

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 20 April 2021

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD

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

Corrections should be authorised by signature and contain the name, office and telephone number of the person transmitting/making corrections.

Amendments cannot be accepted over the phone.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'HARRY MOMOS', written in a cursive style.

HARRY MOMOS

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FIRST DAY

Tuesday 20 April 2021

The Parliament met at 2 p.m., according to the terms of Resolution of 11 March 2021.

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

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

Sitting suspended.

The Speaker (**Mr Job Pomat**) took the Chair at 2.55 p.m., and invited the Member for Lufa, **Honourable Moriape Kavori**, to say Prayers:

‘Powerful God creator, good afternoon. Yia 2021, festpla sesen mipela i kam openim wantaim prayer. Openim window bilong Heven, cast outim blessings i kam daun long dispela avinun long Paliamen Haus. Na olgeta members bilong Paliamen, umi mas gat gutpela tintin, gutpla wisdom na gutpela spirit long lukautim na menegim pipol bilong yu long liklik hap taim igo inap Jisas i kam. Mi pray na putim Pime Minister na olgeta Ministers long Paliamen wantaim olgeta members igo long han bilong yu, wantaim Opposition Leader na olgeta members tu mi pray na putim igo long han bilong yu. God bilong mipela long Heven, yu forgivim olgeta sin mipela igat. Larim nem bilong mipela igo insait long buk of laif. Long dispel avinun, yu stap wantaim mipela long dispela hour long openim dispela meeting igo inap long dispela yia 2021, long nem bilong Jisas mi pray, Amen.’

ELECTION PETITION AND DECLARATION OF NATIONAL COURT

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I present a copy of the National Court Order which sat as a Court of Disputed Returns (EP No. 73 of 2017) dated 15 April 2021 in the matter between Mr Don Pomb Poly and Mr Luke Alfred Manase in which the Court ordered that —

(a) All relief sought in the First Respondent's notice of motion filed on 1 April 2021 is refused.

(b) It is declared that the result of the recount of votes for the 2017 Kandep Open electorate, presented to this Court pursuant to the Order of the Supreme Court of 21 December 2020 in SCREV (EP) 11 and 12 of 2019, through the affidavit of the Returning Officer, Reverend Tom Sine, filed 7 April 2021, showing Don Pomb Polye as the winning candidate with 22,237 votes and Luke Alfred Manase as runner-up with 21 033 votes, is accepted by the Court.

(c) The following declarations shall take effect at 3:00 p.m. on 19 April 2021:

(i) it is declared that the First Respondent, who was returned as elected at the 2017 Kandep Open election, was not duly elected; and

(ii) it is declared that the Petitioner, who was not returned as elected, is the duly elected Member for Kandep Open following the 2017 Election.

(d) The Order of 7 April 2021 requiring Reverend Tom Sine to remain in the National Capital District is discharged.

(e) The Respondents shall pay the Petitioner's costs of that part of the petition pertaining to the presentation of the recount, on a party-party basis, which shall, if not agreed, be taxed.

(f) The Registrar of the National Court shall in accordance with *Section 221* of the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections* promptly forward a copy of this Order to the Clerk of the National Parliament.

ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBER

Sergeant-At-Arms – Mr Speaker, the new Member.

Mr SPEAKER – Admit him.

02/01

DECLARATION OF OFFICE AND OF LOYALTY

Mr Don Pomb Polye made his declaration of Office and of Loyalty.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I congratulate you for winning the Kandep Open seat through the Court. The Court has ordered you as the new Member after the successful recount so congratulations for that. Thank you.

**TABLING OF RETURNED WRITS –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I lay on the Table the Return of the Writ which is His Excellency the Governor General issued on 3rd December 2020 for a by-election of a Member to serve the Bougainville Provincial electorate following the resignation of Mr Joe Lera as Member of Parliament representing the people of Bougainville in the provincial seat and that by the endorsement on the Writ it was certified that Mr Peter Tsamalili Junior was duly elected as the Member for Bougainville Provincial electorate.

Honourable Members, I have received Return to the Writ and administered the declaration of loyalty and declaration of office on Wednesday 24 February 2021 at the State Function Room.

I welcome the new member.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I will give five minutes to the Honourable Member for Kandep Open to make his remarks.

03/01

Mr DON POLYE (Kandep) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me express to you my profound gratitude for scheduling my swearing-in ceremony on this day when the House sits and also giving me the time to make a few remarks, thank you.

Mr Speaker, I am happy and cheerful that the Court of Disputed Returns or the National and the Supreme Court have made a declaration in the seat of Kandep that I am the duly elected MP based on free and fair election by the people. I am so thankful for that.

That also signifies a very important fact that a wrong has been corrected; a wrong in the electoral process, abuse of the process, rigging of the election, declaring a Member on the Floor of Parliament to represent the people of Kandep not on genuine votes as expressed by the people. But I am happy that a wrong has been corrected.

But, Mr Speaker, not just that. That also means today signifies the spirit of not giving up. It's about not giving up on a stand for the people who we represent. In this case the people of Kandep, Enga and PNG from where my constituency lie.

It is not about breaking down and standing on what is right. Mr Speaker, it is about a drive to making sure the rule of law in the country is always complied with by everyone. Even those in the constitutional offices, the Members of Parliament, the security forces and in various other sectors of the Public Service and in the country.

It is about transparent leadership and good governance. It is about need for all of us and this nation to not to give up on pursuing those values that are correct, that are right, the little things that matter most.

Mr Speaker, the declaration made by the court and, Mr Speaker, you swearing me in as the duly elected Member for Kandep signifies those values.

Let me also say that I am a person that believes in what is right for the people. That should not be compromised; not giving up or giving in to what is good for the people.

This House can stand up tall and proud to delivering a transformation of good for the people. I stand up for those values we cannot compromise wrong to become norm in the country. We cannot compromise the breach of laws to make it look good. We cannot set bad examples that our children can see as a norm for the future. I see that we stand up to provide that leadership that is transparent and that is good for all.

Mr Speaker, let me conclude because I got two minutes on the board. I'd like to also express my forgiveness to Mr Alfred Manase, People National Congress party, and those rigging the election in Kandep. I forgive you all. I will not name everybody but will forgive them.

