



June
2020

PARLIAMENTARY SITTING SUMMARY

DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament on **Friday 26 June 2020**. While all efforts have been made to provide an informative brief, this information must not be relied upon as an alternative to the official Hansard record of proceedings of Parliament. If you have any specific questions about Proceedings of Parliament on **Friday 26 June 2020**, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

Friday 26 June 2020

DAY 9

9:08am

I. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MR SPEAKER

Mr Speaker informed the House of amendments made to the orders of the SOE which have been signed by O Le Ao o le Malo; and called the Clerk to read aloud in the House.

1. Fishing and Trade Boats

- Open the Matautu harbour for trade boats to dock and replenish supplies for not more than 48 hours to offload fish cargo and replenish supplies
- Permit the dock of 2 cargo ships at one time based on appropriate reasons and the ability to carry out the necessary quarantine and checks by responsible authorities.
- Normal quarantine measures in effect, collaboration between relevant Ministries/Authorities (MOH, MAF and SPA)

2. BINGO games reopened

- Closes at 10pm on Fridays and 5pm on Saturdays

3. Inter-Island ferry services

- Pension can be used again for inter-island ferry travels

II. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY – Reading of Bills

1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL No.3 2019/2020; and APPROPRIATION BILL 2020/2021

GOVERNMENT RESPONSES cont.

1. Hon LOPAO Natanielu Mu'a, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Member for Vaisigano No.2

The Hon Minister continued to address issues pertaining to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and proceeded that in terms of export since 2015, the following produce have been exported Nonu, fish, cocoa, oil, taro, banana, lemon and breadfruit.

In 2015 the amount of 40.4million revenues collected while in 2019, 64.5million revenue generated from the aforementioned crops exported to overseas markets and therefore expressed gratitude and acknowledgment to the farming and fisheries community in providing produce for export markets as there is a notable increase in its revenues.

In regards to the SAFPROM Project; the Hon Minister explained that this is a 5 year project which commenced in 2020 – funds which have been highlighted in the budget as questioned by certain Members, Hon Minister clarified that this amount is to source the relevant projects and development which the Ministry has identified for the FY. Hon LOPA00 called out the entire amount of aid from foreign partners; The World Bank IDA grant -13.9 million; World Bank Regional Grant 6million; and IFAD 3.6million, which totals up to \$23.5million USD. The Hon Minister explained that this amount is be spanned out for the duration of the project (it is not given in full).

OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai, Member for Salega East

The Member accentuated that the grant reflected in the Budget is the appropriation of USD\$3.6million which equates to SAT\$11million, however his concern is that the grant from IFAD is not included in the Budget.

MR Speaker

Advised the Member to put forth his concerns when the Bill is progressed through Consideration in Detail stage as the Minister is generally responding to matters raised by Members.

LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi, Member for Gagaifomauga No.3

The Member moved a motion to table a document which portrays the specifications of the appropriation of USD\$20million as mentioned by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries to ensure transparency of grants from foreign organisations for the development of the nation.

Hon PRIME MINISTER - Clarification

Hon. PM reminded Members that there is also the Consideration in detail stage where Members can seek further clarification. Furthermore, the Hon PM stated that the Member for Gagaifomauga No.3 was also seated in Cabinet and is well aware of the

procedures of the House. (Hon PM asserted that the Minister of Finance has already responded to queries and concerns and therefore the time has passed).

FAUMUINA Asi Pauli Wayne Fong, Member for Urban West

The Member seconded the motion moved by the Member for Gagaifomauga No.3.

OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai, Member for Salega East

The Member pleaded to the Speaker to approve the motion.

Mr Speaker – Speaker’s Ruling

The Hon Speaker stated his position on the matter and noted that his decision is final, then informed Members that consideration in detail stage will afford them the opportunity to raise further queries.

After much deliberation between the Hon Prime Minister and the Member for Gagaifomauga No.3 – the Hon Speaker on a point of Order advised Members that as a nation founded on God, it is important to act accordingly and therefore cautioned Members of the language and words used in the House.

