

SEVENTH DAY

Thursday 30 November 2023

DRAFT HANSARD

Subject:

Page No:

ISSUE OF AND RETURN TO WRIT – STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER.....	1
ADMISSION OF MEMBER.....	2
DECLARATION OF LOYALTY.....	2
DECLARATION OF OFFICE	2
MOTION OF CONCURRENCE OF PARLIAMENT – STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER.....	3
MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS – STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER.....	17
QUESTIONS	17
Law and Order issues in the Country	17
Upgrade National Broadcasting Commission (NBC).....	22
TFF – Commodity Component	25
Give Notice of Bills.....	27
Status Of Total Police Manpower	28
ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS	31
Company Registration Deadline -IPA	31
ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS	32
Teaching Colleges Registration Status	32
SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON THE 2022 GENERAL ELECTIONS – FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE 2022 GENERAL ELECTION.....	34
ADJOURNMENT.....	42

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

CORRECTIONS TO DAILY HANSARD

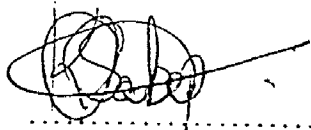
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KENNETH SEBEPMIN

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

SEVENTH DAY

Thursday 30 November 2023

The Acting Speaker (**Mr Koni Iguan**), took the Chair at 10.15 a.m.

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

Sitting suspended.

The Acting Speaker, again took the Chair at 10.50 a.m., and invited the Member for Moresby North-West, Honourable **Lohia Boe Samuel**, to say Prayers;

"Aita guriguri, Dirava lohiabada, Tamamai namona, ai tamamai. Tenk yu badaherca heina daba namona ome heni mai. Iboumai oi emu leaders of Papua New Guinea ma iboumai ama heina ruma badanai ame hegogo to serve our people. Ina horai a gurigurimu emai Prime Minister, James Marape oi ese baitaia tao, bona oi ese bagunalaia bona ai emai Opposition leader danu oi ese baitaia tao bona oi emu ura daladai ba rakaia. Ai iboumaiai bame durumai oi emu ura daladai bame harakamai bona oi ese bame hakaumai oi emu ura daladai. Ai emai taunimanima baia gunalaidia oi emu ura daladai. Bame hanamomai. Amen!"

ISSUE OF AND RETURN TO WRIT – STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Members, in accordance with *Section 175* of the *Organic Law on National and Local-Level Government Elections*, I lay on the table the Return to the Writ, which His Excellency, the Governor-General issued on 21 September 2023, for a supplementary election to fill the vacant Office of the Member for Lagaip Open Electorate and that by the endorsement on the Writ it was certified that Mr Amos Joseph Akem was duly elected as the Member for Lagaip Open Electorate.

02/07

ADMISSION OF MEMBER

The new Member preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms proceeds to the Chair to make his declaration before the Acting Speaker.

DECLARATION OF LOYALTY

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, you will do a declaration of loyalty. When I read, you repeat after me.

Mr AMOS JOSEPH AKEM – I, Amos Joseph Akem, realising fully the responsibility to which I am committing myself and the consequence of not leaving up to the declaration and those responsibilities, freely and willingly declare my loyalty to the Independent State of Papua New Guinea and its people, and to the *Constitution* of Papua New Guinea adapted by the Constituent Assembly on 15 August 1975, as altered from time to time in accordance with its provisions, and promise that I will uphold the *Constitution* and the law of Papua New Guinea.

DECLARATION OF OFFICE

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – We will continue on the declaration of office. When I read, you repeat after me.

Mr AMOS JOSEPH AKEM – I, Amos Joseph Akem, do promise and declare that I will well and truly serve the Independent State of Papua New Guinea and its people in the office of the Member of Parliament.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, congratulations. You may now take your seat.

03/07

**MOTION OF CONCURRENCE OF PARLIAMENT –
STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SPEAKER**

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honorable members, I seek the concurrence of the Parliament to admit pall bearers carrying the casket of the Late Honourable Maso Karipe MP, Member for Porgera-Paiela Open.

With the concurrence of all Honourable Members, I invite the pall bearers carrying the casket of the late Honourable Maso Karipe MP, Member for Porgera-Paiela into the Chamber.

Motion – That the Pall-bearers be admitted into the Chamber – agreed to.

04/07

Pall Bearers enter Parliament with the Casket of late Honourable Maso Karipe.

(Casket lies in the Chamber)

05/07

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

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

That Parliament express our deepest regrets of the death of 7 November 2023 of the Member for the new Porgera-Paiela Open Electorate, the Late Honourable Maso Karipe.

And places on our record its recognition of his devoted service to the people of Porgera and we do extend our deepest and profound sympathies to his children, his wife, his family, his tribe, his supporters, his people of the new Porgera-Paiela Electorate, Enga Province and of course Papua New Guinea.

Mr Acting Speaker, it is not every now and then when we witness a casket that lies in the House. Today was somewhat somber, earlier we saw the ascension into office of a member of the

sister electorate of what used to be Laigaip-Porgera and we're now seeing the first Member for Porgera lying in state and the new member for the sister electorate being sworn in to office.

If it is any consolation to the family and the people of Porgera, "Romans 8: 28 says, 'God knows best for all us in whatever circumstance we are called upon'". It is sad that the first Member for Porgera had to lie in State in this manner, but God giveth and our brother and leader who came into this 11th Parliament is lying at rest at this moment.

On behalf of the Madame President of PANGU Pati, party executives and the parliamentary wing of the party, our Deputy Party Leader, the Honourable John Rosso, the entire PANGU Pati family nationwide, I want to take this time to offer our greatest respect to the Member.

When he came in, he knew that there were greater agendas in as far as the restart of the new Porgera Mine was concerned, his commitment to support government in as far as reopening of Porgera was fixed. In the 16 months he served with us despite facing illness himself, he was able to labour and work on for the reopening of Porgera Mine, the self-man of Porgera Electorate, and for the leadership he associated in working with us. He was serving as the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Emergency and was also a member of the Public Accounts Committee.

I want to register PANGU Pati, I want to register our government, and I want to register the people of Papua New Guinea's recognition of the short stint of his service as Member for Parliament but he will forever be registered as the first Member of the new Porgera-Paiela Electorate. Hamane, may you rest in eternal peace, you are a Christian yourself, in the dying moments of your life you related with me on your firm belief of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know you're resting; may you rise to eternal life on the resurrection morning. Rest in Peace, God Bless,

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker for giving me the opportunity to pay my respect to the Member on behalf of every one.

Mr JOSEPH LELANG (Kandrian – Gloucester Opposition Leader) – I move –

That the Parliament take note of the condolence motion.

On behalf of the Opposition and all our families and supporters throughout the country, we extend our heartfelt condolence to the family of the late Honourable Member and the people of Porgera-Paiela and Enga Province.

06/07

Mr Acting Speaker, it is indeed a sad occasion to lose a young leader at the start of his political career and his desire to serve and deliver to the aspirations of his people. This is a short lived career but in the short period of time in this Parliament, the late honourable leader has served his people well and therefore we should be proud of him.

Mr Acting Speaker, with these few words, we extend our prayers and sympathies, especially to the family of the late honourable leader. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

Mr WILLIAM POWI (Southern Highlands) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. In my capacity as the Governor, I also want to represent my five districts and the 510,000 population of my province, I would like to pass my condolence and sympathy to the family of the late leader.

In the PANGU Pati Highlands Region, we have 19 members but now that he passes on, we will have 18 members. Again, on behalf of the Highlands Region PANGU Pati, my family and Molinda Powi who got married into the family, in those three capacities, I would like to pass my condolence and sympathy to the family of late leader, especially the widow lady Dorothy, the only son Gidron and my daughter Molinda.

I am aware that the late leader was a courageous and determined leader. The very sad thing is that, he passed away while creating his five-year development plan which will not be fulfilled because God has called him.

I want to inform our people and the Honourable Members who are here that we can differ in policy and the way we want to conduct our lives but as honourable leaders, let's embrace life and respect each other as leaders. If we are unhappy about something, we can differ in policy and the way we want to do things because at the end of the day, we will give an account of what we do to our people and go like how our late brother has gone.

The late brother was a very determined and courageous man. I say this because he would take his people and family from Porgera to travel to Laigap, Kandep, Lai Valley, Magarima and finally to my place. He used to pass through these very difficult electorates and experienced so many roadblocks and law and order problems so I see him as a determinant and courageous man.

However, having said that, I am so sorry that he did not fulfil his five-year district development plan and God has called him home.

So, on behalf of my family, the people of Southern Highlands and the Highlands Region, PANGU Pati, I am so saddened and pass my condolences to the family of late Honourable Maso Karipe. I assure the family that we will take the casket of the late brother home.