Mr Speaker, I too would like to confess if something that I did was not good to other brothers. I confess my sin that they too can forgive me.

Mr Speaker, you know this country will only be saved by us working together. In Kandep I want to work together with Alfred Manase. The same thing in all the electorates of Papua New Guinea. In this House the Government and Opposition should work together.

04/01

We have 12 months before the next national elections and what can save our country is us working together as a country and addressing the issues that are we are faced with.

Mr Speaker, the four years of me staying out of Parliament has been a blessing in disguise for me. It has taught me valuable experiences and precious lessons. I have seen from the outside

that our systems of Government have collapsed and it requires the Prime Minister, the Opposition Leader and all of us to work together to find a solution to save this country and transform it before the next elections.

Mr Speaker, let me conclude in saying that the National Electoral Commission is no in a proper state to run the national elections, I say this from experience. We the sitting Members will have to come into Parliament through rigged elections because the system is not working. We will not want to do so because I have suffered from the rigged elections that occurred in Kandep.

Mr Speaker, this House has greater responsibilities than personal animosity or political rivalry. So let us work together because in the last four years I have seen that serving the country depends on all of us working together in unity to bring some meaningful transformation in Papua New Guinea.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

STATEMENT BY GOVERNOR-ELECT FOR BOUGAINVILLE PROVINCIAL ELECTORATE

Mr PETER TSIAMALILI (Bougainville) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me and the people of Bougainville the opportunity to express our voice in Parliament during this very special and challenging time. I say challenging as we have returned to this House after burying our Late Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare just a month ago, and I am sure the nation is still silently grieving for him and we will still grieve for him for as long as this Parliament exists. It is also a challenging time as the Nation as a whole is facing the imminent threat of the COVID-19 as we slowly and reluctantly get into the “Niupla Pasin”. It is also a time where we face the political future of Bougainville during the ractification process as shown by the referendum where 90 per cent of Bougainvilleans voted for Independence.

Apart from the challenges faced by this Parliament to implement the Bougainville Peace Agreement we just can’t afford to forget the internationally politicized but sadly non-nationally publicized climate change refugees on Bougainville of which I will elaborate on further on in my speech.

Today, I am privileged and proud for my people of Bougainville to have voted me as their Regional Member. For me as the New Regional MP, it’s the aspiration of the young men and women from Bougainville as majority of my voters were in the ages of 17-25 years. This

is a sign of a new beginning elected as a young leader and it marks a new political landscape for Bougainville. It prompted the changing of the guard from the old generation to the new, reflecting from the days of Sir John Momis, Sir Paul Lapun, Late Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare and of course Sir Julius Chan just to name a few. They all did their very best for Bougainville and there are all an identity of the South Pacific Region

Today, we are the new and the young Bougainvillean Leaders like the Bougainville President, Mr Ismael Toroama, of which I also represent together with young new leaders of Papua New Guinea like our vibrant Prime Minister, Mr James Marape, the East Sepik Governor, Mr Allan Bird, the Northern Governor, Mr Garry Juffa, the Goilala MP, Mr William Samb, Governor Goroka Peter Numu, Honourable Rainbo Paita, and others who will continue the old guards legacy and the new vision for Bougainville and PNG as a whole.

05/01

We will be the first on the Floor of Parliament in the new generation taking this responsibility to give hope for our future in the midst of Covid-19 and in addition encourage and inspire young men and women from Bougainville and PNG to step up and take responsibility. A term of a parliamentary leader is five years and coming in at the back end will be a big challenge. There will be a lot of expectations in Bougainville but I am focused in representing my people for the next 12 months.

I am pleased to announce to the people of PNG and Bougainville and all our development partners that for the first time I have the endorsement on the ground to represent them on the Floor of Parliament. I will ensure that I continue to embrace the Prime Minister's aspiration to make PNG a strong economically independent nation and at the same time embracing the aspirations of my people on Bougainville. I will play the role over the conduit between the National Government and the ABG. I play a role where you could almost see me as an ambassador or as a representative of the entire Autonomous Region of Bougainville on this Floor of Parliament.

My priorities in aligning all Bougainville MP's in the ABG over the next couple of months, I will be concentrating to get data from around AROB that my plan will be more responsible. I have established a strong relationship with the ABG President, Hon Ismael Toroama, and I would echo the same sentiments and aspirations of the ABG. Between the two of us, we have established a quarter relationship so that what the national leaders are doing can be a lot more aligned to what the ABG wishes to achieve on the ground. Because the ABG are on the ground we will ensure that there is collaboration between the two governments. And a

part of my responsibilities is also to solicitate the open members both North, Central and South Bougainville, so they will align with me on same plan in terms of service delivery and development.

I look forward to another twelve months and 2022 is around the corner and if I do it right now, I am sure I will give the confidence back to my people and PNG and I want to be seen as someone who wants to break down the mis-trust and suspicion between the National Government and ABG in terms of misunderstanding of transferal powers and the allocation of funds from Port Moresby to Bougainville. And I am sure there are outstanding issues raised during the Annual Supervisory Body Meetings. I strongly believe in pushing for Political Independence on Bougainvilleans as soon as possible and that is what Bougainvilleans have wanted but I too believe what the Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape, wants for Bougainvilleans and that is before political independence. Therefore, Autonomous Region of Bougainville must be economically independent first. So, I will work closely with the National Government and the ABG to ensure that the Prime Minister's commitment of the K100 million per year from 2022 to 2030 is transferred and if it means that funds should be acquired under Public Finance Management Act so that the next batch of funds will be released then so be it. I also look forward to the government shares and the Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL) to be transferred to the Bougainville Mineral Limited (BML) as Prime Minister, Hon James Marape, had said during the recent ASB meeting that the government would give all its shares to BML, and BML would manage shares on behalf of ABG and Panguna Landowners.

The Government owns 36.4 per cent of the BCL shares since 1975. These functions have to be transferred as soon as possible to enable Bougainville to have economic independence. These are some of the transferring of all the powers to ABG as stipulated in the Bougainville Peace Agreement. These are functions that we are lacking to build our economy since getting the Autonomous status in 2005. When we have this power, it will enable us to generate our economy.