Hon LOPAOO Natanielu Mu’a, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Member for Vaisigano No.2 (Cont.)

The Hon Minister continued by elaborating on the (SCATAP) project which is funded by China, the Hon Minister explained that 5million has been afforded by this grant from the Chinese Government for the specific development of vegetation (fualaaau faisua), it is anticipated that the project will run for 3 years. Hon LOPAOO elaborated on the benefits of the current project (pushing the development of vegetation) as evidenced in times of hosting the Pacific Games, the Minister explained that only few imported products were utilised as the bulk of vegetation and ingredients used to cook the food for the Pacific Games were locally grown. Hon Minister stated that we have also developed ‘chicken feed’ made from local produce and further informed the House that this is beneficial as it notes a 50% decrease in costs from importing chicken feed (current alternative)

HON Prime Minister - Clarification

The Hon PM acknowledged the Minister for procuring the assistance of China in formulating Chicken Feed. Furthermore, Hon TUILAEPa noted that it is imperative to formulate, as it will help with the development of livestock. (Poultry, Pork, Cattle) The Hon PM noted that the success of livestock depends on good nutrients for livestock. (noted that fish mill; is good for

providing the necessary nutrients for livestock). He stated that if this initiative is successful it will reduce reliance on imported meat and thus producing employment for Members of the Public (in regards to the factory as noted in the Minister's response). The Hon PM elaborated on the importance of strengthening sustainable farming.

The Hon PM further elaborated that it is imperative to procure oil as Samoa is strategically located in the centre of Major EEZ's, which in turn contributes immensely to our Economy & the indirect development of livestock.

Hon LOPAOO Natanielu Mu'a, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Member for Vaisigano No.2 (Cont.)

The Hon Minister stated that the price for local eggs has decrease since April from \$7.00 to \$4.00; he also stated that the Ministry is working towards providing subsistent meat. In regards to taro, Hon LOPAOO clarified that Taro price is at \$60-7\$0 dollars per 22kgs. The Hon Member iterated that the price depends on the demand.

On the issue of farmer ploughs - the Minister asserted that the Ministry has taken this into consideration and is seeking overseas donors to fund the procuring of ploughs for development of farmers. In regards to chicken farming, Hon Minister stated that there is a Chicken Development Project in the pipelines and briefly noted that they will allow members of the public to raise chicken which they will then buy back later. (win-win scenario). The Hon Minister further iterated that although Covid19 induced shutdown had forced unemployment and hunger in some developed countries; this was not the case for Samoa.

AFOA Amituanai Mauli, Member for Palauli West AMITUANAI Mauli

The Member commended the appropriation of 2million for the development of crops and vegetation; furthermore, the Member recommended that a further appropriation be afforded to the Ministry to continue with the development cocoa, coconut and vegetation.

Hon SILI Epa Tuioti, Minister of Finance - Clarification

The Hon Minister clarified on the 20 Million USD in the budget; this will assist with the developments of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Hon SILI stated that the funds is to assist MAF for its projects for 5 years: 20millionUSD from World Bank and assistance from IDA with no interest charges and 3 million USD from IFAC. However, the Hon Minister emphasized that only 11million Tala is appropriated for the first year and the rest will be appropriated in due time as the project will run for 5 years.

The Hon Minister reiterated that 11 million Tala is appropriated for the first year and the rest will be appropriated over the next 4 years. Furthermore, the Hon Minister elaborated that the Project is worth 20 million and further reiterated that this amount will be appropriated accordingly by the Donors over the timeframe for the Project.

OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai, Member for Salega East

The Member queried why IDA contribution is not incorporated in the Budget.

Hon PRIME MINISTER - Clarification

The Hon PM clarified that IDA is a smaller branch of the World Bank. (It is a subdivision of the WORLD BANK) with smaller interests rates for loans and grants on developing countries. The IFC is also a branch of the World Bank, but this branch provide assistance/funding on bigger developments worth billions and have much higher rates. Hon PM stated that amidst grievances for policies and the immense interest rates of the IFC, South Pacific Facility in Australia.

