firstly, I would like to thank the Chair for recognising the people of Kainantu, and I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the people of Kainantu for electing me into this House.

Mr Assistant Speaker, my questions are directed to the Minister for Internal Security and I would also like the Prime Minister to take note. These are important questions that concern the policy relating to police manpower.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the police force in this nation comprises of less than 10,000 serving personnel. The population of the people of Papua New Guinea has increased to almost 9 million. There has been concerns raised on the Floor of this House relating to law and order issues. In fact, the number of tribal fights are increasing. As I am raising this issue, a lot of lives have been lost due to the escalating crime rate, and police are finding it difficult to contain this and bring the law and order under control.

Mr Assistant Speaker, it is high time that the Government start looking into this matter and start increasing the number of police personnel in this nation. As I understand, the ratio of police to the citizen of this nation is one to more than a thousand.

Mr Assistant Speaker, that in itself cannot solve a lot of our problems. Today, if you walk to Gordons Market or any other market in Port Moresby or around the country, there is a feeling of insecurity felt by our citizens, especially our women and children. There were many people that were being attacked in those places.

A concern was raised by the Member for Kairuku in this sitting, about a youth that was stabbed to death. It is an everyday occurrence and you will hardly find any police officer attending to that. Even in Port Moresby, you will hardly see police vehicles moving around. This is contributing to the law and order situation. Police presence acts as a deterrence and will stop people from thinking of committing an offence.

Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I will interrupt you. Can you ask your question?

Mr WILLIAM HAGAHUNO – My questions are;

(1) What plans does the Government have to address this concern?

(2) Does the Government have any plan to increase the number of police personnel to 50,000? That might help to reduce the ratio of police to the number of people so that there is some security guaranteed for our people.

08/04

Mr PETER TSIAMALILI – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Member for Kainantu and thank the people of Kainantu for electing you to represent them.

Mr Assistant Speaker, as we all know, the problem of law and order has become a common discussion in all of our formal and informal forums. I want to thank the Prime Minister and his government for giving me this opportunity so that I can lead this space. But, as I've said, from the outset, it needs a collaborative effort by everyone.

Just like our good Minister for Health mentioned, we must work collaboratively to manage the challenges that we face with fundamental services similar to the law and order issues. Law and order provides the ecosystem whereby the country can progress and develop.

The point for increasing manpower is at the forefront of our plans. In my earlier statement, I have clearly stated that Papua New Guinea's current police force is just below 6000 or about 5000. The global standard of policing ratio of our people should be 1 to 450. At the moment, we have a ratio of almost 1 is 1100 people which is beyond our capacity.

I must thank the Prime Minister and his deputy for taking the lead in our social sector where they have put in massive support for resource allocation in the 2023 Budget. Lack of funding is one of the impediments for addressing the law and order issues.

To answer your question, yes, we have a plan to increase police manpower and it is already captured in the plan. Hopefully, next week, I will have the opportunity to also present a Whitepaper of Internal Security which will also highlight the need and steps we are taking to increase our capacity.

Whilst we talk about recruiting and increasing our capacity, we must also give that same respect and support to the retrenching police officers. We have the recruitment process but at the same time we also need to capture those that are retrenching from the force. It is an ecosystem therefore we need to address the police, magisterial services and the correctional services.

I encourage all of us that the Commissioner has given a directive to all our PPCs to make sure that all your district policing plans are captured and must be signed off in order for us to have visibility and support you in 2023 and beyond. So, if you have not had the opportunity to discuss with your PPCs, I encourage you to do so that you can get a sign-off by the PPCs to give visibility at a higher level when we are planning and supporting you accordingly into 2023 and beyond.

Thank you.

Supplementary Question

Constitutional Requirement – Police Funding

Mr LUTHER WENGE – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. I also direct my questions to the same Minister. Under the *section 225* of the Papua New Guinea *Constitution*, amongst other things, the government of this country is under legal obligation to provide sufficient resources for the performance of the constitutional obligations of the police.

09/04

(1) Are you aware of that section which requires you to comply and provide the constitutional obligation to the police force to perform its constitutional obligation?

(2) If you are not aware, can you consult your lawyers to make sure that they go through these constitutional provisions and advise you? The government is not budgeting and not taking into account what is required by the police to perform these constitutional obligations in this country. Therefore, consequently there is a total law and order problem in this country, total disorder and we in this country do not deserve that scenario in this country.

Mr PETER TSIAMALILI – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. Thank you, Governor of Morobe, for your very good questions.

I would like to inform the Governor that I am aware of *Section 225* of the *Constitution* and it's something we should have addressed before. If we had taken heed of our constitutional obligation, the police will not be like they are today.

I'm at a time now, where I have come and taken responsibility and hopefully with the Government of today, we can make sure we are of arm's length with this office. It's questionable because in our DSIP or PSIP we have funding available for law and order. In fact, it should be outrightly funded so we won't compromise ourselves when we want to do things our way and leave that arm of Government where it is managing us and policing us to move freely inside this country.

So, Governor, I am fully aware and I appreciate that this Government is a progressive government and putting things in order like they did before and taking full responsibility. Thank you for the question, it makes us all aware so that we can all collectively address this as Government. This office into the future must be a standalone, fully functional office and funded to manage our sovereignty.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Teaching Certificates Withheld

Ms RUFINA PETER – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Education.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the Sacred Heart Teachers College just outside here near Marianville Secondary School was established in 2010, with the objective to address the remote schools within Central Province in terms of teachers. It has a three-year program and the graduates from that school have been doing an excellent job after their graduation, serving the people of the most remote areas of Central Province.

Mr Assistant Speaker, in 2018, a FODE facility was also established at the Sacred Heart Teachers College to assist intakes who may have had GPA's that were probably lower. So they gave an opportunity for those trainee teachers to upgrade as well as get a teaching certificate.

10/04

Mr Assistant Speaker, in 2021, a circular went out from the Education Department instructing that the student intake would have GPA not less than 2.4.

Mr Assistant Speaker, because the college has a three-year program, it means that the student intake from 2019, 2020, and 2021 onwards were affected. This is not to say that they were not upgrading their marks because the FODE center was already established in 2018, the upgrading of their marks was done concurrently.

Mr Assistant Speaker, however, the graduates from 2021 who were in-takes from 2019 have been affected by their certificates being withheld. So, upon graduation they were not given the certificates. This means that teachers who are out there, who are teaching in the most remote difficult areas have not been paid for almost two to three years and have delivered the services.

So, I want to ask the Minister for Education, whether he is aware of the situation and what are they doing about resolving this situation.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Mr JIMMY UGURO – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, I thank the good Governor of Central Province and congratulate her on her election.

Teachers who have been in various teachers' colleges throughout the country including Sacred Heart are affected by certain issues regarding the certification and the process of awarding their certificates before they can teach. And teachers must be qualified to teach in the classrooms. They must get the right kind of education and must be certified by the Department of Education through the Teaching Service Commission to practice as a teacher in a classroom.

Now there are two reasons affecting those teachers who are now waiting to be registered and paid.