06/01

And also the formula for tax collection, which right now is 30 percent to remain in Bougainville and 70 percent for Internal Revenue Commission, which is the National Government share.

As per the JSB resolution, we would like the formula to be reversed for 70 per cent to remain in Bougainville and 30 per cent to IRC, which I believe is been resolved in the recent JSB meeting also.

The Prime Minister, James Marape, mentioned that ABG will receive K20 million of the K200 million allocated for small to medium enterprise (SME), and I must thank the NDB team for allowing that to happen already. But I am aware that the National Government has an outstanding of K621 million owed to ABG for restoration grant and that amount has been outstanding for the last 18 to 19 years. And the JSB has affirmed that K621 million has been confirmed by an independent United Nations assessment which is the actual amount owed by the National Government to Bougainville as far as 2001 Peace Agreement is concerned.

And yes, Bougainville needs to grow its economy to be ready to manage its full political future. Right now, there is a huge gap between revenues raised locally and the total expenditure of ABG.

For example, in 2020, the total ABG budget was about K440 million, of which only K47 million was raised within AROB or the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, which means the rest of the amount was funded through the National Budget. But we believe that the total cost of the public service provided to AROB is much larger than K393 million.

Another challenge that we also face is the climate change refugees on Bougainville, our very own climate change refugees from the Atoll District of Carterets, Mortlock, Nissan, Tasman and Seit have totally neglected by this Parliament in Waigani and also Bougainville House of Representatives in Kubu. Not only the Atoll Districts but other low-lying Islands in Bougainville like Petats, Pororan, Saposa, Matsungan, we turn to focus more on BPA but we never focus on our very own climate change refugees.

I am glad that we now can address climate change refugees in the countries outline in the PNG Sustainable Development Goal 13 road map report by empowering response to challenges and opportunities posted by climate change 13 actions by 2030. And if that report be transferred on the ground to address climate change refugees on Bougainville, then that will be appreciated by the people of this affected Islands in the Atolls of Bougainville. Generrally, the climate change refugees on Bougainville were forgotten by both the National Government and ABG, and they had to fend for themselves. At this juncture we would like to thank the local non-government organisation, Tulele/Persiha, for taking the lead to resettle the affected Carterets Islanders at Wororu village in Tinputz and also thank the villagers in assisting the Catholic Church in the relocation exercise since 2009.

I also thank the leaders in Mortlock, Nissan, Seit and Tasman by using their initiative to negotiate with the people of the mainland to resettle their affected Islanders. I am now calling on both the National Government and the ABG that if we can really address the climate change refugees on Bougainville in the next 12 months before the next general elections, then that will be better.

I am aware that the Asian Development Bank has provided total of K98 million which is equivalent to K345 million as of July 2020, to address climate change impact globally, and apart from the ADB funds, I am sure there are other sources of international funding like UNDP purposely to address the effects of climate change.

So my good Prime Minister and Minister for Environment and Conservation, Honourable Wera Mori, if you both can help access some of these funds to the Climate and Development Authority to address the climate change then it will be very much appreciated by my people and those that have been neglected in the Atolls of Bougainville.

Fellow Papua New Guineans and Bougainvilleans, to conclude, I want to say that I am a symbolic of trust between Bougainvilleans and Papua New Guineans.

07/01

I want us to work together to draw down powers from Waigani to Bougainville both political and economic powers to successfully implement the BPA and the climate change refugees. I want both the National Government and the ABG to admit the truth on who is causing the blockade. Is it the ABG or the National Government?

We have to resolve this mistrust and only then the autonomous region of Bougainville and PNG can face this together into the future generation.

On behalf of my family and the people of Bougainville, I say thank you, Mr Speaker and all Members of Parliament in expressing my sincere gratitude in representing my people of Bougainville in Parliament.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS –
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Mr SPEAKER - Honourable Members, I have to inform Parliament that the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings met today and resolved that:

- (a) The *National Broadcasting Cooperation* (NBC) will be allowed to broadcast live on radio Question time as part of its community obligation,
- (b) The National Television Service (*Kundu 2*), *EMTV* and *TVWAN* will be allowed to telecast live Question time for news purposes for the duration of this meeting.

CERTIFICATION OF ACTS AND LAW

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, I have to inform the Parliament that the Acting Speaker in accordance with *Section 110* of the *Constitution* certified 15 Acts and a law made by the National Parliament.

The list is as follows:

- (1) *Appropriation (General Public Services Expenditure 2021) Act 2020,*
- (2) *Appropriation (Judiciary Services 2021) Act 2020,*
- (3) *Appropriation (National Parliament 2021) Act 2020,*
- (4) *Customs (2021 Budget)(Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (5) *Education (Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (6) *Excise Tariff (2021 Budget)(Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (7) *Higher and Technical Education Reform Act 2020,*
- (8) *Higher Education (General Provisions)(Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (9) *Income Tax (2021 Budget)(Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (10) *National Training Council (Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (11) *Papua New Guinea University of Natural Resources and Environment (Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (12) *Papua New Guinea University of Technology (Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (13) *Road (Management and Fund) Act 2020,*
- (14) *University of Goroka (Amendment) Act 2020,*
- (15) *University of Goroka (Amendment) Act 2020, and*

**CONDOLENCE MOTION – LATE RIGHT HONOURABLE
SIR MEKERE MORAUTA, Kt, KCMG, MP**

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Prime Minister) – Mr Speaker, I move that this Parliament express its deep regret at the death on 19 December 2020 of the former Prime Minister of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, the right Honourable Sir Mekere Morauta Kt KCMG MP, the Member for Moresby North-West Open Electorate and places on record its appreciation for his meritorious public service.

Mr Speaker, his death took all of us by surprise. Since his passing, burial service and his burial the death of our Great Grand Chief the late Sir Michael Thomas Somare also took place. We accorded the Great Grand Chief a state funeral and a parliamentary call that gave honour and respect. Today is the first opportunity for Parliament to give recognition and make commentaries, especially by myself representing the government side in light of circumstances in which we convened in Parliament, and hopefully if the Opposition Leader was present he would have spoken in respect to Sir Mekere Morauta.