Thank you.

Sir PETER IPATAS (Enga) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I also stand to join the Prime Minister and the Governor of Southern Highlands. On behalf of the people of Enga, Members of Enga who are here, we all pass our sincere condolences to the family of the late Maso Karipe, his tribe in Porgera-Paiela Electorate, the people of Enga Province, and of course colleagues in this Parliament.

07/07

The late Maso Karipe was a giant in Enga because of his built and many people thought that he was from Gulf. A standout leader in a volatile environment, dealing with many lawless people in the Porgera-Paiela valley. He was a giant, growing grey hair, peaceful, and a very humble leader.

The late member was an SML agent and had ownership of the limestone. But, he is down to earth and a very humble person when meeting the needs and expectations of his people. He was the right person to become the pioneer Member for Porgera-Paiela. A leader who brought hope, peace, and offered good qualities of leadership in the Porgera-Paiela valley.

Like the Prime Minister said, 'God gives and God takes' but we will miss him because we admire his leadership qualities. Many leaders in the valley are not transparent as he was for service delivery to the people. They will miss him as their member. Even before he became a member; he was a business leader and a community leader living with his people in the village. A leader who is always with his people and I sympathize with them, they will dearly miss him and the province as well.

The late member didn't work with us and he passed away, but when he got elected, he tried his best to stabilize politics, and the relationship with the people of Enga and Porgera-Paiela; because he was an ideal leader and full-blooded Engan. The country, province, people, and family will miss him. So, on behalf of all the people in the province and the members of Parliament, I would like to pass my sincere condolences to Dorothy and all the children.

At the same time, it will be remiss of me not to thank the Prime Minister, on behalf of the people of Enga and the people of Porgera. Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister for providing the medical assistance towards the late member, you gave your utmost best to save him. I take note of the Leader of Government Business, the Honourable Rainbo Paita for the medical assistance and support as well to save his life.

So, I think it is important that we must care for people when they are sick and not to spend money when they die, that serves no purpose. So, it is important that I take this time to thank the Prime Minister, the government, and whoever lent a hand, his colleagues here on the Floor or any other businessmen or women out there who tried to help save his life.

On behalf of the people of Enga and my family, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for trying to save a very peaceful loving leader and a father.

08/07

I know as the Prime Minister mentioned he is a committed Christian and I believe he is in Heaven. And so, I want his body to rest in eternal peace, thank you.

Mr LUTHER WENGE (Morobe) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I also rise at this juncture to join with other distinguished members of Parliament to deliver this condolence message to our beloved brother and Member for Porgera-Paiela, Honourable Maso Karipe.

Honourable Acting Speaker, I knew this Member in a short time during the course of my election to this Parliament. When he enters the Chamber, before he takes his seat, he taps my shoulder and would say, 'kaim moning' and I would reply back by saying 'kaim mi save laikim mausgras bilong yu tru, naispela mausgras bilong yu'. So, we became good friends for a short time.

On behalf of the people of Morobe and as a senior leader in the Momase Region, which I represent, I would like to pass our sincere condolences firstly to his wife. We all look upon our wives and feel courage and strong and likewise wives look upon their husbands and feel secure and safe to live on. That's why if his wife is present on the Floor of this Parliament, I pass my deepest condolences from our thoughts and hearts.

Secondly, I want to pass my sincere condolences to his children, grandchildren, tribe and clan. In politics, we have a big family, you have your own family plus your political family on the side as well; the campaign committees and all the supporters and that forms a big family.

In this electorate, they stood firm in following the democratic system and elected the late Member to represent them in this Parliament. He had plans and dreams to achieve his goals with the support from DDA and the National Government to deliver their goals for his electorate but unfortunately he passed away unexpectedly and that brings big sorrow and grief to the electorate.

I feel and know what they are going through in the sudden passing of their leader and I want to comfort them in saying that all the people of Morobe and Momase are with you all.

Furthermore, we the people of Morobe brought '*mitic*' or Bible to the Highlands Region. We didn't get scared whether you practiced cannibalism or fighting, we held the Bible strong and forgot about our land.

09/07

Armed with the Bible, we left our land and our family and we went to the Highlands region to Eastern Highlands, Chimbu, Western Highlands, Enga, Southern Highlands and we would have gone further. However, other churches came in so we stopped out of respect and planted crotons at Ialibu and returned.

However, in Enga, we covered the whole province. So, when Morobeans heard about the death of this leader from the Highlands region, we said one of our own children has left this world. That includes us mothers, fathers and children so we say one of our own has died. So, when one of our own from the Highlands region becomes the Prime Minister such as Peter O'Neill, Paias Wingti, James Marape and others who will become prime minister or deputy prime minister, Morobe will say that's us, we are the Prime Minister. Whatever high office that the Highlanders hold, Morobeans are proud to claim it as theirs.

As such, when the late Member held this position, this is the sign of the good news that was spread by the Morobe people. So, when a leader of the Highlands region dies, we are truly sad and send our sincere condolences during your time of grief. Hopefully, our God above will hear our prayers and give us new leadership through a leader such as the late Member to continue his work.

I agree with the Prime Minister's statement that God gives and he also takes. God gives in his time and takes in his time. Our life is short on this Earth. However, our life will be everlasting

in Heaven. That is why we must be prepared and one day the life that is promised to us in Heaven will be ours.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for the opportunity to speak, and on that note, I extend our deepest condolences from our heart and spirit.

Mr DON POLYE (Kandep) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I also rise to add to the condolence messages that came from the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Governor of Enga Province, Governor of Morobe and Governor of Southern Highlands.

On behalf of my family and the people of Kandep, I express our sincere condolences and sympathies to my sister and wife of the deceased, Dorothy, Kidron, family and the other children. Mr Maso Karipe was a former Member for Laigaip-Porgera but he is also a leader of Porgera-Paela. The late member's tribe Wawalunda tribe, Upulainagai and the Paunda clan and the others that are very close to the member, I extend on behalf of the people of Kandep and my family our sincere condolences.

Whilst doing so, Mr Acting Speaker, I also would like to apologise personally to Dorothy, Kidron and the children for not turning up to their hauskra in person. Forgive me because I could not come but I certainly will come on Monday when the body goes up to Enga Province where Governor Ipatas and the provincial government will be there to receive the body. Through you, Mr Acting Speaker, we will be there to celebrate the life of the late Maso Karipe.

Also Mr Acting Speaker, let me express that not even two years have passed that a very new electorate was established by this Parliament.

10/07

The Lagaip-Porgera electorate was a very huge electorate with close to 120,000 to 200,000 people and the Marape-Government was wise in splitting the electorate in two and establishing Porgera-Paiela as its own.

In the last elections, the late Honourable Member Maso Karipe was elected freely and fairly and we were very happy that that part of Papua New Guinea would be served more adequately because this electorate accommodates Porgera Mine. But to have the pioneer Member lose his life unprecedented in this very important electorate is a shock to the families and people.

I agree with the consent of the Honourable Governor of Enga, Sir Peter Ipatas, and the people of Enga Province, Papua New Guinea and even the Prime Minister and PANGU Pati, which the late Member served through and led up to the opening of the mine. So, it is a shock to that electorate and also to the province and the country as a whole.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to express something that I have been emphasizing during ceremonies like these when we have one of our own colleague Member of Parliament, like the late Honourable Maso Karipe laying before us. I have made this comment and I believe that it should be such for all the Papua New Guineans.

I would like to express that we should see death as birth. The birth of a life into the world is an everlasting spirit that comes into this new body and lives in that body encased in that temple. Then the spirit tries through its body to manifest goodness and blessings to fellow mankind and to others emanating positive energy and goodness to everyone through that body that it lives in. I am speaking through that body but the spirit that comes during birth is the same spirit that dies in that body.

So in this case, I would like to celebrate rather than cry or mourn or be sad about the death of one. I think we Papua New Guineans and the people of Porgera-Paiela, and all of us on the Floor of Parliament should focus in the direction of celebrating the death in the same way we celebrate a birth which brings a bundle of joy.

When we celebrate the positive energy passes out and the one who passes on which is a spirit that has now left the casing, which is the body but the goodness of the spirit must live on. And therefore, I heard the Prime Minister say that the honourable late member was a very good Christian. I agree because when he came back from Australia, we sat at the back and we were communicating with each other and I noticed that he changed, but I did not want to tell him because it might psychologically affect him, so I acknowledged him for returning and he replied, 'everything is in the hands of God'.

So, he was a very strong believer of this God that he believed and I think that it is the truth. If we believe in something, then that belief will guide us to stay on and it has to be something good.

