

DISCLAIMER

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Day 24
9:30am

Monday 22nd February 2021

I. ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

i. WARRANT OF APPOINTMENT

Mr Speaker read out the Warrant of appointment by the Head of State, Afioga Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II:

Pursuant to Article 82A of the Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa, 1960 and based on the recommendation of the Panel and approval by Cabinet stipulated by the FK 21(5) dated 4th February 2021, the Head of State confirms the appointment of **Ms. Luamanuvao Katalaina Sapolu** as the Ombudsman for the term of 6 years and its functions are prescribed under Article 6A of the Constitution and the *Ombudsman (Komesina o Sulufaiga) Act 2013*.

II. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2020/2021- second reading & Debate on the Bill (cont.)

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

i. Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama, MINISTER OF MINISTRY OF WOMEN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (MWCSD)

The Minister continued his response by greeting the whole House, Leader of the House, Mr Speaker and all the Members. He then went on to list out a number of programmes rolled out by the Ministry to empower women and youth in our communities:

- sex education programs are now enforced to protect young girls from being impregnated at a young age;
- education programs for the youth funded by the United Nation Population Fund focusses on health issues related to the youth and problems that may lead to suicide;
- Samoa Disability Programmes whereby wheelchairs were distributed to the disabled peoples who are in need;
- Awareness Programmes on Domestic Violence Against Women were rolled out to villages that requested for it (Samoa Women Shaping Development Programme);
- Assistance rendered to all the women committees by providing sewing machines and training conducted so as to capacitate women with the skills to increase self- reliance and as a form of revenue for their families; the assistance was fully funded by China which also included materials, equipment as well as provided food for the women during these classes. The Minister also noted that those who are offering their service to teach them, are people who have been sewing for a number of years;
- Vegetable gardens funded by the United Nation Youth Employment Program which provided work opportunities for the youth of Samoa’
- Assistance rendered to villages so as to upkeep its independent water schemes (natural steam water);
- Training for women and youth in regards to leadership capacity building programmes through the Women in Leadership Samoa Programme funded by AUSAID;
- Another project that is included in these projects for Constituencies as provided in their DDP guide, village pools, this project aims to assist villages to fix, renovate and clean village pools to make sure that they are neat and clean not only for their usage but as a tourist attraction; assistance was sought from China Aid and JICA;
- Rendered requests letter to UNDP on behalf of constituencies for equipment (trash bags) to collect rotten rubbish which has destroyed the coral reefs and shores;

The Minister then clarified on the issue queried by the Member for Lotofaga in regards to collaborating partners during the measles outbreak and Covid-19 and stated the following Organizations were able to collaborate in promoting prevention such as: Nuanua o le Alofa, Faataua le Alofa, Samoa Family Health Association, Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG), World Health Organisation (WHO), Ministry of Police (MOP), Ministry of Health (MOH), Cancer society and other relevant bodies.

Noted that during the follow up work done by the Ministry with Private organizations which the Ministry is in partnership with, no programmes were rolled out as they are still awaiting funds as per their request.

He further placed emphasis on the fact that the Ministry prioritises its collaboration with the villages through the Sui o le Nuu, Sui Tamaitai o le Nuu in order to continue assistance with developments for each district. Accentuated another important matter in regards to policies where each village must propose their by-laws.

Hon FAUMUINA TIATIA FAAOLATANE Liuga, MEMBER FOR PALAULI LE FALEFA

The member commented on the Village Fono Act and regulations and noted that the Courts recognize village punishments.

Mr SPEAKER

Mr Speaker clarified that it is important for villages to receive copies of court decisions which uphold village punishments and not just the parties involved to assist with their decision making.

Hon TUILAIPA Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, PRIME MINISTER

Hon PM commented on the importance of communal rights as provided in the previously enacted Bills. Village bylaws are important as it reduces crimes in villages and aims to uphold peace and safety in villages. Hon PM noted that although individual rights is vital, there are boundaries. He gave the example from the court-during criminal proceedings, the court may query whether a punishment was made against the person by the village this will then be taken into account by the court as a mitigating factor.

Noted that the village council are enforcers of the law in respective villages to ensure a safer community - assist with the policing of safety within villages/constituencies.

Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama, MINISTER OF MINISTRY OF WOMEN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (MWCSD) cont.

The Minister responded to Mr Speaker's query and confirmed that respective villages receive copies of court decisions. He then asserted that the Courts recognise any punishment made by villages during criminal proceedings.

Hon Minister touched upon village council practices and asserted that village bylaws are in place as a deterrent for individuals from committing crime in the village (but not made to burden families).

FUIMAONO TEO Samuelu Teo, MEMBER FOR FALEALILI EAST

Noted that it is not mandatory, however villages should register their by-laws with the Ministry for MWCSO for ease of reference to the Courts during its proceedings. Accentuated that by-laws should be formulated in alignment with the main legislation. Stated that the recent amendment to the Village Fono Act 1990 now requires the person who is perceived to have committed an offence in the village to lay out his side of the story (natural justice). Took an example from a recent case where the court overruled the Villages decision on the basis that the principle of natural justice as stipulated by the Village Fono Act was not followed.

Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama, MINISTER OF MINISTRY OF WOMEN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (MWCSO) cont.

The Minister touched upon the measles outbreak and the efforts made to combat the outbreak, specifically the work carried out by the Ministry for Women in its follow-up assessment to ensure all Samoans were vaccinated with the MMR vaccine. He noted that while the nation was wrapping up its assessment with the measles outbreak, Covid-19 struck and Samoa again took necessary measures to ensure Samoa was safe from the pandemic. Healthy lifestyle (eating habits) were encouraged, together with hygienic living (basic sanitary habits). Village hygiene committees (Komiti Tumama) were revived to ensure communities had the assistance needed in the village setting.

Cash powers worth \$7,500 were given out to a few families funded by the UN and food package vouchers worth \$200 for families who needed assistance (a total of 800 families received these vouchers). The Ministry also distributed planted crops to the villages to re-start a healthy lifestyle by eating right, they distributed, Umala, Tiapula and crops that are easy to grow. Also gave out Hygiene packages that included sanitizers, to villages out back to for hygienic purposes and prevent the spread of any diseases. At least 30 independent water schemes have been established for the safe consumption of water in villages and constituencies. Hon Minister noted that these independent water schemes continuously undergo water testing to ensure the quality of the water is safe for consumption. In December of last year an independent water scheme was officially launched for the subvillage of Saaga in Siumu.

TAFUA Maluelue Tafua, MEMBER FOR ALEIPATA ITUPA I LALO

The member commented on the Independent water schemes and posed a query whether there is plan in place to test these waters for E-coli?

Hon FAUMUINA TIATIA FAAOLATANE Liuga, MEMBER FOR PALAULI LE FALEFA

The member confirmed that the independent water schemes of Sili and Salailua in his constituency has already been tested for E-coli bacteria and the water there is safe for consumption.

AUMUA Isaia Lameko, MEMBER FOR FALEALILI WEST

The member queried as which water takes priority, the government water or the independent water schemes?

Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama, MINISTER OF MINISTRY OF WOMEN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (MWCSO) cont.

The Hon Minister asserted that the testing of bacteria in water such as the E-coli as queried by some Members is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. The Hon Minister continued with the Government's initiative to revive the ie-samoa; and elaborated on the need to continue women committees 'fale lalaga'. Accentuated that this initiative has developed the standard of living.

Hon Minister noted the value of the finely woven ie-samoa as not below \$2,000 (category #1); noted that the Ministry has conducted workshops to educate the public and those who are interested to attain the skills to produce this priceless treasure 'measina'. He noted that during the stimulus package, the Government disbursed close to 1 million tala for all fale lalaga for development purposes. He added that there are at least 108 fale lalaga in Upolu and 63 in Savaii. He noted that an increase in fale lalaga's after the Ministry's workshop for registering fale lalagas was noted (26 was added in Upolu and 7 from Savaii) thus the number abovementioned.

Hon TUILAEPA Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, PRIME MINISTER

Clarified that there have been many issues raised in accordance to the government allocations awarded to the 'Ie Samoa program'. Hon PM noted the importance of Government's involvement in reviving the fale lalaga as it ensures the sustainability of the program, noting the importance of the initiative to ensure there is enough supply for our never-ending family obligations (faalavelave). Stated that the government also encourages siapo making and the planting of the U'a tree (paper mulberry tree) for making Siapo. Further mentioned the importance of decorating the ie (ula) despite its size. Hon PM noted that Samoa takes pride in her culture, and our measina, the 'Ie Samoa' is part of our culture.