Mr Speaker, before the opposition speak, I would like to place on record. Firstly, I would like to congratulate the two new Members who have just joined us. I congratulate the Member for Kandep and also the Regional Member for Bougainville and their speeches.

08/01

On the occasion of Sir Mekere Morauta's passing the nation mourned because he served as our country's 6th Prime Minister. Before politics he was a very distinguished public servant who served in the public service and he stands as a giant amongst the giants of our country. Many of us in this Parliament including myself stayed close to his shadows.

Mr Speaker, though he was Prime Minister for only three short years, today, the nation stands to benefit from some of the reforms he established during his tenure as Prime Minister in those three short years from 1999 into 2002.

Mr Speaker, I stand here not just as Prime Minister representing the entire country but I stand here on behalf of my wife and children, on behalf of Tari-Pori people and also the whole country to pay my respects in this first instance to the late Sir Mekere Morauta for the work and his contributions to this country and may his memory guide us on into the future for

us as present leaders also to contribute lasting legacies for our country. Monumental amongst those were the reforms he established for the financial institutions and the reform in our State-owned Enterprises and today we stand in benefit of those reforms he put in place.

Mr Speaker, let me on this note place my great respect to Sir Mekere along with my sympathy to the family who continue to mourn the leader of our great nation.

Mr PETER O'NEILL (Ialibu-Pangia) – Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Opposition Leader the Honourable Belden Namah who is not present with us this afternoon, we the Members on this part of the House also express our sincere gratitude to the Late Sir Mekere Morauta, our former Prime Minister, first Departmental Secretary for Finance and one of the great architects of our economy. His passing is a great loss to our nation and we express our sincere condolence to the family, the people of Moresby-North West, people of Gulf and we join them in sharing their loss of this great man in our country.

We are certainly going to miss his contributions to this House and as the Prime Minister has stated he has contributed immensely to the structuring of our financial systems in our country and great respect must be expressed by this Parliament and our country to the Late Sir Mekere for those contributions and many others to the development of our country.

Mr Speaker, he was one of the first early graduates from University of Papua New Guinea and became one of the first to join the public service and appointed as the first departmental head in the country to join Sir Rabbie Namaliu, Sir Charles Lepani, Sir Anthony Siaguru and many others in shaping what is our public service structure today so that we can continue to develop our nation from that.

With that I also extend our congratulations to the Honourable Member for Kandep and welcome him back into Parliament and of course elections are elections and let us leave it at that. We also express our sincere thank you to Alfred Manase for his leadership and his contributions not only to this Parliament but the people of Kandep. I am very pleased to hear from the new Member that they will work together over the next 12 months to ensure that our people of Kandep continue to receive services that they rightfully deserve.

09/01

Also on the same token, let me express our congratulations to the young Member for Bougainville Regional and extend a warm welcome to this honourable Parliament, and again you will continue to serve the people of Bougainville just like many other distinguished leaders

before you who have held the same position that you now hold. Their contribution to our nation's development is profound and I am certain that you will fill in those shoes very well.

Once again, congratulations.

Motion – That the condolence motion be noted – agreed to.

Mr SPEAKER – As a mark of respect to the memory of the Late honourable gentleman, I invite all honourable Members to rise their places.

(As a mark of respect to the memory of the later gentleman, all honourable Members stood in their places)

QUESTIONS

Covid-19 Costs – Effect on Economy

Mr KOBBY BOMOREO – Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I will take the cue also to welcome the Member for Kandep before I go to my question.

And also take this time to thank the outgoing Member through court Mr Alfred Manase for his input and contribution in these four years.

With that, I'd like to congratulate the Member for Bougainville. I'd like to thank you for joining the team here.

Mr Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the Minister for Treasury. We are aware that with Covid-19, inflation has hit the economy very hard.

Can the Minister tell the House if there are any new borrowing costs now that Covid-19 that is affecting us?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr IAN LING-STUCKEY – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the good Member for his very simple but relevant question.

I understand the question is whether the new borrowing costs for Covid-19 is affecting or even killing the government.

The short answer to that question, Mr Speaker, is no.

10/01

Mr Speaker, the additional borrowing cost, boring cost has been built in to a medium term, fiscal framework that is being set up in our responsible and responsive 2021 budget.

Covid-19 has created a massive K6.8 billion hit on our revenues over the next four years. In addition, it has added to our expenditures by a further K1.8 billion through three years of Covid-19 packages of K600 million each.

This hit on our budget has also been incorporated into our medium term fiscal framework. Mr Speaker, we have plan and the plan is in place. It is a good plan endorsed by the Marape Government and this Parliament. This framework sees rapid declines in the size of our national deficit.

Despite Covid-19, from 9 percent of GDP when the global pandemic hit to 7.3 per cent this year down to a very low 2.1 percent by 2024. This framework sees a turnaround in our debt to GDP ratio from 51.5 percent this year to 50.5 percent in 2025 and hopefully declining thereafter.

This framework sees interest costs as a share of our total expenditure staying essentially constant at 12 to 13 percent for the decline from 2023 onwards. We are not going to have a debt increase by 443 percent for the four falls so from 8 billion to 37 billion as occurred under the former Government of Peter O'Neill.

We are not going to see domestic interest rate costs increase by nearly 400 percent from 450 million in 2012 to a massive gigantic 1648 million by 2019. And we are not going to see foreign interest payments increase by nearly 1000 percent from 44 million in 2012 to 434 million by 2019. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr ALLAN BIRD – Thank you Mr Speaker and may I also extend on behalf of the people of East Sepik our sincere condolences to the late Right Honourable Sir Mekere Morauta, his family, his tribe and people. Let me also join in congratulating the Member for Kandep and let me also place on record to recognise the former Member, Alfred Manaseh for his significant role in securing the upgrade of Boram Airport.

Mr Speaker, I would like to place on record the gratitude of the people of East Sepik for the work that he did during his time as Civil Aviation Minister. I also extend our congratulations to the new Member Bougainville Regional. Mr Speaker, my questions without notice are directed to the works Minister and this is in relation to Sepik Highway.

congratulations to the new Member Bougainville Regional. Mr Speaker, my questions without notice are directed to the works Minister and this is in relation to Sepik Highway.