Now, that is something that we can learn from the late Honourable Member, Maso Karipe. His belief was based on something good, fair and just for the people of Porgera-Paiela, and that is the legacy of this body before us that we should carry on in our lives because that is what it is.

Death and birth are the same thing but what must live on is the spirit of goodness that has been living and manifesting through the body.

11/07

I agree with points made by Grand Chief Sir Peter Ipatas. When someone is sick, we should be trying to save their life so that they may live longer and continue to serve their purpose. I give credit to the Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape and Honourable Rainbo Paita, who led the way to help the late honourable Member, and others who have passed on in this House. They have been trying their best as leaders in this government to save lives and I commend them for it.

Let us celebrate the life of the late Honourable Maso Karipe through the Christian values that he lived and let us strive to be a good Christian as he was. In that way, he will continue to live through us.

(Speaks in Engan language)

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Dr LINO TOM (Wabag – Minister for Health) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I also rise today with our brother leaders in expressing my commiserations to our dear brother and fellow leader, the late Honourable Maso Karipe, on behalf of the Engan leaders and as the Leader of the People's Party.

Mr Acting Speaker, today is a day of mixed emotions for us Engan leaders. What would have been the celebration and joyous welcome to Parliament of a new member from its twin sister electorate, the new Laigap Electorate, the day is instead dampened by this very sad occasion with a very sad demise of the maiden MP for the new Porgera-Paiela Electorate and our dear brother, the late Honourable Maso Karipe, we have had to admit his brother, maiden MP for the Laigap Open Electorate, Honourable Amos Joseph Akem into the Chamber.

I believe with God, there is no coincidence, and I believe that if there is any consolation, this would be it. It is as if the heavens want Lagaip-Porgera to remain as one. With demise of one of its dearest son, we have had the opportunity today in admitting another into this House.

The late Honourable Maso Karipe is a gentle giant. A man once feared in the valley of Porgera who through the transforming power of God, has become a humble leader of his people and in his church. It will take a lifetime to find a person of his standing to fill in his shoes. We

assure you that his legacy will remain to usher in and inspire in a new generation of great Porgereans.

I have had the privilege of knowing him as a young doctor who worked in Porgera as my first place of posting. I have also had the privilege of being sponsored by the Porgera Gold Mine and I hold the people of Porgera dear to my heart. We played in two different fiercely rival rugby teams as young men in Porgera. He is a gentleman and in every sense of the word, a great man indeed.

On behalf of the people of Enga, we thank the Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape and the greater PANGU caucus for taking this late great leader into your wings, and through his long illness, for all the attempts and all the contributions you have made towards trying to save his life. We realised PANGU's great contribution towards the medical expenses, and on behalf of the people of Enga, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Honourable Prime Minister and his party.

With one of your party leaders leaving, you have been consoled through the admittance of another into this House from its sister electorate, the new Lagaip Electorate.

With this, I wish his dear family; his wife Dorothy and his dear children, and the people of Porgera-Paiela and Enga, sincere condolences and God's comfort and peace during this time of sorrow. I believe that there is no coincidence in God's plan and God in his own time will give us all the answers.

12/07

Today we may not have all the answers but we believe and we pray and we hope that one day, when our Lord comes; my brother, we will all be there.

Mr Acting Speaker, I also acknowledge all the leaders who have spoken this morning. On behalf of the leadership from Enga, we would like to acknowledge all the condolences made this morning.

Mr WILLAM DUMA (Hagen – Minister for State Enterprise) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. On behalf of the people of Hagen and the Parliamentary wing of the United Resource Party and the supporters, I want to extend our heartfelt condolences to Mrs Dorothy Karipe and

her children, the tribesmen of the late Member and the elected leaders of Enga led by Sir Peter Ipatas and the people of the Porgera-Paiela Electorate, for the tragic loss of a good leader.

We in Hagen value our relationship with the people of Enga. Of course, when there is feasting in Wabag, we are invited. When there are fights or deaths in the Wabag or Wapenamanda, we in Hagen empathize with them. This sudden loss is not a loss only for the people of Enga but also for the people of Western Highlands too.

Most of us think of Engans as short or stocky in stature and occasionally have volatile tempers but this man was a unique leader. Even before entering into politics and this Parliament, he was a leader at his level. He was from the SML area where he was one of the principal beneficiary and yet on most occasions in the public arena, you would never see this gentleman talk or even lead a group of volatile or angry landowners. He was a gentle giant, his leadership qualities were evident well before he came into politics and put his hand up for elections to represent his people of Porgera-Paiela. His character and mannerisms were different to most people from that part of the area. He was a gentle giant in the true sense of the word.

Life can be cruel and it works in mysterious ways, we as mere human beings can never understand, for it is only God who understands, He gives and He takes. Just a few moments ago we all witnessed and celebrated the entry into this esteemed Chamber of another new leader from Laigap and moments later, we witnessed the entry into the Chamber of someone who was with us for about 14 months.

He came into this Parliament with dreams to share with his people, just like all of us, unfortunately, life is such, and it is tragic. In many, ways we can regard it as a cruel thing. In life sometimes a part of us wishes death upon people who we think are not so nice to us while the other part of us wishes to have our loved ones remain with us and not die and leave us.

I saw nothing bad about this man, even before he entered Parliament I knew he was a good man. Well before I entered politics I was a lawyer representing the people of Porgera and he was one of those men who had the interests of his people at heart. And I was not surprised when his people finally elected him to represent them.

And as a lot of members have shared, he was on the verge of preparing his five-year development plan. I am sure the people of Porgera-Paiela, especially those who worked hard to get him into Parliament had high hopes for him

13/07

The thing is with the reopening of the Porgera Mine, the future was looking bright for them with their good leader representing them all the way. Unfortunately, the Lord has taken him.

On behalf of my people, I convey our deepest condolences. May his soul rest in eternal peace. May the Lord's wisdom and understanding be with his people and family in this time of bereavement. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr JOHN ROSSO (Lae – Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Lands, Immigration and Boarder Security) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I would also like to join by offering my condolences to the family of the late Honourable Maso Karipe. I would like to sincerely on behalf of my family, the people of Lae and the PANGU Pati, offer my condolences to his wife, children and family. Words cannot express our sorrow and words cannot explain your sorrow today.

It is not easy to farewell a colleague and a friend and like the good Member for Wabag had pointed out today. For PANGU Pati, we welcome a new member to our party and today we also farewell another who has departed. Everyone has said it, Mr Maso Karipe was a rare gentleman. He was a gentle giant with a great personality, forceful nature, but he did not use that in any harm. He stood strong for his people and one of his works that we shall remember him by is his SML13 which has two of his hard works included in it. Environmental sensitivity to be inclusive and the resettlement of the mine village for Porgera. He fought for inclusion for these two particular issues. He fought for a better Porgera.

He fought for Porgera and yesterday we passed the *Mining Act* amendment to restart Porgera. Unfortunately, the late Maso Karipe was not around to see them but his legacy lives on through the restart of the Porgera Mine. So when we look at Porgera, let us remember the legacy this great man and his work put into achieving that objective.

Once again, my sincere condolences to the family, the children the relatives, and the people of Porgera. God gives and God takes. Thank you.

Mr RAINBO PAITA (Finschhafen – Minister for Finance and Planning) – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I would like to also take this time on behalf of my family and electorate to convey our condolences to the late leader who now lays in front of us.

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to echo the words of my Governor with most of other good leaders who shared many great words of life, grief, happiness, and gospels, where we can reflect on this Floor. I first met this leader when the Prime Minister sent me to go and pick him up at Hagen Airport. There I realized a giant of a man he was. At the distance, he stood like a warrior, when he approached the plane and I met him for the first time and then I realized overtime what a kindred spirit he possessed. I was able to mix and mingle with him to understand his views of his people.

Mr Acting Speaker, he had great hope for his people and everything he planned or talked about was not about himself as a landowner, or about his interest, but always about building roads from Porgera to Paiela. He talks about the health services in Mulitaka and the lack of services in his district. He could have enjoyed his life as a private citizen, being one of the landowners but he decided to take public office to fight for what he believed in and for some of the things his people were missing out on.

14/07

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to say sorry to his family, his wife Dorothy, Kidron, and his immediate families and his supporters who had so many high hopes that their leader would have transformed their district. I extend my condolences to the supporters, his voters, and those people who had a hand in him coming to this Floor.

Mr Acting Speaker, I always think to myself that one day, we will all become former members either when we lose the elections or when we die. We will all have a day or days where we will either come through the same way. This is the exit for us, either when we die they'll mention our name on the Floor, or our body will lie in State.