Hon LOPAOO Natanielu Mu'a, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Member for Vaisigano No.2 (Cont.)

Commended the Ministry of Works for repealing of port docking fees during the stimulus package for Covid. The Hon Minister proceeded to elaborate on the major contributions of Chinese fisher vessels- 60,000 litres 15,000-30,000, Passenger Ferries 360,000 litres of oil. The Hon Minister noted that currently Samoa has yet to fill the big 360,000litres vessels as it will take a toll on its fuel supply.

The 12 million is revenue generated from wharf fees in 2019. The Hon Minister stated that the Fishermen are looking at constructing a Fish Factory on the wharf and cited the economic benefits that the public will gain. (currently Samoa only acts as a Trans-shipment, however it is envisaged that the Fishing factory will contribute through revenues from fish export).

In regards to calls for a wharf at Falealili, the Hon Minister stated that this cannot be done yet; The Hon Minister noted the clam conservation at Lefaga (faisua faasao) and stated that the conservation has developed and is being well managed by the village. Furthermore, the Hon Minister stated that the ramps for Siumu have been implemented. Furthermore, Hon Minister clarified that ramps allow fishermen to move canoes and boats to and from the water - especially if there are seawalls, it can be difficult to carry heavy canoes - hence the importance of a ramp/slipway

NAFOITOA Talaimanu Ketii, Member for Gagaemauga No.3

The Member mentioned that his constituency is full of fishermen; therefore, he requested for two ramp for his Constituency.

MULIPOLA Laki, Member for Aiga i le Tai

The Member stated that his community is a fishing community & therefore needs a ramp and further requested for harbour lights to assist fishermen, canoes and boats

AUMUA Isaia Lameko, Member for Falealili West

The Member requested that if a wharf cannot be built for his constituency then a ramp be erected instead.

Hon LOPAOO Natanielu Mu'a, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Member for Vaisigano No.2 (Cont.)

The Hon Minister informed that all requests for ramps by Members have been noted and will be implemented in due time. In regards to SAFPROM- the Minister noted that there is a project in the pipelines for the procurement of a ship (super alia) worth 200,000 to assist with fishing. Stated that in regards to Alia Building requests, these have been duly noted as there is no factory to build Alia's. In regards to Toomata's request for state of the art equipment for agricultural development, the Hon Minister stated that the Member's requested equipment is non-existent in the Pacific and is only found in China.

SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tuilili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga East

The Member stated that His constituency is a fishing constituency and cited Sea Urchin, Fish etc. The member then requested a project to foster the replanting of coral and attributed this to the residue from rivers killing Coral Reefs.

LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi, Member for Gagaifomauga No.3

The Member informed the House that there are 12 requests from the Farmers in Savaii in regards to the agri-business.

**Proceedings were set aside at 10:31 am;
and resumed at 11:20am.**

Hon LOPAOO Natanielu Mu'a, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Member for Vaisigano No.2 (Cont.)

The Hon Minister clarified the rhinoceros beetle traps in place (a PVC pipe is filled with poison that attracts the beetle and then killing it, this together with the assistance from the community is required to ensure the eradication of this pest. The Hon Minister stated that in order to truly stamp out the pest requires clean plantations (avoid areas of compost as these pests love to nest in such areas). Furthermore, the Hon Minister spoke on swine fever and stated that although it has reached Asia and PNG, it has yet to reach our country. However, regardless of this, the Ministry continues to prepare in case this disease reaches our nation, the Ministry continues to implement proactive measures to ensure local pigs are not affected.

Namulaulu Sami Leota, Member for Faasaleleaga No.2

The Member called to clarify why the Taro from his village is not exported and queried whether it does not meet the minimum standard for quality assurance.

LEAANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata

The Member queried whether the traveling public are aware about the minimum standard for compliance in terms of fish coolers.

SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tuivilili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga East

The Member re-stated his issue which pertains to removing emphasis on cultivating the Israel species and place it on the Cavendish banana.