A contract was awarded under the former Government to a contractor by the name of HBS and Mr Speaker, that contract has now failed the Sepik Highway is now in a worse state than prior to the awarding of the contract.

11/01

It is my understanding, Mr Speaker that this contractor had never undertaken road works previously. They were an equipment hire company based in Lae; hiring equipment to the recently completed PNG LNG Project and somehow, they managed to secure a significant contract in my province.

Mr Speaker, my questions to the good Minister in light of this massive failure and in fact, they packed up and left the province without letting anyone know. They just absconded. My people are very upset and I want to ask the good Minister;

(1) How was this tender awarded and on what basis? How could a contractor with no previous work experience be given a significant contract like this?

(2) Who supervises the work? The work is such poor quality. While they were working on it, they would complete a section and that section would collapse within a couple of weeks.

(3) When can my people expect this incompetent work by this particular contractor be rectified and how soon will be a new contract issued to fix the mess of HPF?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr MICHAEL NALI – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Governor of East Sepik for the important questions he raised.

Mr Speaker, since 2017 to date, I am not aware of this contract because maybe it was awarded before my time as Minister. So, I will need to get back to the Department to get more information then will give a better response to the Governor.

How was that awarded? Normally the Department puts up tenders and bidders bid. Anything below K10 million is awarded by the Tenders Supply and Tenders Board. Anything above K10 million is then recommended to NEC, where the Minister for Works takes the submission to NEC for approval and in my time as Minister, I have not yet submitted a submission to NEC for them to award a contract.

Who supervises the work? Mr Speaker, depends on the size of the contract. If it is in the capability of the Department of Works, our Works engineers supervises the contracts. But, if

the capacity is too big then as part of the contract we engage consultants to manage the contract by working with the Department.

When can this be rectified? Mr Speaker, until I find out the status of this particular contract by getting back to my department to gather information, so that we can take appropriate actions to rectify this contract.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Works – Fix Magi Highway

Sir PUKA TEMU – Thank you, Mr Speaker. Once again I want to join those who have formally congratulated the Honourable Don Polye for coming back to Parliament. Congratulations and welcome to the Floor of this Parliament.

12/01

I also congratulate Honourable Peter Jr Tsamalili for winning the Bougainville Regional seat and the vision that you have accrued, all the best to you in these challenging years. We have a short period of time but I am sure that all of us will back you up in your pursuit on the vision that you have articulated on the Floor of this Honourable House.

Also, on behalf of the people of Abau, I follow the Prime Minister and Honourable former Prime Minister Peter O'Neill for the congratulatory messages to a great leader, the late Honourable Sir Mekere Morauta. Having had a strong background in public service and becoming a politician and in a very short period of time introduced big reforms that Parliament in my experience over the full term rarely achieved, so congratulations and the nation will miss him. But, the by-election is on and we pray the constituency in the Port Moresby North West will also choose the leader they recognize as a good leader to this Honourable House.

Mr Speaker, my question goes to the Minister for Works and Implementation. Having being a minister for most of my terms in Parliament, I rarely ask the question on my favorite road which is the Magi Highway. I usually ask the Cabinet Minister for Works over the years and never make a noise on the Floor of Parliament so my people accused me of not asking questions on Magi Highway and I said ministers never ask questions on the Floor of Parliament but we lobby in Cabinet. Therefore, this is my opportunity to ask the very hard-working Minister Michael Nali on Magi Highway.

My dear Minister, through the Speaker, I have listened on the Floor of Parliament and in my tenureship in Cabinet of how the minister has travelled the country visiting the national roads. Like him, we believe that roads are very important for nation building. But, Mr Works

Minister, if I can say, while you have traversed the country and visited many of the national roads, my observation is you have not yet visited Magi Highway. It is so close to you and the people of Rigo and Abau are your best friends and your own people but you have never visited Magi Highway. If that is true, Mr Speaker, may I ask the Honourable Minister if he can join me on a time soon after the Sitting of Parliament to take a ride on Magi Highway to actually see for himself the status of his road, not Abau road or Rigo road, it's a national road.

So the Minister owes it to the people of Rigo and Abau to visit his infrastructure which some of us have been able to hold on to with our small DSIP component which we know is not enough. But I can say, Honourable Minister, when you visit Magi Highway you will be disappointed at the actual status of the highway. So, please, may I invite you to come with me to ride from 6 mile all the way to Domai in Cloudy Bay so that you will actually feel the hardship that the people of Abau are facing particularly because the most deteriorated part of Magi Highway is on the Abau side and not on the Rigo side. So, the hardships that we have felt, I know minister, you will also feel it when you travel there and once you notice it, come and help us. So may I ask you to come for a ride?

Mr Speaker, my final question is, if the minister can inform the nation and more particularly the people of Central on the East side, if he has plans to address this deteriorating infrastructure called Magi Highway?

12/01

Once again, I want to congratulate and welcome Honourable Don Pomb Polye for coming back to the Parliament House.

I also congratulate Honourable Peter Jr Tsamalili for winning the Bougainville Regional seat and the vision that you have accrued, all the best to you in these challenging years. We have a short period of time but I am sure that all of us will back you up in your pursuit on the vision that you have articulated on the Floor of this Honourable House.

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My dear Minister, through the Speaker, I have listened on the Floor of Parliament and in my tenureship in Cabinet of how the minister has travelled the country visiting the national roads. Like him, we believe that roads are very important for nation building. But, Mr Works Minister, if I can say, while you have traversed the country and visited many of the national roads, my observation is you have not yet visited Magi Highway. It is so close to you and the people of Rigo and Abau are your best friends and your own people but you have never visited Magi Highway. If that is true, Mr Speaker, may I ask the Honourable Minister if he can join me on a time soon after the Sitting of Parliament to take a ride on Magi Highway to actually see for himself the status of his road, not Abau road or Rigo road, it's a national road.

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Mr Speaker, my final question is, if the minister can inform the nation and more particularly the people of Central on the East side, if he has plans to address this deteriorating infrastructure called Magi Highway?

13/01

Can you inform the Parliament and assure us that the government does have plans and the actions are being taken? Thank you very much.

Mr MICHAEL NALI – Thank you Mr Speaker, I thank my good brother member and senior Sir Puka Temu for raising this very important question regarding Magi highway.