Mr Acting Speaker, this gentleman had so many plans and I thank the Prime Minister, Mining Minister, and other relevant leaders. Even though he was sick for a short while most of his views on Porgera, and environmental issues where he raised, the government and ministers must take note. That was his little contribution as a member. I'm saddened that he did not spend enough time with us so that we could feel his essence when he exhausted his five-year term which his people mandated him for.

To conclude, this man was tall. and strong and I don't think any man would have been able to defeat him but he was defeated by the only thing on Earth that we will all be defeated by, death itself. I am sorry that death stole his hopes and dreams of the people of Porgera-Paiela and

Mulitaka. We hope that the family will find the strength to bring the body back to his home province. Once again, I would like to convey my deepest sympathies to the family and the leaders of this electorate. I want to thank the Prime Minister and the leaders who had made an effort to try to save this leader.

Mr Acting Speaker, we often give contributions to the *hauskrai* but it's better to try to save the lives of the sick while they are still alive. Therefore, Mr Acting Speaker, I want to say thank you to the leaders on this Floor, Governor William Powi, Prime Minister, and any other leaders who tried their best to save him by helping him in his fight against cancer, we tried our very best but death defeated us.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to say thank you to the family, supporters, and his people who have joined us today and may God give him rest. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – On behalf of the Parliament, the Office of the Speaker, the Clerk, and the Staff of the Parliament. I wish to extend condolence from the Parliament to the family, to the province of Enga, and to the people of Porgera-Paiela. And from the Chair, I would like to mention the late Honourable Member's name, Honorable Late Maso Karipe, we wish you eternal rest in God's hand

Honourable Members, I would like to inform the House that the funeral service for the late member, the date will be set, and a notice will be sent to your office on the date and time and the venue of where the funeral will be held. As we finish from here, the Casket will go back straight to the funeral home.

Motion – That the question be put – agreed to.

Condolence message noted.

15/07

The pallbearers carry the casket of the late Honourable Maso Karioe, MP (Member for Porgera-Paiela) out of the Chamber.

16/07

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

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable members, I would like to inform the Parliament that grade 7 students and teachers of Koiari Park Adventist Secondary School in the Hiri-Koiari District of Central Province are present in the Public Gallery. On behalf of the Parliament, I extend the visitors a warm welcome.

QUESTIONS

Mr JOSEPH LELANG – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Before I ask my question, I would like to acknowledge the new duly elected leaders who are joining us in this Eleventh Parliament especially, the Member for North Bougainville and Member for Wewak. We have also just witnessed the declaration of office for the new Member for Laigap, Honourable Amos Joseph Akem.

7/07

Law and Order issues in the Country

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to direct my questions to the Prime Minister, we have heard so much about law and order issues in this country. Not long ago, we heard and saw in the news about an ethnic clash in Tabubil and many of our people there are homeless. And a lot of killings occurring in Port Moresby and the tension is very high.

In Madang, one of the student was murdered in front of the Divine Word University gate. The problem of law and order is occurring at a speedy rate.

My questions are:

(1) What leadership are you providing and what plans do you have to stop this rise in killing and lawlessness that is happening around the country as we sit here in this Honourable House?

Mr Richard Masere – Point of Order! Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I don't mean to interrupt the good Leader of Opposition's question but the Minister for Internal Security is present, so, I believe the question by right should be directed to the minister responsible.

But in his absence, then the Prime Minister can be asked the question. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, your Point of Order is out of order. The Member, at his discretion can ask the Prime Minister who is the Chief Minister.

Mr JOSEPH LELANG – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, I understand that the employment contract for the Commissioner of Police has lapsed.

(2) When are you going to appoint a new Commissioner of Police so that there is certainty in the rank of the police force to address many of these issues that we are now facing in this country?

(3) In view of the recent killings and lawlessness around the country, can you make a firm commitment to give funding to the police operations in the provinces and let them deal with the issues from the ground level up rather than from here in Waigani, which doesn't seem to work?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for allowing the Leader of Opposition to ask these important questions.

Law and order issues are a major concern for our Government and we acknowledge it is indeed fire that is now trying to subsume our country. But the good news is that we have been working to ramp up our support to not just police but entire law enforcement agencies and the law and justice sector.

Mr Acting Speaker, earlier today, you heard the notice being issued by the Clerk on some of the bills that are coming through, especially the bills from the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General in respect to our judiciary.

Yesterday, we witnessed that and I thank both sides of the House for passing the bill into law which now establishes the ceiling of 60 judges, before we were operating with a ceiling of under 40 judges but will increase to 200 judges at any time.

18/07

Secondly, there has not been any recruitment of police and we have an ageing Police Force who are operating in run down infrastructures and accessories to give them good support to work. But that being said, knowing the status quo of our Police Force, in the last two years especially, we made concerted effort to empower the Police Force and look at our Correctional Service Institutions, our Magisterial Services, our National Court and our Supreme Court in totality.

If you read and I look forward to the reply by the Opposition tomorrow in the Budget reply, I just hope they see that in the Budget's allocation, there is a greater level of support to the total law and justice sector never like before. Record allocation to Judiciary, record allocation to the Magisterial Services, continued record allocation to the Police Force, and of course, a little bit of improvement in allocation to the Correctional Service Institute. All geared towards ensuring that the full gamut of the law-and-order sector is being worked upon so that we arrest the lawlessness that is seemingly spreading to other parts of the country who were earlier living in an ordered lifestyle and manner.

So, I want to assure this House that we are mindful that the entire law and justice sector needs to be supported, not just the Police, and especially for the Police, we are ramping up more support as we speak. This year and next year will have seen allocations to the Police like never before.

I want to answer his third question on whether we are funding straight to the provinces so that police can work. As we increase allocation to the police, I want to give an assurance to this House, our governors have been raising this issue that instead of clogging the money at Konedobu, allow the money to funnel to our provinces, especially the Provincial Police Commanders (PPCs) can be better resourced to better function. I want to give assurance that we will look at the structure where the Commissioner of Police does not hoard money at Konedobu but is funnelling money to our PPCs, especially the administrative components so that they can be functional in caring for our people in as far as law-and-order maintenance is concerned.

I want to also indicate that for instance; in the urban areas that are facing stress, the city municipals or the urban area LLGs and our provincial governments must work with the police. I want to make a special mention to the Governor of our nation's capital and our Lae City Authority. They are trying their absolute best to ensure that they step up in policing and supporting police law and order in the cities. For next year's budget, there's 'an allocation, for instance in Port Moresby

Safe City, there's a small allocation to match NCD's commitment to Safe City in Port Moresby or NCD. Likewise, we would give the same support to Lae City and I would ask all governors' who have a major urban area or who preside over urban areas in your provincial headquarters to ensure your function as law enforcement legislators in the provinces, the provincial assembly and the city authorities or the city municipals pass relevant laws to match the laws against the *Vagrancy Act*, and other sister legislations that the country has.

And at your own lower levels, you could work to refine and ensure protection of law is given support by city authorities and LLGs in those urban areas as well as in the province just like the National Capital District Commission under Governor Parkop's leadership, and the Lae City Authority, and the Governor of Morobe, and the Deputy Prime Minister here who is stepping up in that space in Morobe.

So, just to conclude and answer the Opposition Leader, I want to appreciate his concern for law and order in our country. It is not a quick fix but we are working to ensure not just police but the entire law enforcement sector is given full support including empowering all the relevant sectors.

19/07

I do not want to discredit others before my time, however, when we took office in 2019, the need was there but there wasn't any allocation to the Magisterial Services until 2020. With the two previous budgets and the 2023 Budget, we have allocated more to the Magisterial Services. Simply put, they handle 80 per cent of the workload in as far as adjudicating lawlessness is concerned. The summary offenses are handled by the Magisterial Services.

Mr Acting Speaker, through you and to the Opposition Leader and every one of us in this House, sadly, in the past we have considered the higher courts and the police but we have not really targeted Magisterial Services in a big way. And so realizing that vacuum in terms of resources allocation, for this year and next year, we are giving the Magisterial Services a greater support.

They can employ more magistrates at a higher pay, they are resourced better so that when summary offences are committed, it ends in front of a magistrate somewhere.

We hope that the magistrates realize that the Government is giving support to them so they are prudent in their dispensation of justice as they preside over many of the summary offence cases

that the police put to them. As it comes to them, we hope they accord the correct penalties in respect to those cases presented to them.

For, the Police Commissioner, I think the Opposition Leader, questioned the tenure. I want to inform this House that although the process is not complete, the Permanent Parliamentary Appointment Committee did preside over the submission of the re-engagement of the current Commissioner. The Cabinet has also presided over the recommendations that have come through from the Appointment Committee as well as the Public Service Commission and the current Commissioner has ticked off all the requirements that needs to be ticked off and the process is now in place for the current Commissioner to be re-appointed for a second term.