(1) Some of those teachers have forged the certificates from their siblings or from other people and the department has detected this through our system. And we advised those concerned to rectify the situation and prove to the Teaching Service Commission before they are registered. The Teaching Service Commission and the department are in the process to rectifying all those.

I have given instruction to Teaching Service Commission and the Department of Education to get those things sorted out administratively and get those teachers registered and must be paid. Teachers cannot be paid until they are registered and after the registration they are given file numbers and paid according to their file numbers.

That process is still pending, our Teaching Service Commission has been given instructions and no teachers must be left behind. All teachers must be visited, assisted, and must be paid.

I take this time also to advise all the appointing provincial education authorities, the PEBs, headmasters, and teachers of various institutions. Those teachers who are now out in the field waiting to be registered must be visited, assisted, and salaries must be paid.

I apologise to all our teachers who are serving tirelessly out there in the remote areas, towns, cities, and districts; part of the blame must be teachers themselves.

On the same note, once you are in the field the teachers are supposed to fill in the resumption of duties forms. It must be signed, with the correct registered number of schools and your file numbers and signature of head teacher as well as all appointing authorities including Chairman of Provincial Education Board (PEB)

11/04

This will ensure that the ALESCO salary system recognizes you on the payroll.

Many teachers are not on the payroll because those forms are not completed properly and registered. So, to answer your question; the Teaching Service Commission is working hard to get those teachers properly registered.

Impact at the Asian Economic Zones

Mr JAMES DONALD - Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for International Trade and Foreign Investment as I am interested in the area of foreign investment, especially on the Economic zone that we have been having some discussions on.

My question to the Minister is based on recent announcements that he made. Firstly; he mentioned that he would focus on the Asian and Indonesian economy. As Indonesia is our closest neighbor, you want to tap into Asian economy through Indonesia.

The second announcement in regards to investment was about the 18 economic zones, of which Western province is one of them. There have been so many case studies done on these economic zones and for Western province; we share two international borders, Indonesia to the west and Australia to our south.

Under your special economic endeavor and foreign trade with Asia, what is your strategy and how will it impact the people of Western province?

Mr RICHARD MARU - Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker and thank you also to the Member for North Fly for his question. I will reply in Tok Pisin so that all the people of Western Province can hear for themselves.

Firstly, when I took office, it has come to my attention that Ok Tedi has 10 years of mine-life left. When Ok Tedi shuts down after 10 years, it will leave a gap of around K1 million in revenue which it contributes to the economy of this country. Thousands of jobs and dividends, royalties or payments to the landowners will also cease. It will be a challenging time for the country as well as the people of Western Province. The Marape-Rosso government is a very responsible government and we want to plan for the day when there will be a black hole in Western Province and the country.

In my recent announcement, I made it known that Western Province is one of the provinces that we will focus on putting together a plan on how best we can build the economy and provide a revenue to sustain the province without Ok Tedi mine.

12/04

Western Province has one of the biggest land mass in this country and has vast economic potential including agriculture, fisheries and forestry. So when we engage consultants in the coming weeks, I will request for you, Governor, and members to tour Western Province with them and see what can be done in the next 10 years in terms of industries. Australia has an ongoing rice research program there, OK Tedi mine is implementing its own projects through its foundation and so is PNG SDP. There is no joint-effort because everybody is doing their own thing.

We need to pull everyone together and come up with one development plan, or one master plan. We need to find investors and build an economy in Western Province which will sustain the province into the future and provide for loss of revenue to the State and the province, and employment. So that is the underlying perspective. This study will help us to determine exactly which path to follow and the best structure we should have in place to oversee the special economic zone development and what type of zone to establish in Western Province,

So, Mr Assistant Speaker, that is a very important question, I will put my time and attention to this. I want to assure all the members of Western Province, I understand that we have 10 years to sort out the province and prepare it for the mine closure, and one way to do it is to come up with a special economic zone. We need to create one plan and channel all the resources to achieve that plan. We work together with all the stakeholders to develop the province and prepare it for mine closure. Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTION

Ramu Nickle Cobalt Project

Mr ANO PALA – I ask leave of the Parliament to answer questions raised by the Governor of Madang.

Leave granted.

Mr Assistant Speaker, on Tuesday, the Governor of Madang asked me a series of questions which were quite detailed and technical so I asked my department to provide those details for the benefit of this House and specifically for the benefit of the Governor of Madang and the people of Madang.

So I now table the answers to those questions. They are quite detailed. I don't want to read through them but I want to table them for the benefit of the Parliament.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the first question was regarding the MOU review; the MOU review was for every five years since the mining commenced in the year 2000. The last review was done in 2013 which expired in 2018.

(1) In 2013, the Ramu MOA was signed and has been operating for five years. The next review commenced in 2019 and will be finalised next year.

On to the next question, Mr Speaker, since being appointed as the Minister for Mining in this Government, were you being briefed and are aware of the expiry of the MOA in 2018? The Ramu Nickle Mine has been operating for almost four years without an MOA, legally speaking, Mr Assistant Speaker, Is the Ramu Nickle Mining therefore illegally in operation?

(2) The MOA is legally in effect until a new MOA is signed between the stakeholders to the Ramu Nickle Cobalt project.

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Therefore, the MOA is not illegal and it's a benefit-sharing agreement entailing the distribution of benefits amongst the stakeholders to the project and their respective commitments.

(3) All stakeholders to the project are currently receiving their benefits as stipulated in the MOA. Benefits include; royalty, annual payment, development grant to the provincial government and business spin-offs to the landowner companies amongst others.

(4) The review of 2013 MOA has commenced and was delayed due to varying factors which were outside of the State control.

(5) In 2009, the MRA and the State team commenced MOA review by firstly mobilising landowners through a conduct of landowner associations election of officials to engage in the MOA review. The landowners disputed the elections and instituted a court proceeding against MRA in Madang. The court took ten months and a decision was made in favour of MRA, election of Landowner's Association was subsequently held in November.

(6) In 2020, COVID-19 pandemic disturbed most of the MOA programs.

(7) In 2021, MRA issued notice to Madang Provincial Government, local-level governments and landowners to submit position papers for MOA review but Madang Provincial Government and local-level governments refused to provide position papers. Position papers contain key aspirations and commitments to be included in the MOA review.

In 2022, MRA commenced MOA review process with the stakeholder meeting in April, setting the way forward and in that meeting, parties resolved to review the Landowner Association Constitution first before reviewing the MOA. It is anticipated that by first quarter of next year MOA review will be finalized.

Going back to the question asked on whether the Minister for Mining inform the House why there is no provision in the *Mining Act* regarding the rates at which the development levy will be paid. The management of it is a sharing arrangement between the Provincial and local-level governments and the application of the funds as dictated by section 98 of the *Organic Law on Provincial and Local-level Governments*.

My response is that:

(1) Development levy is applicable to oil, gas and logging sector and it's not applicable to the mining sector; hence, the Ramu project does not pay development levy.

(2) Ramu project paid all the stakeholders to the project their best benefits as stipulated in the MOA. This include royalties, annual payment of two per cent, development grants to the Provincial Government and business spin-offs to the landowner companies amongst others.