Mr Speaker, Magi highway is not a district or a trunk road, it's part of the National Highway. Like in Central Province we have Hiritano and Magi highway.

I want to inform the Honourable Member that I drive through Magi highway upon the invitation of the Member for Rigo and Central Governor but the fact is I didn't drive to Abau.

But even before we drive to Abau from Port Moresby city, 6 mile down to Central City the road condition is good. The road condition from Central City to Rigo and Abau is deteriorating. Last week I drove to Hula to visit some of my friends and I have noticed some maintenance have been carried out from Central City to Gabagaba junction. That's for drainage and cutting the grass.

Last year's budget allocation was K10m but the Department of Works did not receive this funding. The system and the process of government have changed over the years. When all the trust accounts were closed by the Department of Finance, the Department of Works does not have the financial powers for the funding allocation. We do cater for technical side because we have the civil engineers and department staffs.

So, on the part of the Department of Works, we put this particular road on tender last year and today as I speak it is with the Tender Evaluation Committee and they are delaying it. Meaning that responsibilities have shifted and so it is not only not the road just leading down to Magi Highway.

The Magi highway is also part of this Marape/Basil government. It's listed as one of those roads that this government would want to take on board as part of the Connect PNG program.

But to cut the story short I want to say that this particular road got an allocation of K10m last year and it is still on our program. It has been tendered but contract has not been awarded and you would know why the contract has not been awarded. It is really out of my hand because the procurement side is not with Department of Works. The APC or Authority to Free Commit is not with Department of Works.

14/01

The Tender Evaluation Process is not with the Department of Works and it is like the fourth person down the line.

So, the systems of government must complete its own processes before it comes to me and then I can be held responsible for not delivering service. I would love to maintain these roads but on an annual basis, the Department of Works requires K1.5 billion a year to maintain all these roads. We have a good team and we can execute these tasks but we don't receive that kind of money in our annual budgets.

I want to thank the former Prime Minister, Honourable Peter O'Neill, for allocating K300 million when he was in government to pay the outstanding monies due to contractors. Also, I want to thank the current Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape, and his Government for giving K300 million in 2019 and another K100 million last year to pay outstanding contractors.

In this country we have 225 ongoing contracts that are worth over K4 billion so our biggest challenge that we face is when it comes at the end of the year, when there is the close of accounts and we are told that we still have outstanding contractors to be paid.

I will stop here and your question is being noted and I will take it back to my department. I will make it our business to go and knock on all the doors to find out why this work cannot start then I will get back to you.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Works – Incomplete Road and Bridge Repairs

Mr PETER ISOAIMO – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Is it the responsibility of the district authority or the National Government when bridge bays are taken off from highways and roads?

I have a case here where the old Angabangga Bridge which was earmarked for two bridges in my district, one from Makunga River to connect up the North Mekeo people and the other 12-13 bays I used with the aid of Department of Works to put across the Bioto Creek. The other half of the bridge was stolen from the Works Compound Yard in Bereina in the Kairuku district and taken to Sogeri.

Has the Minister driven up to Sogeri to see the construction of that bridge? In my opinion it is not safe for a container truck to travel on, considering the load they transport. So, is it a temporary bridge?

With the Vanapa to Brown River portion of the Hiritano Highway, which I have mentioned many times in the past, I was assured that the World Bank was going to fund this road but we still have the Laloki to Brown River portion that's in a mess.

It is a similar story to what Governor Allan Bird is saying. There are contractors put there but the road erodes in a week or two weeks. So, are we going to continue wasting people's money like this or do sectional sealing to improve the roads for our people to travel on?

Some of us are regular commuters, who come in from the village every day and we are sick and tired of this. Now, as the current Member, I am tired because I have been raising this issue since 2014. On the Western end of Kairuku-Hiri, the Porebada Road is also in a mess.

So who is responsible for that road? Is it ExxonMobil, the Credit Scheme people or the National Department of Works?

I think that these are issues that I should raise with the Minister to give clarity to my people.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

15/01

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER – Minister for Works, I think you have provided many answers to the difficulties the Works Department has gone through, so I do not think you need to answer the questions in detail because you will talk much on that. I want you to go confine your answers to the questions raised by the Honourable Member.

Mr MICHAEL NALI – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank the Honorable Member for his question. Unless you want a yes or no answer; I can say yes and sit down or no and sit down.

(Members laughing!)

Mr MICHAEL NALI – Because if you want to get some answers it has to be explained properly. Why are we all in a hurry? Give me time to explain.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not aware of the bridge part the Member is talking but when a particular bridge is replaced, the old bridge parts are supposed to be brought back to the Department of Works yard. It is the property of the Department. If the bridge part has been taken away by our provincial works engineer or by the provincial works manager who decided to split the bridge into two or three depending on the length of the bridge, that is the discretion the department has in order to extend services to others.

Who took the old bridges away? I do not know. If it was taken away by the Department of Works to do work somewhere else, we have the right to take the bridge part away to repair bridges somewhere else in order to give service.

The second question that if I have driven up to Sogeri, yes, I have driven up to Sogeri. I know the bridge that you are talking about. I don't know what you call the power station up there, Rouna 1 or Rouna 2 but you go up the hill before you turn off to Variarata National Park. I have seen that bridge constructed and it has taken a very long time, I am sorry to say this but I do not know who the contractor was but I will have to find out and see which contractor was awarded that contract, whether it was a proforma or by the Provincial Government or by the District Authority or by the Department of Works, I will get back to you, Honourable Member.

The World Bank funded project from Brown River or Vanapa up towards Doa Plantation which was done by Dekenai Construction, has been completed because it was more or less maintenance and not so much of rehabilitation.

The second part of that, has then moved onto Epo near Kerema and upon advice from the National Procurement Commission, I will take that submission to Cabinet for approval and the contract will be awarded.

However, the sad part of that story is from Brown River to Laloki and coming back to 9 Mile. I was told that the World Bank had a variation to that particular section but I have not driven on that road for quite a while so I will get advice from the Department and get back to you. As I said earlier, the Department of Works requires K1.5 billion a year for the upkeep of our roads to a satisfactory or acceptable condition. But we don't get that kind of money.