I want to indicate to this House that if the process is completed and he is reappointed, that will mean that he will be the first Police Commissioner in the entire 48 years to be reappointed.

Mr Acting Speaker, this is a significant statement because no Police Commissioner since 1975, has served more than two terms. I looked at the entire history of our police commissioners since 1975; we have had, if my memory is not failing me, 18 commissioners.

Some commissioners served less than one year and some commissioners served less than three years but there were only two Police Commissioners that were able to serve their full entire four years of contract; that was Commissioner Baki and Commissioner Inguba.

Mr Acting Speaker, with lack of stability and consistency at the top, we saw proliferation of ill-discipline in the Police Force in the entire 48 years because they were not responsive to a steady leadership up at the top.

I want to assure this House, that the Police Commissioner's job is not about putting out fire in tribal fight spots. There is a greater job of the Police Commissioner like running an efficient Police Force and dealing with corruption.

And, so in this context, with the tenure of the current Commissioner ending, in light of the leadership crop that we have right now, we felt that continuity and stability was important. The Minister did propose from the Law and Justice Sector, in our SLOS committees that they considered him for a second term, the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Appointments affirmed that recommendation. The Public Service Commission has recommended to Cabinet and Cabinet has endorsed that and the due process is on its way, his contracts expires on 2 December 2023.

I want to inform this House that the contract will be signed, the approval has been given so that there will be continuity in the Police Commissioners office. The last four years has not been easy. Under the current Police Commissioner's watch, over 300 police have been disciplined for ill-discipline.

Lawlessness remains abound but the Commissioner has been under clear instruction to restructure the Police and to empower the provincial and regional police.

20/07

We will work in tantrum with a new security arrangement that we will be signing with Australia next week when I have a bilateral meeting with the Australian Prime Minister.

When that comes into play, greater support will be mobilised towards local police training, more police empowerment and we hope within the next three years, the Police Force will be brought back into better direction in as far as maintenance of law and order is concern, and to ensure that we get better in that space.

It is a work in progress and I want to assure this House that we are not sleeping. We are working to make sure Police and our magisterial services and judiciary is given full support to empower them to care for our country in as far as law and order is concerned.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, and I do apologise for a lengthy reply, but I thought a serious question like this deserves a full response. Thank you also to the Opposition Leader for asking this question.

Upgrade National Broadcasting Commission (NBC)

Ms FRANCESCA SEMOSO – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for Information and Communication Technology in relation to a question asked two days ago.

National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary tomorrow. When I first walked into NBC studio 36 years ago, I was able to sit there and still be able to deliver my job. Three weeks ago, I went back and was totally appalled that the studio where the best comes out from, is not what it was anymore.

We have the broadcasting booth up here that broadcasts live streaming of the Parliament sitting every day for two weeks for the nation of Papua New Guinea to hear spontaneous report of what is happening in this House.

Mr Acting Speaker, maybe the only time we see the importance of NBC is during election time, especially during the counting and elimination process. My question to the Minister is, what are your plans in regards to all NBC radio stations in PNG?

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr TIMOTHY MASIU – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, and the Member for North Bougainville for her question. Before I give my response, I would like to congratulate and welcome the new Member for Lagaip into the Chamber. At the same time, I extend my congratulations and welcome also to the members for Wewak and North Bougainville.

To respond to the question raised, I acknowledge this government which has done a lot to provide support to NBC. Under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape, we have started the rehabilitation of radio stations that have been neglected in a lot of provinces around the country.

The refurbishment and rehabilitation of all radio stations started in 2019, and is still ongoing. We have almost completed all radio stations except for Central provincial radio station which needs to be relocated from Koki in NCD to somewhere in Central Province where it can be accessible to the people of Central.

21/07

There are plans to install new medium wave transmitters and so far, two have already been installed. These are used for the national radio service transmission to connect the radio service that is based here in Port Moresby.

The first transmitter was installed in Kimito in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province for the Highlands region and the second one was installed at Waigani for the Southern region. The third one is being installed and will be switched on next week in Kurakakaul in East New Britain Province for the Islands region, while the fourth one will be at Nine Mile in Bubia Lae, Morobe Province for the Momase region.

Once the four medium wave transmitters are installed fully and switched on, many areas within the country will be able to receive the national radio service signal for NBC. West New Britain Provincial Government has assisted with funding to NBC and a medium wave transmitter was installed for its provincial government and right now it is in use and we hope to encourage partnership for all our provincial stations with their respective provincial governments.

Partnerships with the stations and the respective provincial governments will ensure people receive the radio service wherever they are and we are also looking into re-introducing the shortwave transmitters into the provincial stations that were used around 1973 where these shortwave transmitters were installed and used nationwide. Through the shortwave (SW) transmitters most of the rural people in the remotest parts of this country were able to pick a radio signal.

Individual stations had their own call signs which made it is easier and the shortwave was very popular at that time. As I speak, NBC Daru through the assistance of the Australian Government, we are installing a mediumwave (MW) transmitter. The provincial radio station in Daru has been rehabilitated and refurbished. It is our wish to refurbish the studio complex for the NBC headquarter in Five (5) Mile Port Moresby. I have written to the Australian Government for funding assistance, I have a good hunch, they may come through and assist us.

The building housing the NBC studio here at Five (5) mile is old and needs rehabilitating as well as refurbishing to make it safe for occupation.

A to D, refers to the transition from analogue to digital form of broadcasting, I therefore wish to take this opportunity to thank the former Prime Minister Peter O'Neill whose government assisted with this transition through a loan from the Exim Bank.

I also want to thank the current Prime Minister, James Marape, as under his leadership the funding from Exim Bank came through and we were able to transition smoothly from analogue to digital. Transition for some provinces has been slow but we hope in time we will have all our stations doing away with analogue and going fully digital. This is part of the modernization for our radio stations.

One area where I think NBC is lacking is on training and recruitment. Training of broadcasters and other staff in NBC is not as good as it was before. Being a former staff of NBC, I note that we had the best training in radio during those times. We understood the functions of the radio.

22/07

So my thought as the Minister, we should bring back training programs and recruitment to change many of the long serving staff who are now ready to retire. Moreover, we've signed some MOU recently, for the journalism school of USP in Fiji to train our journalists. We are waiting for the school of journalism at our University of Papua New Guinea to come but they haven't so we must get up and work with the ones who are ready to partner with us in this.

There is a lot to be done; ideas and plans are in place but as we go along and as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary which is tomorrow, we will do better. I am pleased to see that NBC's future is looking bright. Under this government and the leadership of this government, I believe we can get NBC up and running and position it in its rightful place in this country to disseminate information and entertain our people and educate the ones in our rural areas.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like to thank all the governors who've signed the MOU with NBC to see its work in their provinces gain people's support. I know and I am sorry as many of our people are living in the rural areas. Like yesterday, the good Member James Nomane asked questions about the people in the rural areas, most of them are not accessing these service.

I would also like to thank the open members who have signed the MOU –

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I think you have taken much of the time on that so I will interrupt you. Thank you.

TFF – Commodity Component

Mr NOAH KOOL – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Education regarding the TFF Program, and I think this will be the second time I am asking this question. The material component of the TFF Program is not working for Chimbu.

I'd like to ask again, if he can release all the money back to Chimbu so that we can do a better job. Can you assure the education institutions in Chimbu today so that we can all be clear whether next year's TFF material component will be directed to Chimbu, so that we can use that money to effectively and efficiently deliver the quality services that my children in Chimbu need?

From the way things are going, looks like the money is being spent on the contractors and we have poor quality materials being delivered to schools and some schools are not receiving the

materials they need. That is why we have been complaining about this since my last encounter with the Minister.

So, I would like the Minister to assure the people of Chimbu on whether the TFF material component will be transferred to Chimbu for the 2024 programs. Thank you very much.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Minister, before you reply, let me take this time to clear some things. Honourable Ministers, when you are answering the questions please get to the point and if you decide to add on you can include it in your ministerial statements later to present to this House. In doing so, we will have more time for more members to ask questions.

Mr JIMMY UGURO – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, and thank you for the good question from the Governor of Chimbu regarding the commodity component.

23/07

The question from the Governor of Chimbu is regarding the commodity component if it is possible to transfer to Chimbu Provincial Government so that they can disburse those commodity components to their schools.

According to the law, we give contracts to the suppliers to supply those commodity components and that is captured in our National Government budget. The Cabinet has gone through this issue of commodity component supplies. Previously the supply was given to the main contractor to supply to the provinces but last year, and this year, we have given that contract to our local contractors. It's called local content and we have increased our sub-contractors to 32 Papua New Guinea contractors to deliver those.