Proceedings were suspended at 10:54am

Proceedings resumed at 11:43am

Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama, MINISTER OF MINISTRY OF WOMEN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (MWCSD) cont.

Hon Minister spoke on the display of women's ie-samoa 'faalelegapepe' and explained that he has witnessed the women's enthusiasm during times of display, noted that it takes 6 months to weave a fine mat. He also noted that a 12-year-old girl completed the finely woven 'tosi tasi' ie Samoa, while another fine mat was woven by a man.

Hon Minister compared the earnings made by the farmer from selling his crops, to that earned by a mother weaving the ie-samoa and mentioned the 'ula' which is a design on the fine mat by using bird feathers. Hon Minister noted that due to the fear of natural birds becoming extinct, the use of its feathers is prohibited. Currently the feathers used for the ie-samoa ula is being painted and the public are encouraged to use colours that do not run (as this was a common issue noted with the ie-Samoa, it becomes ruined with the paint used for its ula).

Further clarified on the social development initiatives conducted by the Ministry such as Women committee to address matters such as le lalaga and addressing violence against women and children. All women in villages should be included in the women's committee in order for the Ministry to recognise the committee. Noted that currently the Act provides recognition for women committees in main villages 'nu'u mavae' (or villages that have cultural genealogy) and asserted that plans are in the pipeline to include women committees in 'all villages' and not just nuu mavae. He added that the womens' committee also received a stimulus package for Covid-19. There are a total of 218 registered women committees, with the exception of some who are finalising its paperwork. Hon Minister reminded the House that all women committees are under the administering body for Women's Committee that is within the Ministry for Women. He then highlighted the duties of the Women's committee; that is, encouraging general hygiene, encouraging vegetation in villages and overseeing fale lalaga. Noted that 113 women's committees for Upolu which had been registered, 76 for Savaii and 29 women's committees of those nu'u le mavae which brings the total number of women's committees in Samoa registered to 218.

Hon Minister touched upon Village representatives and noted that in Upolu there are 82 registered representatives, and 26 village representatives in Savaii. Stated that the selection of village representatives is the responsibility of the

village, when the village representative is terminated due to certain issues, the village is notified of the decision made by the Ministry through its Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Hon Minister noted that the Ministry has compiled a booklet which contains all duties for village representatives and is distributed all village representatives; Hon Minister stated that it was disappointing to note that there were certain representatives who do not follow this list. Hon Minister iterated that if and when the village representative feels he is compromised from carrying out his role; he should do the honourable thing, and resign.

Women representative (Sui o Tamaitai) is elected by the Womens' committee and approved by the Village Council. Given that this is the last Parliamentary session the Hon Minister concluded his speech by fare welling and conveying gratitude to the following:

Acknowledged Mr speaker and conveyed endless blessings for his future plans. Acknowledged the Leader of the House, Prime Minister for his expertise and courage in seeking to develop our Samoa. To all Cabinet, Associate Ministers and Members of Parliament gratitude was given for their service and commitment to Samoa. Conveyed his apologies to any matter that his Ministry may have lacked to achieve. Paid special acknowledgement to his Associate minister, Afioga Salausa Dr John Ah Ching- grateful for his unwavering, unyielding support during the Parliamentary term, not only in the Ministry of Health, also the Ministry for Women Community and Social Development. Relayed his support for his Associate and wished him well in the upcoming elections. The Hon Minister conveyed thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Health and the CEO, ACEO's and staff of the Ministry for Women Community and Social Development for all their efforts in serving Samoa through the Ministry. May God bless you with long life and wisdom.