16/01

You know why we don't get that kind of money. With all the other services that Government provides, the best our annual Budget can allocate would be around K300 million or maybe K600 million but when the money comes, it comes in drips and drops.

It's not only about this government; this has always been the case. So, when you look at all the delays on road maintenance that has not been done over the years, you will see that the roads are deteriorating.

Honourable Members, under the legislation that we have passed, the *PNG Road Management and Fund Act* and the 2021 work plan that was launched at Laguna a few weeks ago, it gives the provincial governments the responsibility to look after provincial roads. This means, when funding is allocated in the national appropriation, provincial roads come directly

under the provinces. And for the districts, it comes directly under the districts. I am now responsible for the national highways and connect PNG.

So, if you happen to get some money from the budgetary allocation, please, use it wisely. Our officers will always be on the ground to assist you so we maintain some standards but utilize whatever little that is allocated for your roads. But it does not hurt to notify the department just incase we find something to assist you.

Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

PNG Power – Restore Electricity

Mr RICHARD MARU – My questions without notice go to the Minister for State Enterprises.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my district receives power from the power station in Wewak. We have a powerline from Wewak that runs through my district for some 120 kilometers serving all our schools, health services, district headquarters and even the private companies.

Over two months ago, Mr Speaker, a road contractor who is building three new bridges along the Sepik Highway paid PNG Power to relocate one section of the line, about three lines, in order for the road to be re-routed out to the new bridge. This job would normally take two days to complete.

However, Mr Deputy Speaker, it is now three months and PNG Power has put off power to my entire district causing suffering to all our schools, health centers and villages who are hooked up to power and even the big Sepik agriculture project within the Sepik Plains. Everyone is now forced to buy generators and expensive diesel and are suffering big time.

Mr Deputy Speaker, to make it worse, our efforts to get PNG Power to restore power over the last three months has failed. They got our money; the contractor is blaming PNG Power and no one is doing the work and they are causing enormous hardship to every one of the customers within my district.

Mr Deputy Speaker, to make it even worse, PNG Power is paying for diesel in Wewak and losing revenue for three months and no one seems to care from top management here all the way down to branch management in Wewak. They are happy to lose thousands of kina in revenue.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my questions to the Minister are:

(1) Is it the PNG Power culture to not worry about customer service because it seems quite entrenched that no one cares?

(2) Is it the PNG Power culture not to worry about revenue generation? You are happy to lose income for three months when you are burning expensive diesel but not able to sell?

(3) Can the Minister give an undertaking to my people that he will direct PNG Power management and the board to restore power to my district within the next 24 to 48 hours?

17/01

(4) Can the Minister give an undertaking to Parliament that you will cause an investigation to be undertaken to investigate why it has taken them three months when they have been paid by the contractor to relocate a small line. It should only take you two days. And can those responsible for losing thousands of kina in revenue which is an enormous hardship to my people be taken to task and if need be sacked for such careless and incompetent work?

Mr WILLIAM DUMA – Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, let me start by pointing out that there is no room for complacency. There is no room for incompetent people. There is no room for people who are not able to do their job in PNG Power for that matter or any those companies that our people own through the Kumul Consolidated Holdings Group of Companies.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank him for bringing this matter to my attention. I must admit that I was not aware of the problems that have been encountered by our people on that side of the country. I want to assure that hard working Member that as soon as Parliament adjourns tomorrow, I will make it my business to attend to this matter immediately.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is not the only occasion where people have complained about the lack of service being provided by employees of PNG Power. There is an entrenched culture of incompetence and most of the employees I must admit are mediocre. I am not here to protect people who get paid every Friday and yet are unable to deliver for their people. There is no room for this kind of people in these companies.

I have heard the complaints from our good Member and I can assure him that as soon as Parliament adjourns, I will attend to this and I will make sure this incident is investigated properly so that I will use this as an opportunity to make an example to employees of PNG Power as well as all the employees of our SOEs. Similar occurrences of incompetence have been reported and most of our people have complained and this is not an isolated incident and as Minister I must admit that we have to work together. I urge all of you to report incidents

where our people have been found lacking in their responsibilities to provide services to our country. I will attend to your complaints immediately.

Mr Deputy Speaker, with regard to this case, I was not aware of the problem that has confronted our people there and I must also say that when the Minister for Agriculture had a similar issue, he brought it to my attention and I did my best to put to the concerned people. I am not sure if they were able to fix it, but in this case, I will make it my duty to attend to this problem and report to him later this evening.

Mr PETER O'NEILL – I wish to join the Member for Tewai-Siassi and extend my questions to the Treasurer about the Covid-19 loans that he has tried to answer on.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this Covid-19 loans are now adding into billions of kina, can you assure the Parliament where you are spending this money so that our people and our country can be aware of the spending? Could you give us the exact time frame when you will lodge this report of the loans that you are getting?

Mr Deputy Speaker, why I am asking these questions is because this are support coming from international organisations but nonetheless, they are loans that will be repaid by our country and our people.

18/01

(1) Is the Treasurer aware, that there are two financial reports that have been released recently? Firstly, a company called Moody's International Agency, stating that we have a short fall of internal revenue of 2.7 billion kina and thus rating our country's economy from stable to negative?

(2) What is his department doing to address this issue so that we can have a stable rating of our economy and investors can have confidence to invest in our country?

The Central Bank has released a monetary policy statement recently which indicates that our economy has declined by 2 percent in 2020 and of course it continues to project a further decline in 2021.

(3) What is the Ministers Department doing to address these declines of well over 5 percent of our economy which is a substantial decline given the state of economy we are in?

(4) Is the Treasurer aware that our economy is now in recession? Whilst loans are increasing our exchange rate is declining, there is no foreign currency in the country, inflation is going up, prices of tinned fish and rice are going up. Investor confidence is down and unemployment is going up right throughout the country.

(5) What is his department doing to address these issues?

Mr Deputy Speaker, my final question is about warrants.

We are now in the first quarter of 2021 and I am told by many departments and hospitals right across the country that they have received no operational funding from Treasury and Finance.

(6) Can the Minister tell this Parliament what is happening? Why are the warrants not being released thus ensuring that operational funds are released to these organisations so they can continue to serve our people?