(3) Ramu projects continue to pay royalties directly to the 19 local-level governments and the Madang Provincial Government. The records of the royalty payments are hereby attached. And I want this attachment to be tabled detailing all the payments made to Provincial Governments, Local-level Government and landowners over the years.

The final question on whether the Minister for Mining is aware of the illegal mining of chromite by Ramu Nickel Management Limited and the Minister also assure this House and the people of Madang that such illegality would be addressed immediately and rectified.

My response is; chromite mineral is part of the nickel and cobalt minerals that are mined from the pit as other minerals. Mining of chromite, exporting and selling is provided for under the *Mining Act 1992* and Mining Development Contract.

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The *Mining Act* gives exclusive rights for the Ramu Projects Mining to mine minerals within the special mining lease. The minerals are nickel, cobalt, and other minerals that can be found within the special mining lease. The MDC considered chromite as a mine product which is generally defined as ores or concentrates or other minerals produced from the area of the special mining lease and all refinery products including products made from imported mineral products. It is noted that (a) MDC is a commercial agreement between the State and developer that entails key fiscal items and mining contracts, and (b) MOA is a benefit-sharing agreement between State, Provincial Government, Local-level government, and landowners.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER – Honourable Members, Question Time has lapsed. This is now time for Grievance Debate.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Question proposed –

That grievances be noted.

Acting Secretaries in the Department of Agriculture

Mr GABRIEL KAPRIS (Maprik) – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for recognizing me, this is the first time in this Parliament that I will speak on the Floor. I would like to acknowledge the Maprik people for giving me the opportunity to come back to Parliament. Ten years ago, I was the Member for Maprik, and during that time I served as a senior Minister in the Cabinet.

So, I would like an opportunity to contribute to the grievance debate but firstly, I would like to congratulate the Honourable James Marape for being elected as the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea and the Honourable John Rosso for being elected as Deputy Prime Minister. Thank you to the people of Lae and Tari-Pori for mandating them back into Parliament.

I have been out of Parliament for ten years and I have seen how the Government was performing. What I have realized is that the most important department to advise the government was abolished but I thank the Prime Minister for bringing the amendment to have the Office of the Chief Secretary to be appointed as the head of CACC.

CACC is a very important advisory body within the NEC. All the ministers of government before submitting any projects to NEC, must be scrutinized by the committee which is comprised of all the think-tanks; highly qualified trained and expert advisors, including the heads of departments and also the heads of private entities who are part of the committee. They screen all the submissions and recommend them to NEC.

What I have realized recently is that in the office of the former Minister for Agriculture, there are three acting secretaries who are currently running the Department of Agriculture. And one of the recent acting secretaries, I believe, did not go through the proper process because the former Minister for Agriculture appointed a non-public servant to be a secretary, who is Doctor Nelson Sipingan. He is not a public servant so what powers –

Mr Aiye Tambua – Point of Order! That information is not correct about the current acting secretary. It is provided for under the process of statutory or committee boards that they can be considered to be appointed as heads of departments.

Thank you.

Mr GABRIEL KAPRIS – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, with due respect to the report I got today, I consulted two acting secretaries, one was the current secretary. He is the acting secretary but he cannot implement government policies.

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The important thing that I would like to stress is that the Prime Minister has seen fit to appoint respective ministers to his respective community boards. The Minister for Coffee, Oil Palm and Livestock are important because of their respective important ministries. We then have the Minister for Agriculture, who can't perform because he doesn't know which secretary can implement the policies of the Government.

The current suspended secretary is still fighting his court battle. There are arguments that the appointment of these various positions are still questionable. The point I'm trying to bring across is, the Coffee Ministry has played a very important role in this country as far as coffee is concerned.

I just got a message from coffee growers in Nuku, Lumi and Maprik in Sepik, that they have just transported 2,000 bags of coffee from Nuku to Wewak to sell despite the deteriorating roads in their districts. The buyers cannot purchase the coffee and got them for free with the understanding that when they export and get the money, the buyers will then make payments to the growers. The farmers are now in Wewak waiting for the payments of their coffees.

That is really disturbing and the Minister for Coffee needs to take note of this. You have a very big responsibility to perform and we would like to see that the farmers are paid their dues for their hard-earned produce.

In relation to our resources, foreign investors cannot come in and invest in them because of the former Somare Government putting a stop on the issuing of the Special Agriculture Business Lease (SABL). Investors who are interested to come in and invest in oil palm, cocoa or coffee on a bigger scale would not be able to do so now because of that.

That is something that the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Lands have to brief the Parliament on in regards to the status of SABL. We can talk about bringing in investors to develop our resources but there is a blockage in the way that licenses can be issued to the investors.

The Minister for Agriculture has to also look at addressing the issue of the current three acting secretaries that have been appointed to the Agriculture Department.

The Public Service Minister also needs to take note if the appointments do not come through your office, you have to intervene and make sure that we do not create a precedent for non-public servants to get appointed through the ministers. There was an issue about the four signatures of the Prime Minister on the submission decisions and that allegation should be addressed.

The other important economic project that I would like to comment on is –

(Members interjecting)

Mr Pila Niningi – Point of Order! This is Parliament and with respect to the Member for Maprik, information has to be substantive and must be correct. You tell the Parliament and then asking the Prime Minister about all these. This is a wild allegation and must be withdrawn.

Mr GABRIEL KAPRIS – Thank you. Let me proceed. I thank the Prime Minister for giving support to the Pacific Job Industrial Project in Madang for the processing of our tuna fish in the country.

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I also thank the Minister for International Trade and Investment. Recently he brought the investment from Japan and they went to Madang and visited the Pacific Marine Industrial Zone project. It's a very important project and I believe it will assist the country and the government to bring in a lot of foreign funds into the country to help build the economy. That's why I want us to make this project work. I want the government to create a working committee for that specific project. We must have a working committee and the committee must have a parliamentary appointed chairman so that you can keep track records of how all these projects are implemented. If we allow the bureaucrats to be in charge of this impact project, they have their own politics within themselves.

So this PMIZ project, as I can explain to the Parliament and to the country, it was my brainchild, it took me three years to venture this project. This project is a renewable resource because fish is a free resource in the sea.

Mr Belden Namah – Point of Order! I think his time for grievances debate has lapsed.
Thank you.

Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER – Honourable Member for Vanimomo-Green, your Point of Order is in order. His debate time has lapsed.

Economy and investments

Mr ALLAN BIRD (East Sepik) – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. My grievance is in relation to our economy and the investments we make going forward. I want to preface the debate by starting off with a common element we see across the country at the moment and that is, the lack of jobs and opportunities for our young people. I think that will be further compounded because this week there was a report in the newspaper, Mr Jerry Garry of MRA made a very telling statement and that statement reads that 'by 2040, all our existing projects and pipeline projects in the mining will come to an end.'

Mr Assistance Speaker, that is, 18 years from today. Most of us in this House will still be alive when this event kicks us in the face. Mining, oil and gas currently contribute 30 per cent of Papua New Guinea's GDP. So, of the K100 billion we talk about in this House, some K30 billion comes from oil, gas and mining. More significantly, 80 per cent of our foreign

exchange is earned by this sector. In 18 years time, we can look forward to 80 per cent of our foreign exchange earnings coming to a complete stop. That is the reality that faces our country and I put to you, Mr Assistant Speaker, that it is now urgent whilst we see a lot of investments from budget to budget and whilst we see a projection that says that our economy is going to grow, we need to start working on the nuts and bolts. I put to this House that this is not a job for government, this is a job for the Parliament. We cannot wait and procrastinate anymore.