Hon LOPAOO Natanielu Mu'a, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Member for Vaisigano No.2 (Cont.)

The Hon Minister clarified that the price of cultivation is \$4000 - \$5000; furthermore he mentioned that SROS are conducting a research on this (Fa'i) banana tree as mentioned by Members in their statements. Hon LOPAOO mentioned that only 5kilos of fish can be taken to Australia, plus a paper of verification from the Quarantine

2. Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure and Member for Urban East.

The Hon Minister firstly thanked God for His continuous protection then addressed the House: Cabinet, Chairpersons for respective Parliamentary Committees and Members of Parliament. He acknowledged his constituency and requested the Hon Speaker to stem all questions post his speech addressing all Matters raised by the Members.

Hon Minister noted all the SOE's and Ministries under his portfolio: SSC, PFL, MWTI, PUMA, SPA,EPC SWA, SSS, LTA, SAA. Noted majority of concerns raised by Members are road works, seawalls and electricity related matters, water supplies and speed humps - all request are noted and will be considered when the supplementary is passed by Parliament. Hon PAPALII commended the Minister for Finance and his Ministry for compiling the tabled supplementary. In regards to Overbridges calls (Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo).

The Hon Minister noted that LTA had researched and stated the following difficulties: EXPENSIVE. Seafarers school- the Minister emphasize that there is an existing academy to educate seafarers in regards to their safety especially on fishing boats ; the Maritime academy educates our children on safety when hired.

An appropriation of 4million reserve for (CSO); 11.4 million for Capital Works - The Hon Minister noted that 6 million is appropriated to implement operations during the FY. Cited that if the Ministry carry on the costs the trickle down effects will result in the raise in electricity & Water costs. Fire hydrants cost is appropriated for crossing.

FUIMAONO Samuelu Teo, Member for Falealili East

The Member stated that they have misinterpreted as it is stated in the Budget it is appropriated under CSO. The Member clarified that he now understands what the accurate interpretation is.

Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure and Member for Urban East. (cont.)

Hon Minister further clarified that the CSO is not necessarily to pay for the water pumps as stated by the Member, rather it is to factor the cost of electricity which enables these water pumps to operate and assist with the supply of water to families/communities. In regards to Members calling to reopen the use of pension, the Minister refuted the claims made by the Member.

In regards to the usage of pension cards for transportation between the two main islands is now being reactivate. On another issue raised by Members, regarding the utilizing of the Airport at Maota, the Minister emphasizes that it is still in service, but due to the lack of people travelling to and fro, this is why it is hardly in service but it is still in operation.

The Hon Minister clarified on the formula utilised to calculate Electricity Billing and stated that 10c tariffs is waived. (stimulus package from EPC)- in response to the Member for Faleata who called for a waiver for fees. Noted 1.5 Deficit was recorded for EPC since its stimulus package in response to Covid19. Further noted that Samoa has two water hydrants in Mulinuu as queried by a Member. The HON Minister noted the Economic Crunch and its effects on Samoa's economy. In response to the issue of vilimaa, Hon Minister stated that during the visitation it was noted that there were 4 companies (vilima'a) within the industrial zone and the Hon Minister stated that PUMA is looking at a solution to the problem (Residents near the Vilima'a area). Furthermore, the Hon Minister noted that these individuals reside at the heart of CBD.

LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Member for Faleata West

Accentuated to waiver the EPC extra tariffs for business and requested that the Ministry operate with the highest degree of consideration

Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure and Member for Urban East. (cont.)

Hon Minister claimed concerns raised by the Member is true and the organisation is considering this matter but advised everyone to pay their arrears.

Hon PRIME MINISTER - Clarification

Hon PM acknowledged the Member for Faleata for his remarks and commented that Common Sense is a double-edged sword. Hon PM noted that we also have to be concerned about arrears that the Corporation can incur in light of assistance.

**Proceedings adjourned at 12:04pm;
and will reconvene at 9am on Monday 29 June 2020**