(7) Is it true that Warrants are being authorised by your consultant in Canberra before it is being released by our officials here in Waigani? Can you confirm or deny that?

Mr Deputy Speaker four months is almost over and our country needs to continue to provide services to our people.

Mr IAN LING-STUCKEY – Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the Member for Ialibu Pangia for the questions raised and they are very comprehensive and require a lot of details. Judging from the last question on warrants, I would have to say that his contacts at the Treasury seem to be a lot better than mine.

But in relation to the other three questions, I think the main one that he has asked is that where has all of the COVID 19 money gone to? That was his first question. And his second question is am I aware of the outlook given by the Moody's outlook picture. I haven't assessed that statement; in fact, it came out last evening so well done, Member for Ialibu-Pangia you are on top of things there.

So, I will respond to that after giving me something in writing and then the last question was on warrants.

Mr Deputy Speaker, let me go onto the main question for this afternoon. Where has the COVID 19 monies gone?

Mr Deputy Speaker, the COVID money that we had put aside to address both the health and economic sectors totals about K5.7 billion. If you recall that was an economic stimulus package which we announced last year. The short answer to his question is that the money has gone where it supposed to have gone apart from the individual instances of misuse that we hear and get reported on media which I am not aware of and cannot report on those.

Let me firstly explain that there is some misunderstanding promoted a lot by the Opposition –

19/01

Some misunderstanding promoted lot by the Opposition that all of the K5.7 billion was to be spent on this health response to covid-19. That's not the case, Mr Speaker.

There's been a lot of ignorance discussed in Social Media publicly by the Leader of the Opposition. His dangerous misinformation on the risks of our medically endorsed vaccine programme has undermined some of the very good initiatives by the Minister for Health and the department.

Mr Speaker, there are two wars on covid-19. Let's be clear about that. A health war and an economic war. Almost all of the K5.7 billion was on the economic war. That's why we called it an Economic Stimulus Package, not a covid-19 health package.

Overall the Economic Stimulus Package performed quite well. And if I can just go through very quickly again its components so that we can understand where that money has been spent.

(1) Mr Speaker, if you recall, last year we announced a K2.5 million Covid-19 bond raising. All of these were successfully raised despite our very fragile and a once in a century risk to our financial markets. All of these funds supported all of our budget activities last year, not just health but also education, law and order and infrastructure.

(2) If you all recall, in this Parliament we announced a K1.5 billion raising in friendly foreign support. We exceeded this mount demonstrating that there is trust in the Marape Government. Total receipts in 2020 were about K4.4 billion and this is part of the dividend, a result of more open, transparent and responsible budgeting. We had a dividend of nearly K2.9 billion in better cheaper financing and of course, this has helped tremendously to repay the former expensive debt by your government. Importantly, it has supported the current critical demands critical demand to increase health funding and support the economy from all of the covid-19 shocks that we are all experiencing.

(3) Members of Parliament will recall an initiative where we extended a K600 million line of credit from the Bank of Papua New Guinea through two initiatives, lowering cash reserve requirement, if you recall that 10 to seven percent which released about K643 million. So we exceeded our target and of course, reducing the KFR, the kina facility rate from five to three per cent. Whilst we are still waiting for data to be provided by the Bank of PNG, I understand from the three-month moratorium that we had to try and assist businesses for an interest and principle loan repayment holiday. That resulted in about K1.1 billion worth of loans that were provided as a holiday, affecting about, if I recall correctly 16 per cent of our

businesses in this country. So, that was quite effective, Members of Parliament will remember the fourth out of the six measures that we announced last year, was trying to release K500 million from the superannuation funds to assist our people who are out of work. Members of Parliament will recall that we had commenced some legislative changes. We were quite late so that didn't really help them but nevertheless they still accessed a lot of those funds because a lot of those funds because the six months period that they were out of work made them eligible. We don't have much visibility on that but as soon as I get some figures on that I will be happy to report back to Parliament.

20/01

And the fifth measure was of course our Economic Stimulus Package and I'll detailed more of that in my statement tomorrow.

Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for that particular question and for the remaining two questions on the Bank of Papua New Guinea. I'll ask him to put them in writing and I'll respond back to him. Thank you.

MOTION BY LEAVE

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

Leave granted

PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS – APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN

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

That Mr Aiye Tambua be appointed Chairman of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts.

**SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE –
AMENDMENTS TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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

That the following amendments to the terms of reference for the Special Parliamentary Committee on Gender Based Violence as be made:

1. In item 2, insert the following new paragraph:

“(a) Inquire into the connections between GBV and broader issues and root causes regarding the gender equality and women’s empowerment, including women’s economic empowerment, women’s political participation, the impact of early family planning, cultural, traditional and religious beliefs and broader social norms;
2. After the word “departments” and before the word “provincial” insert the following words:

“the Royal PNG Constabulary and related enforcement and prosecution services, the courts”;
3. Immediately, after Paragraph (f), insert the following new Paragraphs (g) and (h):

(g) (h) Inquire into the gendered impacts of COVID-19, with a particular focus on the differential experience of GBV on PNG women and men, identify how the Government and other stakeholders can ensure more effective response in the context of the ongoing threat of COVID-19; and

(h) (i) Inquire into how women’s leadership can be more proactively supported to ensure that women can help lead the response to GBV, including examining options for implementing temporary special measures for women in Parliament.
4. Renumber all paragraphs commencing from the inserted new Paragraph (a) to the end of the functions and responsibilities of the Committee.

Mr RAINBO PAITA – Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to thank all honourable Members of Parliament on both sides of the House for attending the first day of our session today. I also acknowledge the inclusion of court-declared Member for Kandep for joining the Government Bench and I thank him on behalf of the Government. We welcome all his contributions to this Parliament as we move towards 2022. I also acknowledge the Governor of Bougainville for joining the Government Bench as well, and we look forward to working with him in the Panguled Government.

I also acknowledge other Members who have joined the Government, especially leader of the National Alliance Party where we will consolidate and move towards 2022. On behalf of greater coalition government, I thank Members who have joined the Government to consolidate and work together going towards 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (**Mr Rainbo Païta**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 4.40 p.m.