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And I note briefly from the response from the Minister for Trade, in responding to the Member for North Fly on the question of Ok Tedi coming to an end in ten years time. His very eloquent response in what has to be done in Western Province foreshadows what needs to be done for the entire country.

In the last five years I've been in this House we have discussed at length, there have been many debates about diversifying our economy. I'm sad to submit that in the last five years I have seen very little attempt whilst we have focused quite a bit on SME. We have yet to see a presentation on this Floor as to the outcomes we have achieved from the significant investments placed in entities like the Bank of South Pacific in order to help grow some of this particular important sector but more than that.

We know as we sit in this House that we have a massive liquidity problem. What does that mean? It means that our banking center and the savings of Papua New Guineans in the super-funds and other savings have reached very high levels. As a result, you will see that the purchase of treasury bills from the Government is oversubscribed every time. Now, that should tell us that there is too much money in the system and that money is only chasing one investment, which is Government Treasury Bills and that's not good enough.

These investments need to be made in other parts of the economy, we need to find a way through a very structured plan and a strategy going forward as to what we have to do from year to year. Start to shift some of these revenues that are currently held with KPHL and other entities, the landowner funds and of course the savings of people in the super funds. We have to figure out a mechanism to deploy those funds in other sectors of the economy.

Particularly now, in light of COVID-19 with the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war we see a lack of capital investment in third world countries. Particularly in third world countries, we sit under that description of a developing country. We will find over the next five years that there will be less and less. While we talk about investments in Papua New Guinea, we will find that there are less and less foreigners interested in investing in our country.

That's not just because of law and order it's because in their own countries, they are having difficulties in funding that is why a lot of these countries have come up with mechanisms and incentives for companies from those countries to move their money back into their own countries.

Meanwhile here in Papua New Guinea, we grapple with things like law and order, we have no written down plans. While we have made statements I have yet to see an actual effort with people sitting down and figuring out how we start to shift our economy and we need to see actual policies been put on this Floor, we need to see measurements.

If we are investing money in districts in provinces on roads and all these things we need to see reports being placed in this House that tell us what is the return. We need to see a shift from all these renewable resources. The money that they bring in we need to see that shifting to the other sectors of the economy.

And unless a bipartisan committee or some other mechanism is put together by eminent persons in my country to produce a document that not only this government but every other going up to 2040 can follow. Then I put this to this House that we are doing a dis-service to our future generation. We are too busy with projects for today and we are paying very little attention to an impending disaster that is going to befall our country in eighteen years time, Mr Assistant Speaker.

And whilst I understand the pressing needs over roads and bridges and little bits of money to fix houses and things like this in our districts, I think that we need to be paying attention to what is coming and I think that is what our people elected us to do, not just to fix roads, bridges and dig drains but to provide opportunities and to look at lasting opportunities for the next generation

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And I submit that almost every government has failed in this regard. We have been making predictions for the last ten years, perhaps going back further. We know the revenue flows from our renewable resources particularly oil, gas, and mining are coming to an end and we are paying very little attention to it.

Now that almost all of us are in government; I only see four members in the Opposition. I put to this House, that it is the responsibility of Parliament, that a minister is tasked – if not, perhaps the Prime Minister in terms of the office of Planning or even the Deputy Prime Minister and we start to put the minds together. Not to talk about it, but to write up a strategy, that all

provincial governments, national departments, and districts can contribute towards building this future for the next generations.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

Seabed Mining and Carbon Trading

Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. I have two matters to discuss during Grievance Debate. These two matters are in relation to seabed mining; the scourge of the Pacific, and regulating the carbon trade sector and related aspects of that sector.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I wish to also ask that the relevant ministers take note; the Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for Justice and the Minister for Mining, and indeed all other Cabinet Ministers.

The first issue I would like to discuss is the issue of sea bed mining. This awful proposal to mine the seabed especially in the Pacific because the Pacific is an area that is often very passive. In fact, the word Pacific means passive, meaning we have been pacified. Perhaps a deliberate ploy by those who came to rape and plunder the Pacific. They pacified us and made us believe that we are all going to Heaven so we can leave everything here on earth to take and do as they please.

Anyhow, Papua New Guinea lost \$120 million in this ridiculous venture which known scientists around the world spoke up against because there is too little known about the effects of seabed mining. Too little known about what happens when you dig the seabed and disturb the life vents that affect especially the pelagic area of the waters. This is where the most miniscule life forms activate to feed the life cycle in the oceans. Scientist around the world have warned against this and this is why developed nations are not even entertaining this idea of seabed mining. But we in the Pacific who don't have the wherewithal, the science, the knowledge are appearing to openly embrace this very dangerous project or idea being influenced by extremely wealthy entities and individuals who have no care for our future.

Interestingly enough, had we listened to our people in 2012, particularly on 18 October when they presented a petition with more than 20, 000 signatures affixed to the Mining Minister at that time, we could have saved this country that \$120 dollars. Our coastal citizens raised concerns and in fact all of us leaders here who have coastline in our provinces, we should have taken very serious note of this situation. The coastal leaders of that time, 'shame on them!' 90 per cent of them did not say anything against this. But their people who live by the coast rely heavily on the oceans and were very concerned about this activity.

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In fact, the very early signs were alarming and disturbing. We had dead fish appearing along the coastlines just from the initial stages carried out by that particular company which has wound up. Nautilus had 60 mining licenses that were somehow issued; which shows that there are no laws governing the issue of these licenses under the mining department which is controlled by cartels for their own interests.

They have us fight over crumbs and make us think that we are fighting over great development funds, and I am glad to say that the Marape Government is now changing many of those laws so that Papua New Guineans can actually derive a true benefit from this activity and those 60 mining licenses are apparently alive. And that is what a new company that is now entering into this space is saying. This company is called Deep Sea Mining Finance and they are now saying that they have these licenses and are going to be in the Pacific doing whatever they want as usual, as no one is going to stop them and we might also put aside another \$120 million for them to just take away.

My concern is this; I would like the Minister for Mining to take note and cancel those licenses by putting a moratorium on seabed mining, we do not need it. Do your research and you will find out that the scientists of this world discourage this activity because, the unknowns are too great. And we owe it to our coastal people to protect their livelihood. I can't see the Mining Minister but I hope he is taking notes wherever he is listening, please do take note and find out about this company and cancel those licenses.