I don't know whether Chimbu has received those materials, if you have received the materials at your schools then the program is okay. If you have not received those materials, I request the Governor to see me after this so we can fix that one out. Otherwise that contract is ongoing as we speak. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker

Sir JULIUS CHAN –I ask leave of the Chair to ask the Chair a question

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Leave is granted

Give Notice of Bills

Sir JULIUS CHAN – Mr Acting Speaker, this morning there were a lot of notices being given for a number of bills to be presented. I have quite a number of bills and I have asked the Speaker of the National Parliament as far back as May this year. I wrote to him and copied Clerk, for them to show me the best way to introduce the Private Members Bill, I wonder if you would like me to name these bills.

I have given a formal request to Honourable Job Pomat, the Speaker of the National Parliament, asking him to please assist me to give notice on the Floor of Parliament for the bills. Among all the bills I presented to him, I have already prepared explanatory notes for these bills but they have been left completely in the dark except for the Provincial Health Authority which is in the paper now. I don't know when it was notified to the Parliament but I would prefer to present it when I'm ready to do it. And since May, I have not received any clarification.

Mr Acting Speaker, I ask this because I want to make sure that Parliament preserve the rights of every member to present bills on laws that they think needs to be enacted, otherwise they are prevented the rights that the people mandated them to fulfill.

So Mr Acting Speaker, my Bills have not been given any notices and as far as I'm concerned, if they are not given any notices then it is not parliamentary property.

24/07

So, Mr Acting Speaker, can you help me to clarify this? I am very patient and I have been very patient. Actually, I have been out quite a bit, but otherwise, when are my bills going to be give notice that I intend to introduce them on the Floor of this Parliament and that's basically what it is. So, Mr Acting Speaker, can you help me on that?

Thank you.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Governor, your question to the Chair regarding clarification on the Bills is noted. I will direct the Clerk's Office to give you a response on the delay of the Bill that you have referred to.

Status Of Total Police Manpower

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker for giving me the opportunity to ask these series of questions. I wish to direct my questions to the Minister for Internal Security. Taking note of the comments made by the Prime Minister, I would also like the Prime Minister to take note.

Firstly, I thank the Minister for Internal Security for dispatching a team to Northern Province to attend to the matter in Kokoda; the burning down of a supermarket there most recently. This has assisted our policemen on the ground, of which we only have 30. The staff ceiling is 360 but we only have 30 policemen active in the province which brings us to the ratio of one policeman to 10,000 citizens.

The United Nations recommended one policeman to 400 citizens whilst the International Association of Police Chiefs recommends a ratio of one policeman to 250 citizens. According to statistics, for Papua New Guinea, we have one policeman to 1,538 citizens throughout the country. My questions are as follows;

(1) Sometime ago in this Parliament, there was an undertaking to increase the number of police from 6,000 to 10,000 by the year 2030, what is the status of this?

(2) Has the Police Department done an assessment of each province and their needs, and how to achieve the objective of increasing our police numbers from 6,000 to 10,000 by the year 2030?

(3) How many policemen do we actually have now on strength?

(4) What efforts are being undertaken to consider the option of transferring funds to provinces so that they can manage their own policing issues in their provinces.

Thank you.

Mr PETER TSIAMALILI – Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Firstly, before I answer the series of questions, on behalf of my family and the people of Bougainville, I want to convey my sincere condolence to the family of late Honourable Maso Karipe and my family up in Porgera.

At the same token, I want to welcome the newly elected Member for Laigap Open, Honourable Amos Josphe Akem who is sitting at my right.

Mr Acting Speaker, I want to also appreciate our good Prime Minister for providing an executive summary today on how we are addressing the law and order space. As he articulated,

police are one part of that ecosystem and we as a government are addressing it holistically so I appreciate some of the things he highlighted.

25/07

I want to announce to the people of Papua New Guinea that the Marape-Rosso Government has not just talked about increasing the numbers; we have actually started. And mid-year, this year, I have stated that we started recruitment and have recruited over 500 young men and women in our academy at the Centre of Excellence. Purely, because it's not just a police training college, it is an academy where they are also able to attain the credentials apart from being trained as policemen and women.

So, that in the future should their career take a different strand, they are able to fit into the executive level of either the government or the private sector which makes our young men and women that are going to come out of the academy to be in a better position in terms of their qualifications. So, that is something that I am proud of in the Marape-Rosso Government, we are able to provide that for our young men and women.

The aim to increase police personnel to 10,000 has already started. The capacity in Bomana can take up to 500. We will be opening up Gusap Training College and we also have highlighted that we will open up Juni in Hela, and also, we have a training Joint Force Academy in Lae. So, with these colleges opening that up means that we are going to turn over more young men and women into the force so are going to be able meet that goal of 10,000.

Mr Acting Speaker, if we have 500 turning over in Bomana, we are hoping that we can also capture the same amount in those four other sites where we are going to start implementing the recruitment and engagement of training. We are going to turn out around one-to-two thousand men and women adding up to the number of 10,000, which is indicated for recruitment.

Mr Acting Speaker, we have around 560 police officers that are out strength, they come on and go off line. Again, depending on disciplinary matters, but we have around 5,600. And so, if we look at the numbers that we are trying to get up to which is 10,000 in the next three to four years, we can hit that number easily with our recruitment and the strategy, and the opening up of the academies.

Secondly, with recruitment comes making sure that our infrastructures are in place. Mr Acting Speaker, across the country we are running a program where we have aligned with all the

provincial PPCs and provincial governments. We have highlighted to provinces to provide your plans. For the first time, we have a five-year infrastructure plan and all of you are aware of it.

We are standardizing our infrastructure right across the country so that our men and women in the force whilst serving are not rooted in that position but they are able to move from one province to another province and enjoy the same comfort of their homes or the infrastructures. And therefore, that infrastructure development plan is something that we are proud of and we've put forward and its now being implemented.

Mr Acting Speaker, we have a scheme where we've allowed for one is to one. So, I am announcing it to all the good leaders, just like we have started with our re-fleeting of our vehicles.

Mr Acting Speaker, we have 140 vehicles being procured, they are on line. We were doing one is to one with every single member. We have our DSIP and PSIP, a kina for a kina, you pay for a vehicle and we give your vehicle. Same goes with the infrastructures and as long as your PCC captures your plans. You propose whether it be a house or a barracks according to the plan of the PPC, we will go one to one.

26/07

In that way again, we all share the limited resources that we have but to achieve the purpose of making sure our Police Force is better functioning and more effective.

I hope I have answered the Governor's question.

Mr Garry Juffa – Point of Order! The Minister has answered all the questions but only one. Will the funds for provinces to manage their police affairs be considered per year? This is one question that all Governors want to answer.

Mr PETER TSIAMALILI – Yes, sorry, as the Prime Minister also mentioned we will be addressing this need and the recommendations by our good governors of having funds managed through a structured process back to our provinces in giving them more autonomy similar to what we have in Bougainville.

Mr James Nomane – Point of Order! Mr Acting Speaker, I just want us to extend the question time.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I won't allow you to use point of order, to ask for an extension of question time. When you have the Floor to ask a question then you can ask for an extension of time. Therefore, I won't entertain your Point of Order.

Honourable Members, I want to inform the House that the question time has lapsed.

(Laughter in the Chamber)

ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS

Company Registration Deadline -IPA

Mr RICHARD MARU (Yangoru-Saussia – Minister for International Trade and Investment) – I ask leave of the Parliament to respond to questions by the Governor of Hela.

Leave granted.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, before I provide answers to the questions, I need to provide some background information.

The IPA, last December, requested all companies in PNG to re-register over a period of 12 months, which ends today, the reason why they wanted all companies to re-register is simply because last year on the 20th of January 2022, this Parliament amended the *Companies Act*. In doing so they wanted companies to re-register because there are now new requirements for registration to cater for the protocols for money laundering and terrorism funding.

So, all companies were required to re-register so that additional information can be provided to the company's office.

They had the option of registering electronically online or manually through the regional offices throughout the country and that exercise went on for a period of 12 months. Now companies who are not re-registered by today will automatically be de-registered. Those were the concerns raised by the good Governor of Hela. He wanted to know what would happen to the companies who are de-registered today?

27/07

Those were the concerns raised by the good Governor of Hela. What happens to the companies who will be de-registered as of today if they're still not re-registered?

Mr Acting Speaker, I need to inform this Parliament that just because you are de-registered after today, it does not mean you cannot re-register. Companies can come back online and register after today or go to the regional offices and get assistance from them and register either online or manually.