I believe the Prime Minister made a pledge sometime early in his prime ministership that we would stand with Fiji on requesting that a moratorium be placed in the Pacific on seabed mining. Let us remain true to that pledge and focus on agriculture and other activities that are not going to threaten our people and that is in regards to the subject of seabed mining, where we gifted \$120 million to a company that took it and wound up and left. And all the individuals in that company became instant millionaires, drinking champagne and laughing about a country called Papua New Guinea which is poor in development as it is, was willing to dish out such an amount for an activity that would have threatened its own people. Let us not repeat that same mistake.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the other issue that I wish to discuss is the matter of regulating the carbon trade sector. This is yet another interesting activity where we have a number of individuals and companies, making a beeline for Papua New Guinea and are hoping to take advantage of our usual kindness and lack of alertness in this new industries and those with fancy dress and speech. They turn up with their clever lawyers and accountants carrying brief

cases to reap and plunder as they know they can get away with it. There is no regulatory framework for this activity in Papua New Guinea and as a result, our gates are wide open and all types of creatures are coming into the country wanting to take advantage of the country.

Our country houses the third largest rainforest in the world, that is seven per cent of the world's biodiversity and the people who are innocent and unfortunately gullible; and depend on us to be the guardians of our gates. In this instance we should really try to do so vigorously. And I want the Minister for Environment and Conservation as well as the Minister for Justice who should be taking the lead to develop the regulatory framework.

We have international organisations that are willing to help us for free and to go out and be able to capture significant monies that are available for countries such as ours. We have already missed out on \$200 million for the last ten years, simply because we have not gotten ourselves organised. That money continues to be available and accessible by other Pacific Island Nations, smaller than Gerehu, are accessing these funds; there are only like 20 threes or something but they are accessing these funds. Meanwhile PNG, with the world third largest rainforest, we cannot access these fund, why?

Can these two Ministers organise themselves to reach out to the international organization that are will to help so that we can access these funds; and whilst they are doing that; they can also work on developing that framework? Because, based on the fact that we had so many carbon cowboys coming into this country to take advantage of our people, I have pushed and insisted for a moratorium to be put in place. unfortunately, that was done by the former Minister Environment, whether that moratorium was enforced, I do not know.

We are great at passing laws and moratoriums but enforcement, that we are not so great at so Mr Minister, can you find out if your ministry is enforcing this moratorium? Because, I hear that there are so many entities claiming that they were given exemption from that moratorium. How can we impose a moratorium and then give exemptions to certain entities to do this?

So, let's make sure that the moratorium is actually in place and being enforced and that we develop this regulatory framework; there are partners willing to assist us, international organizations, foreign organizations, development partners et cetera. Let's work with them and develop this regulatory framework.

And, I want to raise some concerns here about the development of the regulatory framework. I understand and I would like the Minister of Higher Education, Research and Science to take note.

According to Gulf news, a media entity that operates in the virtual space, we signed an agreement with a company called Blue Carbon Limited, to develop the regulatory framework but this will involve the Attorney-General's Office, the Ministry for Environment and Conservation or the provinces where forests are housed and their provincial governments; I mean if it is a great idea let's work on that but I personally think that it is a conflict of interest so we should not waste our time with this. What we should do is the Attorney-General –

Mr Don Polye – Point of Order! The Governor says that I signed an agreement, I would like to correct that. Where did he get that information? I want the Governor to withdraw because I did not sign any agreement. There is a big difference, talk about facts.

Thank you.

Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER – Minister for Higher Education, your Point of Order is in order. Governor of Northern, your Grievance Debate time has lapsed

Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – Can I at least respond before I sit down? I want to explain to the Minister where I got this information because it is written here on Gulf News that he signed an agreement. I also sent him WhatsApp messages and put that on our Caucus Group but he did not respond so I had no choice but to raise it here because my resource owners are asking me about this and I do not have any answers for them. Ministers must answer to the ordinary member and backbenchers.

Mr Don Polye – Governor, you are lying again!

Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – No, I am not lying, Minister, I have got the WhatsApp messages here and this is on Gulf News with a photo of you signing the agreements and that is all we are talking about.

Thank you

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(Mr Don Polye interjecting!)

Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – I will deal with the Minister and we will talk about this. I am not a liar, Mr Minister. Mr Assistant Speaker, please explain to my good brother Minister. I have the facts here and I am not lying.

Mr ASSISTSNT SPEAKER – At your own timing you can discuss with the Minister.

Ministers to attend Grievance Debate

Mr DOUGLAS TOMURIESA (Kiriwina-Goodenough) – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to debate more on what other members have already debated on this morning. I want to stress on what our two Governors have spoken on and I want the Prime Minister to take note on it.

There are some valid points raised by Governors Allan Bird and Juffa, but when I look across from where I am seated, 50 per cent of your ministers are not present. It is very important that during grievance debate all ministers must be present to listen to what the Opposition and the backbenches' grievances because some of these points raised are very critical for the development of this nation.

Governor Bird spoke about after 18 year's time some of these resource sectors especially in the mining areas, law will lapse. If we are not careful with it by sitting here and not listening to such grievances and not taking note of it, then who will take charge of it? We have been voted by our people to sit down here and represent them in this House, and not going out for early lunch or other meetings.

I think it's about time some of the ministers need to be disciplined by canceling their meetings and sit in and listen to the grievances raised by our leaders. It's sickening to see that over the last four months in the two Parliament meetings half of the seats out there are always empty.

You wanted this ministry and Prime Minister delegated it to you so sit down and do your work. That's my point and I am debating because it's grievances time so you listen to me. And not for you to raise points of order after points of order. You look at the *Standing Orders*. Let the members debate on issues. Mr Assistant Speaker, thank you again, love you my brother.

The point that I want to raise today is on law-and-order issue in our country. Sometime ago, I raised a point which our Prime Minister has understood but after a week he also heard that my district was faced with a major problem. These law-and-order issue is not affecting one particular district or province but it's affecting our country as a whole. And we know that very well, Mr Assistant Speaker, the issue of law and order happens because morals and

responsibilities, and fabrics of nation are beginning to collapse. One of the fabrics of nationhood is based on families. When we have strong families, it creates stable communities.

I am debating on this because some of us who were born in the early 60s or 70s have experienced very stable families. Both our fathers and mothers lived in harmony and in that manner, discipline was very strong. I remember when we were small, our parents used to get the cane stick and belt us. But today we can't belt a child with cane stick because laws created by Governments, United Nations and other organization have created that boundary which parents are not allowed to discipline kids in that manner.

As a result, the fabric of our nation has derailed to a point where kids misbehave in the house. Recently we heard from the Member for Kairuku talked about a stabbing incident at Erima. When you see such happenings, it has come to a point where human beings don't have respect for each other anymore. We treat each other like animals, it's like picking up a knife and stabbing animals we come across. Our life has changed dramatically whereby we don't have respect for each other anymore.

I thank the Prime Minister and the Treasurer for announcing yesterday that law and order is getting the big slice of the Budget and that's very encouraging.

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But is this a band-aid solution? We are not dealing with the core issue which is strengthening families and homes. We are losing a generation of young men and women who are losing respect for older people, mothers, and fathers in the community.

Today, you see young people growing up and abusing their parents. They are swearing at leaders and here we are allocating a big slice of the Budget to law and order. What if we look into strengthening the homes, churches, and other institutions that will develop human beings to make them better people for tomorrow? Instead of just allocating funds for the Police to enforce the laws of belting and jailing the offenders; we must deal with the real issues and not band-aid solutions. We deal with the person as a whole being and not just a lawbreaker, who can go into some institute and come out a better person.

Mr Assistant Speaker, today I would like to raise some points that we have seen in very recent times when the youths go out and break-and-enter, law and order has become worse because these youths do these to survive.

The other day Sir Puka spoke about cost of living rising, I understand that the Government in the Supplementary Budget has allocated K611 million for the home relief package.

Yes, again there is money allocated to relieve our people but where is the reality of translating that so that the prices of goods and services can fall. Price of Ox & Palm has gone up to the ceiling, and the prices of rice, sugar and other items that our people rely on have risen but we want to bring them down. One of the indications that people are out there causing problems is that they cannot survive at home and the survival of the fittest has come into play where what do I do to survive for the next day? Now, we need to deal with these issues. If we do not deal with these issues it will cause a bigger problem later.

Then, I hear the Member for Kairuku talk about the provincial border post and that is very important. It is about time that we deal with the Vagrancy Act. We make sure as leaders that we go back and deal with our people at home.

We must not allow our people to come here and we deal with them outside of our districts and provinces. As leaders, we must go back to our people and deal with these issues that are pertaining out there.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I would like to go back and reiterate to all of us; as parents it is our responsibility. I thank you for giving me this opportunity, I have plenty of issues to raise but my ten minutes has lapsed. And, hope that the Minister of Community Development can take note and we can strengthen homes.

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Law and Order issues

Mr WAI RAPA (Western Highlands) – You all know that I was a councillor, then a president, a deputy-governor and now the Governor of Western Highlands Province.

I recently asked the Prime Minister that if we want to talk about law and order issues, one main contributing factor is alcohol. We all know about the Prime Minister's response to that, but we are still talking about law and order.

Many of the leaders and members live in Port Moresby and come to Parliament and talk about a lot of trash. They do not live with their people. Law and order is a serious problem in this country. I thank the Prime Minister for taking the initiative and budgeting for law and order. We have laws in the country but no order. The people of Papua New Guinea can follow the law but still there will be no order.

For instance, in Mt Hagen, if a person is sent to jail, he will still come out when he bribes the police officer with a K50 or K200. The police stations are becoming like ATM or petty cash outlet for police officers. When a person is being charged, the courts must make sure that the person is sent to jail. That will be the only way for us to see change in our community.

Tribal clashes are always happening in the town areas. They may live out of the town areas but will always bring their clashes into the town. The police do not intervene to stop these clashes. They can go on for two to three hours. When that happens, businesses are closed down forcing the town to close down as well. These clashes result in a lot of property damage.

The population of our youths in the country are increasing. The ratio of police to our population is not enough in this country. This law and order is a very big issue. PNG does not have enough money and resources to address it. We must look at all sectors of the government and how we can control law and order issues.

For instance, we cannot address law and order in Western Highlands Province. In the past, people respected the elders and listened to them, unlike at this time.

I want to thank the Prime Minister for this Budget to seriously address law and order. The court system has to be running. There has to be a law and order committee in each province. The governors, members of Parliament, community leaders and all other sectors must try to address law and order in this country. If we do not, it will become a big problem for us all.

These statements I made are from my observation from the communities in my province. There are some communities in Papua New Guinea that are well-behaved because of their involvement with churches. Many problems occur because people are aimlessly roaming our towns. Thank you.

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Lawlessness in PNG

Mr SIMON KAIWI (Jiwaka) – Mr Assistant Speaker, I thank you for recognising me. I wish to take this opportunity to thank my people of Jiwaka for giving me the mandate to represent them in this Parliament.

I also take this time to congratulate you, Mr Assistant Speaker, on your appointment. On the same token, I congratulate the Member for Tari-Pori, Honourable James Marape, on his election as the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea. He has led this country for the last three years, therefore, on the behalf of the people of Jiwaka, I extend our congratulations to the Prime Minister. I also wish to convey the same to the Deputy Prime Minister and Member for Lae, Honourable John Rosso.

Mr Assistant Speaker, my debate is based on the issue of lawlessness in this country. I support the comments raised by the Governor of Western Highlands in regard to the current law and order situation in Papua New Guinea. It is totally getting out of control, and many of us members here have almost fallen victims to these crimes. Lawlessness continues to become

an issue in this country. We can talk about many good happenings and boast about development plans for the benefit of our people but if lawlessness is not addressed, it will jeopardise the safety of our people.

We have experienced constant law and order problems for the last 10 years ranging from ordinary to serious issues. Many lives have been lost and our mothers and sisters have become victims to these crimes. It is happening almost every day.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I am grateful that our government is trying to address the situation. The Prime Minister has announced an increase in the Budget for Police and Defence and I agree with that. It's a good announcement, but at this juncture, I wish to point out that some of our constitutional laws are no longer deemed effective. They are weak in the sense that there are loopholes whereby anyone can easily justify their argument and win court cases. Parliament is the Legislative Arm of Government and our job is to legislate. Therefore, we need to make amendments to some of our existing laws.

Many laws were drafted before Independence and they still exist till today. Some were written after Independence and need amending. Penalties for certain crimes need to be increased. We need to make such changes to improve the current situation. People are armed with bush knives and are walking around freely. The penalty is not heavy or serious enough to deter such people.

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That applies to other laws under the Criminal Code too. I'm not a lawyer but from my experience as a police officer for twenty years that is what I have seen. We need to increase the penalty of some of the crimes such as arson, raid, et cetera. These crimes are carried out by some of the well-educated and disciplined people and we are not doing anything about it. We are allowing them to carry on doing what they do. For example; people getting away with murder in Papua New Guinea and this is really happening. Will we allow this to continue like this and let our families and foreigners keep living in fear?

Mr Assistant Speaker, I would like to talk about the laws of this country. I am suggesting to set up a committee in this Parliament or through the Constitutional Law Reform Committee to look at laws and make amendments to the penalties. Some people are getting away with very serious crimes. For example, if someone stabs a person but does not kill him, he or she should be imprisoned for 10 years, the minimum penalty. If we have tougher laws, people might obey them and stop all these crimes. There are people out there who have disregard for our laws and

also community leaders. Some of us members of parliament are also getting away with crimes. If we let this continue and get away with it then the future of this country is in danger. Soon warlords will take control of this country because they have the power to do so and because of our laws are weak.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I want all the members to take note so we all can make a change to the laws in our country, everything else is based on the stability and compliance of the law by our people. Only then will development take place and other things come into effect. If the laws are not effective, people will break them and commit crimes.

For instance, China with a population of 1.4 billion people all follow the rule of law because their laws are very strict. If people step out of line their penalties are very severe, and we all know this, but I'm not saying we should follow their way. We need to do something more effective so that people will follow the rule of law, hence the penalty for the crime must be really severe so that it goes into the mindset of the people so they are stopped from committing these crimes.

Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, your 10 minutes of grievance debate is almost up.

Mr SIMON KAIWI – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. I have made my point, and I hope all of you have taken note of this.