The good Governor also asked how can IPA services be made available to all provinces. The response I got from IPA is that IPA already has MOAs with nine provincial governments to set up agencies using the commerce offices within the provinces to provide all the IPA services in relation to the registration of companies and lodgement of returns, both electronic and manual.

I would encourage all Governors who are listening in today, who would like to have IPA services in your provinces, you can contact the IPA management and organise for them to train your commerce division staff so they can offer IPA services within your provinces.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS

Teaching Colleges Registration Status

Mr DON POLYE (Kandep – Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and Sports) – I ask leave of Parliament to respond to questions raised by the Honourable Member for Daulo.

Leave granted.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I'd like to answer questions regarding the Daulo Four Square Teachers College, Gorobe Teachers College, Katag Teachers College, and Mesauka Teachers College that the Honourable Member for Daulo did ask with regards to their registration and their current status.

Before I answer, I also join the others in welcoming the Honourable Member for the new Laigap Electorate, Amos Akem for being elected through a very tough competitive process and we acknowledge you.

Mr Acting Speaker, the question was whether Daulo Four Square Teachers College was registered? Daulo Four Square Teachers College submitted their application for registration and underwent an audit conducted by the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology from 1st to 3rd November 2023. The Higher Education Board is currently evaluating their application and is expected to make a decision regarding their registration in the first quarter of 2024 which is next year.

Second question is, whether Goroka Teachers College is registered. Goroka Teachers College also applied for registration, however, there are outstanding requirements that need to be fulfilled. The Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology is working closely with the college to facilitate the completion of these requirements and support them in re-submitting their application. It is important to note that the passing of the late Principal and the subsequent changes in the principal's position have contributed to certain challenges in this process but DHERST is with the college at present to get it registered.

28/07

Mr Acting Speaker, the third question was related to the Katagu Teachers College in Eastern Highlands Province, whether it was registered.

Upon initial review, the Katagu Teachers College did not receive registration approval. The Board provided specific recommendations based on their audit findings and advised the institution to implement these recommendations. Once the institution has made the necessary changes, a post-audit review will be conducted to evaluate or to re-evaluate their eligibility for registration.

And, finally, Mr Acting Speaker, the Mesauka Teachers College, whether it was registered. The Mesauka Teachers College has not yet formally applied for registration. The DHERST has been working collaboratively with them to guide and assist them in the process of applying for initial registration.

These institutions are undergoing development and some of them are yet to apply so I ask that those that are running the institutions and their boards work with the quality framework of standards of registration and program accreditation that is established under DHERST.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

**SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON THE 2022 GENERAL ELECTIONS –
FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE 2022 GENERAL ELECTION**

Mr ALLAN BIRD (East Sepik) – Pursuant to statute, I present –

The Final Report Of The Special Parliamentary Committee On The 2022 General Election.

I ask leave of the Parliament to make a statement in connection with the report.

Leave granted.

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Before I make my speech, on behalf of the people of East Sepik, I would like to register on the *Hansard*, our deepest condolences for the passing of the Honourable Maso Karipe and I endorse all the comments made by the leaders who have spoken before me. We extend our deepest condolences to the people of Porgera-Paiela and his family in this instance.

I would also like to acknowledge the new Member of Lagaip and welcome him to the House. And in so doing, it was remiss of me not to welcome my own Member for Wewak to the House but I did so individually. And also the Member for North Bougainville, my good sister and may I say that it is so refreshing to have a loud voice from Bougainville finally on the Floor.

Honourable Members, on behalf of the Members of the Special Parliamentary Committee for 2022 General Elections, as the Chairman of the Committee, I have the honour to present to this House, the committee's Final Report into the inquiry and findings of the 2022 National General

Elections as well as the observations and findings from other previous National General Elections in our country.

The Special Parliamentary Committee for 2022 General Elections was established by this Parliament in its September Sitting last year after the country had gone through an extremely troublesome and problematic election experience during the just-concluded 2022 National General Election.

The unacceptable level of outcomes, that is the very poor outcomes of the 2022 National General Elections which some of us in the House experienced brought many serious issues to the surface; such as the credibility of key institutions involved, notably the PNG Electoral Commission's role.

I think we have seen that in the recent elections as well, in conducting elections and in turn affecting the credibility and legitimacy of the election of the Members of this Parliament; and the credibility and functionality of the country's system of governance.

29/07

These outcomes shook the nation to its core. It was a major reality check for the country. It left many questions unanswered, and it also painted a very negative picture and the perception of the elites of the nation, especially its political elites.

The political elite is a reference to both you and me, as well as to our senior bureaucrats in the government departments and institutions who are so critical and pivotal to the effective and efficient running of the public affairs of this country. I believe they must also constitute the political elites of this country as they are a necessary extension of the political structures, systems, and processes of our country.

Mr Acting Speaker, the net result of all the fiascos of the 2022 National General Election has been a significant loss of faith, confidence, and trust of the people in our election system and processes, as well as in the general governmental systems and processes, and also, I believe, in the political elites of this country too.

Such an outcome has serious consequences for the credibility and survival of our democracy if we indeed desire to continue a democracy, public governance, and leadership in Papua New Guinea, with very serious implications for the future as well. The survival and effectiveness of the nation-state of PNG and its social coherence, given our vast diversity of over 800 ethnic tribes and

languages, makes it a national imperative that we get our game right, or we may lose that social glue that has helped to bring this very diversified country together and keeps us together.

Thanks to the wisdom, foresight, enduring belief, and infinite hard work of our founding leaders. On behalf of the members of my committee, let me take this moment to recognise them, amongst them, our Late Grand Chief Sir Michael Thomas Somare, and would also like to thank them all for their effort in putting this country together.

The turbulent experiences of the 2022 National General Elections and also to a great extent other recent elections, notably the 2017 Elections, seriously raised doubts about our country's ability to manage its election process and wider administration and stand beside other nations in the region and the world, as a genuine functioning democracy.

Mr Acting Speaker, when this Parliament established this committee over 12 months ago to this day, the Parliament sent a very clear message; that it was not happy with the status quo and that it wanted to see change and reform in our electoral system to bring back the confidence and trust of our people.

The expression of this intent by Parliament was equally supported by the leadership of the Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape, his deputy, Honourable John Rosso, and the government of the day, for which my committee and I must recognise, and we do. It is also important for me to stress here that this report has the support of three entities. They are; Transparency International, Institute of National Affairs (INA), and National Research Institute (NRI) which are represented today in the Speaker's Gallery.

My committee is very optimistic that if we get the reforms of the electoral system right, it will be a change for the better and not the opposite. It will be a change in the right direction and not the wrong way.

It will also be about reconfiguring our future journey, where we can look back with some pride and contentment that we have done well, if not for our own generation, then at least we fulfil our duties and obligations to our children and to future generations.

30/07

Leaders of great nations in the world have always positioned the interests of their country's future above that of their own generation's interests. Let us look at those nations and learn from them as they are very successful countries today. Nations such as New Zealand, the USA,

Singapore and Australia. Earlier in their countries' journeys, their leaders with great foresight, took those courageous, intelligent and bold reform decisions to accept reforms and to roll out a number of reforms often against strong criticism and resistance from the establishment over a number of years, even decades, with patience and dedication, to mold the nations into what they are today; the envy of the world.

Mr Acting Speaker, before I proceed any further, please allow me time to recognize my committee members, whom I have worked closely with to perform the required duties and tasks of the Special Parliamentary Committee on General Elections 2022. They include my Deputy Chairman and our senior statesman, Honourable Sir Puka Temu, Member for Abau; Honourable Elias Kavapore, Member for Pomio; Honourable Robert Naguri, Member for Bogia; Honourable Jacob Maki, Member for Mul-Baiyer; Honourable Keith Iduhu, Member for Hiri-Koiari; Late Honourable Steven Pim, Member for Dei; Honourable Saki Soloma Member for Okapa; and Honourable Charlie Benjamin, Governor of Manus.

Unfortunately, the committee lost one of its members, the Late Honourable Steven Pim owing to illness. On this rather sad note, I convey my committee's sincere condolences to the immediate family members and also to the people of Dei Open, who he represented in the National Parliament and the late Honourable Pim's contribution to the committee's work is duly acknowledged.

I would also like to thank all the people who participated and contributed to the work of my committee. They include government officials, Civil Society Organizations, church representatives, media, and members of the general public. These groups and individuals have contributed to the work of this committee in one way or the other. Without their interest and participation, the committee would not have succeeded in producing this report.