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Growing the Economy

Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE (Pomio) – We are talking about law and order, but I want to say that today many of our young people are engaged in lawlessness, therefore we need to support them through our many economic activities. So my point with regard to supporting the Prime Minister's comment yesterday is to grow our economy through downstream processing.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the Prime Minister in his maiden speech in the Eleventh Parliament made fundamental policy statements on agriculture and downstream processing as priorities for the Marape-Rosso Government. He made mention of this in many of his meetings and even during his international meetings.

During the recent international engagement as presented yesterday, he made mention of delivering the country statement at the 77th UN Assembly on the 22nd of September. Mr

Assistant Speaker, the PM said and I quote, ‘PNG’s ability to industrialise and invest in downstream processing whilst building greater levels of value-added, utilising our vast resources and non-renewable resources.’

He outlined our industrial relations agenda as we approach the 50th anniversary of our Independence including our desire to become a net exporter of both renewable and non-renewable resources through downstream processing. The PM mentioned that the agriculture sector must be harnessed and particularly at the rural level through price and freight subsidies. That will empower the rural families to sustain their livelihoods as a revenue source in growing our rural economies.

Important statements such as ‘PNG is working towards becoming a major supplier of economic, organic, primary and fisheries produce to global markets or in our nearest neighbours in Asia’ cannot be taken lightly. These are fundamental policy statements made by our Prime Minister.

The question is, does the department of agriculture, livestock, coffee and other economic sectors capturing these statements? Do we have plans and strategies for our agricultural commodities that are ready for downstream processing for the overseas markets?

We are expecting ministerial statements from some of these economic ministers this week. The Ministers and their departments must align themselves to implement the government policies especially in agriculture and livestock. As a coffee growing district, we need to know how CIC is addressing the coffee berry borer. I am advised that the borer had not been contained in the highlands provinces that are producing coffee. This has led to losing about 20 percent of our crop to the borer. Therefore, our farmers are losing interest and walking away from coffee.

This also adds to the law and order problems in our country. PNG has been known to producing up to one million bags for export. I have now found that PNG has only produced 700,000 bags of coffee to be exported. This shows that our country is not receiving approximately K200 million export in earnings that would be going to the growers. Our farmers needed the support from the government to give them the assurance not to leave their coffee plantations. Our people are ready and they need the support and the guidance.

Mr Assistant Speaker, we have so much durable land to grow our rice in our country. Australia meets about 99.9 per cent of rice demands. Do we have plans to reduce the rice imports?

Mr Assistant Speaker, in 2018, the then Minister for Agriculture and Livestock said these words in the local media and I quote, ‘we have made rice our staple food without growing it.

‘PNG Spends up to K600 million to import 400,000 tonnes of rice annually. A kilogram of rice now costs up to K6 and it is actually increasing. Mr Assistant Speaker, this is because consumers are paying for other fees as well on top of the rice itself. Even down to saying that, ‘we want to stop the rice imports, supply the country with local rice and begin to export rice by 2025.’

Mr Assistant Speaker, that was four years ago, where are we now? Nothing much has happened. The only change is the increasing volumes of imports and the increasing cost of rice. The PM in his capacity made these announcements. Our departments must rise up and take on these challenges as their KPIs. The new Chief Secretary must hold the departmental heads to account if they are serious about taking back Papua New Guinea.

Mr Assistant Speaker, our view is that the key departments of agriculture, livestock and coffee, oil palm are still organising their staff arrangements. The government must work with the districts that are ready to implement the government priorities to meeting the downstream processing agenda.

Pomio District has huge potential for agriculture and not forgetting fisheries and tourism. We have made a decision to build a factory and we have allocated funds for these. We are also working with private partners to grow rice. We have allocated 20,000 hectares of land for this purpose.

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We are also working with other private partners to grow rice and have allocated 20,000 acres of land for this purpose. Our investors have had the soil tested in Australia and the results are all good. We have increased cocoa production and committed funds to start poultry production and our shipping vessel MV Pomio is always ferrying agriculture commodities for Kandrian – Gloucester district and Pomio district to the south coast of New Britain. The government should therefore support such districts with additional shipping services so that we maintain productivity.

Mr Assistant Speaker, our Prime Minister has made profound statements about the economic sector and the departments and ministries should take on board, align with and partner to support districts that are ready. And I am inviting the team from agriculture, fisheries, coffee to travel to my district to make assessments to provide the necessary support. At this juncture let me put on record to thank this government through the Finance and Planning

Ministry and the Minister responsible for the release of PRP funds to support the bridge and road construction along the south coast of New Britain island.

These infrastructures are adding value to the economic programs and complementing the economic agenda to grow the local economy. I also wish to thank the Minister for Forest and his MD for supporting us with the LDL funds. On Behalf of our people we look forward to your ongoing support in 2023.

Law and order in PNG

Mr JOHN ROSSO (Lae – Deputy Prime Minister and Lands Physical Plan and Urbanisation) – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak. I would like to say thank you to all Members of Parliament who have sat through this afternoon. This is our primary role sitting in Parliament to make laws. I also note the discussions and take this time to join in the debate on law and order which remains as one of our biggest hinderances to development and is one of the biggest crutches of our problems in the country.

I take note of all the suggestions by our good governors and MPS who debated this earlier. Law and order is a big issue and it is an issue that has culminated over the years and we will be still facing this as we are a developing nation but we have to start to address this problem. And some of the issues that we are addressing now under our government under the leadership of our good Minister for Internal Security and some of the issues that we have tried to address is sorting out the Police Force. The Prime Minister has met with the commissioners in the last week and I have met with all the PPCs yesterday and told them what we expect from them.

The breakdown in law and order has culminated over the years due to a lot of situations; partly due to funding as previous governments had not adequately resourced the Police force, the CS and the justice system that led to a breakdown of a lot of things.

Within the Police Force itself to get a complete cycle of convictions, you need from the start the police to make arrests. Once they do the arrests, you need successful prosecution and we do not have adequately skilled or sufficient prosecutors to make prosecutions. Many times, paper work delays a lot of these prosecutions to be speeded up. And also, when taking statement, the police attending to cases must be properly trained so they input factual statements; have evidence to fast-track convictions.

A lot of our police officers do not pursue successful convictions but if you achieve successful convictions, the persons are detained and are in custody with CS. A lot of detainees behind bars are awaiting convictions therefore, we need to reinforce our Magisterial Services.

It was quite disappointing when the chief magistrate presented his case upon an invitation from NEC, because it is a very important sector. It is not just the police and when we invited the chief magistrate, we realized that out of the whole of last year the Magisterial Services received for goods and services only K3.6 million.

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So the Government has decided now to ramp up that funding for the magisterial services. We have actually doubled the budget from this year so that they can complement the sector from the whole law and order perspective. When a person is arrested by police, the offender is then sent to the magisterial services to be convicted. We need to adequately resource them, they cannot go around looking for staplers and papers, trivial things like that. The policemen should not go around begging for fuel. So you will be pleasantly surprised and I ask for all your support when we meet next week Tuesday for the budget presentation that we support the law and order sector. The police must get a big slice of funds, that is the start of a four-year program. It starts next year and continues the following year until we reach the four-year target.

For recruitment, we will no longer be recruiting anybody from the streets. It will be outsourced so that we get the best candidates to become police officers. Their uniforms should be standardised and be adequately in stock. The police re-fleet program will start so we can get rid of all the hire cars that costs us a lot of money every day. All these things must be put in place so that the onus will now be on the Police Force to make certain they do what we need as government. A lot of people expect the Prime Minister to make an arrest when an offence is committed, that is not our job as politicians. Our job is to create laws and allocate funding and it is the police duty to enforce these laws. But we cannot continuously blame them. They need resourcing. As Parliamentarians we are doing our part in enacting adequate laws and allocating funds through the Budget and this will be reciprocated when you see it on Tuesday. We will give them the funds to do their job so that they will have no excuse to carry out their duty. They must do their job.

As quite rightfully pointed out by the Governor of Western Highlands, we have adequate laws covering offences like possession of weapons. There are laws under the *Summary Offences Act* for possession of dangerous weapon in a public place. The penalty is six months' imprisonment or be fined, but there are no foot beat patrols conducted to arrest these offenders. This has been emphasised to the police hierarchy to ensure they do the job, and they have acknowledged their shortfalls. They have given assurance to work together with the Government to ensure this is done. So, now we need to allocate the funds. This is so that when

a person is arrested it's not only about putting the handcuffs on, there should be resources available to complete the whole conviction process. Without the evidence, statements and facts, there will not be a successful conviction of the offender. Our magistrates can't travel to Menyamya, Kabwum or go to Wasu because they don't have the logistics. Today, this Government is allocating funds so they can travel to remote places and carry out their circuit so they can convict people and sent them to prison. The prison facilities must be well maintained and there must be rehabilitation programs and facilities for the CIS officers to use.

Next year, we will start training 500 new recruits for the Police Force and not just people recruited off the streets but properly selected recruits through outsourced arrangements. The officer corp will start being outsourced too, recruited directly from university so they can come in and start a three-year training program to upskill and manage our Police Force.

The good Internal Security Minister under the direction of the Prime Minister has gone ahead to talk to our donor partners to try to help us in the backroom work. This means upskilling our prosecutors, forensics and communication specialists, and CID officers, because right now when if you go to the CID office, no one wants to do any work anymore.

We lack skilled officers and these officers need to be upskilled, trained and resourced properly. The laws exist and yes, we have to amend some laws to increase the penalties for possession and use of weapons like wire catapult and bush knife. This should be increased from six months to one or two years. Why do you have to carry a bush knife around town, obviously you are not gardening there, what is your purpose for doing that? So the job of the police men is to stop and search members of the public who are suspected to be carrying dangerous weapons in places like Boroko and Gordons.

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The job of the policemen is to search all public places like Boroko and Gordons. It's not the duty of us politicians to check them, we make laws and adequately resource them.

So, I can assure gentlemen that our government has placed priority in law and order and we are directly behind our Minister for Internal Security to ensure it happens. It's not just the police force and CIS but a wholistic approach must be taken. And with that in mind it has also reached the magisterial services and they have given their full support during the Ministerial Economic Committee and we will adequately resource them also.

There are lots of issues to be looked at and it won't take one year to fix it but four years of consistency in funding and allocation to properly train men. And if we can do it now then we will fix it. We need to adequately have our people resourced with economic opportunities.

For which most of it will be reflected in the budget in sectors like agriculture and land development. Most people may ask why more funds allocated in land development. We only have three per cent of land which is alienated so where do we move these plantations of oil palm and so forth. All we have to do is to reach out to the land owners and partner with them and acquire land and expand the alienated land program and also partner with people to extend our agricultural allotment.

For instances, right now I sympathise with Governor Parkop, he has a major problem like I have in Lae. Our cities have expanded because of population migration into towns and cities not one suburb have been filled since 1975 or 1980. We need to house our people properly and how do we do that? We need to expand our boundaries by building new suburb by allocating funds to major cities and towns like in Western Highlands, Mount Hagen. If we build one suburb of 10 000 allotments and the return of investment on that will be roughly power, water and the land rates. From the land rates within one year from 10 000 allotment you will give the Government K5 million. And as for water rates you will make K12 million for SOEs and adding all the rates it will be roughly K40 million from that one new suburb.

So, when we spend, we will also make a return on investment and at the same time house our people. And the same will go for agriculture allotment so we must expand and build on oil palm.

We have had good discussions with Governor Bird and few others who are pushing for oil palm expansion. If we put oil palm people need security of land tenure and if you have security of land tenure good Minister Maru can bring in developers. And they won't go and settle at the customary land because it has a lot of problems connected to it. So, we must give this security of land tenure to them to come and develop it. We provide the land and they provide the infrastructure and expand it. If we have 10 000 allotments available then it means 10 000 of our citizens will have an income of average K50 000 per annum similar to West New Britain in Biala. So that is what the focus of Government will be moving forward for next year to address it.

Gentlemen and ladies of this esteemed House it is not an easy task that we will be faced with, we are making up for the last 30 to 40 years that we have to fix. But who else will fix it? It's us seated in this House so for the next four years let us hold hands and walk together in fixing our country. No one from another country will come and fix our country.

So once again law and order remain one of our biggest priorities and please support Government.

Unfortunately, I won't be here next week Tuesday as Prime Minister has asked me to represent him on overseas trip so regretfully won't be here but I encourage you to support this Budget next week so that we can have a good land and slice of budget so that it can fix most of the issues that we are currently faced with. It won't be easy to fix it.

We also have education especially TVET which we will allocate funds to train our young people to become better citizens.

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There has been a lot of talk about the Treasurer's program to send people to Australia to work. When we send people overseas we must always remember that they will bring money back to our country. Many of our people maybe overseas but when they die, their bodies are brought back to Papua New Guinea as it is our custom.

So, let us be like the Filipinos, one of their biggest export is Human Resources, and most of that money goes back to develop their country. we can also do that. When we learn new skills, our attitudes change and that can also help fix some of our issues.

The first time I went to Australia was when I was 24 years old, and that came with an attitude change. We have an attitude of throwing rubbish everywhere we want to; so I had a hamburger and I threw the rubbish out the window and I thought it was normal because that is what we do here but the person next to me nearly slapped me and asked me why I threw the rubbish out the window. And from that day on I had never thrown rubbish out the window I always tell my people not to throw rubbish out the window. There is an attitude change when they expose you to the attitude of other people.

There have been many talks about people in the settlements on law and order issues and I do not blame our young people, growing up in urban cities like Lae, Port Moresby, Madang, Wewak; many of these youths were born and raised away from their home provinces. They do not know their native languages, customs, and heritage because they have grown up in urban areas and it is our own fault. So as the Opposition Leader has mentioned, we need to strengthen our family values which are very important.

At the same time, the breakdown of law and order is because when you are in a "Hausman", our fathers teach us how to do things; there are stringent laws that apply in the Hausman so when we come and reside in urban areas, these things fail and it becomes another problem in the urban centers. So, these things must be taught in our schools, education systems, and even in our compulsory cadet programs. You will also note that in our Budget next week

when it is presented. With that I would like to say thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your presence. Thank you.

Motion – That the Grievance be noted – agreed to.

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Assistant Speaker, thank you for taking the Chair and I congratulate you on taking this Chair for the first time.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.00 p.m.