In addition, I also, on behalf of my committee members, want to thank the members of the Technical Working Group. They comprised of the Committee Secretariat of the National Parliament and the three research-based think-tanks and institutions, namely, the National Research Institute, Transparency International PNG and the Institute of National Affairs. It is also worth noting that the latter three institutions mentioned here have been involved with the committee as independent technical advisors bringing a non-political perspective to the work of the committee. On this note, I acknowledge the invaluable contributions and efforts of the officers from these institutions that have worked closely with my committee.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank a group of eminent citizens of the country as well as the eminent overseas-based researchers and experts on PNG Elections and Politics, who volunteered to participate in a validation workshop and provided their views and counsel. They included Madam Winnie Kiap, Dr Thomas Webster, Mr Richard Kassman, Mr Ila Geno, Professor Philip Gibbs, Professor Nicole Haley, and Dr Tiago Opperman. These experts and eminent persons have scrutinized the Technical Working Groups work, which has formed the basis of this report, and I am honored to say that, each of the eminent person involved have expressed satisfaction and support, particularly, for the recommendations contained in this report. At this juncture, let me just add, I don't think a report has been so independently constructed before has been placed on the Floor, this would probably be the first.

Mr Acting Speaker, this report is presented with several objectives in mind; the first objective is to report back to this Parliament and to inform this Parliament on the work of the committee and its findings; the second objective is to urge this Parliament to deliberate on and consider the recommendations for immediate electoral reform work to commence without further delay and loss of reform time. Let me briefly recap on the terms of reference, the authority upon which my committee relied on and was also guided by, to do our work.

There were four specific TORs for the committee plus a fifth to cover cross-cutting matters. These are as follows:

The committee shall inquire into and report on the conduct of the 2022 National General Elections.

31/07

- The first was to look at powers, functions, and responsibilities of the Electoral Commission and related matters;
- The second was to look at process involved in the conduct of the General Elections with the focus on updating the Common Roll, campaigning, voting, counting, declarations, disputed returns process and related matters; we are also tasked to look into expenditures of electoral funds and related matters;
- The next one was to look at the security aspect of the elections as provided by the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, Papua New Guinea Defence Force, Papua New Guinea Correctional Service and related matters;

- And finally cross-cutting matters,

In addition to the above four TORs, the committee shall also inquire into and report on any election related matters where the committee considers appropriate.

In conducting its work, the committee shall have powers to send for persons, papers and records, and to meet from place to place to act.

Whilst on this, I just want to respond to some of the concerns raised by some of the members when we presented our preliminary report. One of them was to do with electronic voting and I would like to urge members of Parliament to look at recommendation 16 which sufficiently covers that concern. Also to look at recommendation 23. Now you will note that there are 70 recommendations and each of them is grouped below the terms of reference that was given to us by the Parliament for ease of reference.

But I want to respond to those two in particular. There are other recommendations in relation to post election and election appeals and penalties. I think you will find those towards the end. Every recommendation that is required to appropriately deal with elections and make it better in the future is contained in this report. It is fully exhaustive.

Finally, Acting Mr Speaker, let me also note that in the 48 years' history of our Parliament, the establishment of a parliamentary committee to specifically inquire into the conduct of the national elections is unprecedented. The election crisis of the 2022 National General Elections was the watershed moment for this country and hence the formation of this committee by this Parliament.

Many members of this Parliament, including myself and my committee members, have over many national general elections, either as sitting members of Parliament or as candidates, witnessed the many troubles and dramas of our elections, such as supposed election winners being declared in hotel rooms; winners being declared in incomplete counting's where the counting centre was being attacked by lawless groups and the remaining ballot boxes burnt off in bonfires.

In one instance, we have two supposed election winners turning up in this very Chamber for the same seat. And the list of serious anomalies that this country has been subjected to, over many elections, by the country's political elites, will be endless, but, in the interest of time, I shall not continue enumerating them all.

The committee members have worked hard over the last 12 months to meet our terms of reference and to make our findings. It's been a collective effort and the findings and recommendations, are also, the committee's collective agreed position.

In order to enable the general public to contribute to the inquiry, my committee conducted public hearings, regional consultations and also received written submissions from the government entities and the general public. I won't go through all of that.

32/07

Mr Acting Speaker, this is the final report, last session, we provided an interim report and the reason for that was to try and get an impact on the budget. As you can appreciate, I haven't had the time to go through a substantial part of the budget, it's a significant document but I'm hoping that we will find that there's been some allocation so that we can begin the work in earnest of fixing the electoral processes next year particularly starting with an update of the Electoral Roll.

The reform activities proposed by this committee are firstly both in the interim report and now in this final report and I believe after it goes through Parliament, it will also require an urgent and priority attention from the leadership. Again let me acknowledge the support of Prime Minister James Marape and the Honourable John Rosso, the Deputy Prime Minister

Mr Acting Speaker, I just want to caution the House, according to the experts we've spoken to, this Electoral Reform will not be an easy one, it's going to take us 10 to 15 years to arrive at a point where we can say that we are all happy with outcome of elections and the work of reform. We say this because we have looked at experiences in Africa, Eastern Europe, in the Caribbean and in the Americas, their electoral programs took an average of 15 years to bring about meaningful reform and change. So I just want to caution the leaders, let's not expect miracles tomorrow. What took many years to destroy will not be rebuilt overnight.

Drawing from those experiences, we have identified several core pillars which will underpin successful electoral reforms. The first one is of course, political will and I dare say we have that in this government, in our Prime Minister and I'm sure all members of Parliament agree that fixing elections is an important outcome that this Parliament must achieve or start to work towards.

The second one is of course, we need the finances to go along, to help us roll out this reform program. We need strong oversight and a supervisory mechanism, we need multi-faceted programs, several closely interrelated, different reform activities will have to run parallel and at

times with different timelines. We need strong management leadership at the electoral office, we need the technical capacity, we need time and as I've said it could take more than 10 years. We need to include the community service organizations into the total reform processes as the CSO's bring a non-political voice to the table. At this juncture, I mention them again, Transparency International needs to be involved, the INA needs to be involved, NRI needs to be involved. These are non-political voices.

Mr Acting Speaker, reforms if they come with foresight, innovative thinking and of course national interest at heart, properly planned and managed and implemented can bring greater results to our country, no matter how small it might be compared to others in the world

Fellow parliamentarians, the time, the moment is now, therefore my committee and I urge you all to capture this moment of destiny to make real change in our country.

This Parliament must be bold and courageous because this is going to be watershed moment. It's our moment as Sir Mekere said, 'date with destiny'. I hope we will join hands across the benches and from the different sides of this Chamber and rise to the challenge in the name of national interest.

I urge you all to embrace this committee's report because this not Allan Bird's report, this is not Sir Puka Temu's report, this is a report from the people of Papua New Guinea. This is not James Marape's report, this is not John Rosso's report, if I may also add.

This report must not collect dust; it has to be an active document that I hope will be overseen by a permanent parliamentary committee made up of members from both sides of the House.

33/07

These reforms are aimed at strengthening the governance structure and capabilities of the PNG Electoral Commission.

After a necessary performance and capacity diagnostic study;

- formalise and strengthen the role of Inter Departmental Election Committee (IDEC) as an election coordination mechanism;
- conduct an urgent study of illegal firearms and ammunition in the country so that its findings can inform the election security planning for NGE 2027 and
- Critically, the key recommendation for the establishment of a permanent parliamentary standing committee on elections, including its budgetary support in the 2024 National Budget so

that it will continue to provide critical political scrutiny on the electoral reform program envisaged in this report.

The proposed parliamentary committee can also provide scrutiny on the performance of the PNGEC and relevant election stakeholders. Indeed, acting for and on behalf of the Parliament, the proposed parliamentary standing committee on elections can become the principal driver for electoral reform and change.

That work of reforming our election system and administration must commence in earnest. The intolerable experiences of NGE 2022 and also NGE 2017 in particular, and the findings from this inquiry, clearly show that this country is in urgent need of an electoral reform. Otherwise, we shall slide down the slippery slope of acute poor governance in elections with its severely debilitating effects on the rest of the government's systems and processes and of course on the country as a whole.

Therefore, as Members of the legislature, the law makers, it is our job to provide that reform and also to provide that much needed leadership now so our country will never again wake up in the morning to relive the events of NGE 2022.

Mr Acting Speaker, in closing the presentation of this report, and as the Chairman and also on behalf of the very dedicated and hardworking members of my committee, I now table this Report of the Special Parliamentary Committee on General Elections 2022 for this honourable House's consideration, deliberation, acceptance and endorsement.

Thank you.

Motion (by Mr Rainbo Paita) agreed to –

That Parliament take note of the paper and debate be adjourned to a subsequent sitting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by Mr Rainbo Paita) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

Parliament adjourned at 1.50 p.m.