Hon Minister then addressed his beloved constituency Aana Alofi No.1 in her honorific glory. Gratitude was expressed for the privilege afforded to him to serve and represent them in Parliament. The Minister expressed gratitude for their genuine support and prayers throughout the term. To his village of Faleasiu, he stated that he hoped his village was pleased with his efforts this Parliamentary term. He noted the developments that were established within the village such as the development of the village's natural water catchments which is valued at \$100,000SAT; In regards to road developments, Hon Minister noted that a total of 1.2million was spent on such developments and noted that there are certain access roads which are deteriorating due to the lack of proper maintenance by certain sub-villages. He recalled the troubles faced by the village due to the limited space for the school in Sapulu and noted that the village now has 2 schools, with the recent opening of the school in Moamoa. Hon Minister noted that the Sapulu school currently caters for 514 students, whereas the Moamoa school caters

for 402 students and 9 teachers. The Hon Minister noted an appropriation of 1.5million for these developments. Mentioned a challenge that his constituency currently faces to which part of Faleasiu does not have access to water; however, in order to supply water to this area, Samoa Water Authority (SWA) need to install a tank near the families for water access. Hon TUITAMA expressed gratitude to his wife and children in Samoa and abroad. Conveyed his heartfelt thanks for their unwavering support and prayers for him throughout the years he has served. He then concluded by conveying apologies to Mr Speaker for any shortcoming.

ii. Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell, MINISTER FOR COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND LABOUR & PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

Hon LAUTAFI addressed the House, greeted Mr Speaker, Hon PM and Cabinet, Associate Ministers, Committee Chairs and Members, the Clerk and his Office, all CEO's present in the House. Addressed Samoa in her honorific salutations; greeted le Ao o le Malo, greeted the Council of Deputy, Hon LE MAMEA Ropati and his good lady, distinguished clergy on Samoa, respective Judges to our neighbor Tutuila and greeted the Governor. Addressed his constituency in its honorific salutation. Acknowledged the Church Ministers for their prayers and the support; expressed his sincere condolences to the Vaafusuaga family, his wife and daughter. Also to Lealailepule's mother who recently passed and who has been his loyal supporter.

Hon Minister then delved into the issues raised by Members pertaining to his portfolio, which comprise of 9 different Corporations:

- Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC):

Hon Minister noted that the Corporation serves to compensate individuals who have been injured during accidents while on the job. He commented on where the funds are sourced for the Corporation, 1% from employees and levies from petrol to ensure there is enough funds available to cater for those who have been injured; as well as to increase its rehabilitation/recovery. The Minister noted that one goal of the Corporation is to make sure that the injured recovers quickly and make sure that their lives go back to normal. He then noted the developments which were funded by the Corporation, including the purchase of the Goldstar complex adjacent to ACC Building, the construction of the Savalalo temporary Market, procurement of the CT Scan for the hospital, construction of the Samoan Embassy in Australia and other developments.

Noted that within the past 5 years the percentage of people involved in accidents has decreased. The Corporation is working together with the Ministry of Health,

FESA and other Government Ministries to provide awareness programs which aim to inform the public to avoid accidents or causes of accidents. Hon LAUTAFI noted the overall reduction of percentage for injuries reported to the Corporation, and asserted that it was reflective of people being more conscious of their safety; 40% reduction on transportation accidents; 6% reduction for those killed in car accidents; 24% decrease in work related accidents; 40% reduction on injury after employment hours. He stated the importance of revealing the statistics for people to know these facts, to let them know how to take care of themselves better and prevent accidents from happening. Hon Minister noted that the Corporation purchased a vehicle tailored to transport individuals in wheelchairs to transport these individuals to and from their physiotherapy activities; noted that the vehicle costed close to 1 million tala.

The Corporation also offered assistance during Pacific Games. During covid19 - the Government required assistance with funding its stimulus package and the Corporation assisted with \$10million being afforded to Government. With the stimulus package, the Corporation assisted leases at the Market by paying 4 months of rent for all lessors which totalled almost 4 million tala.

Stated that the Corporation is planning to establish an Office in Savaii to ensure that the people in Savaii will have access to the services they provide, also noted that the Samoa Land Corporation (SLC) has already given a land lease for the Corporation to implement this plan. Hon Minister noted that the Corporation conducts ongoing advertisements on television and radio for awareness to inform the public on the services offered by the ACC and to clarify who is eligible for compensation and on what grounds.

- Gambling Control Authority:

The establishment of the Gambling Control Authority (“the Authority”) to monitor the legal gambling games offered in Samoa has contributed to Samoa’s economy.

Mr Speaker interrupted the Minister as it was time for Parliament to adjourn. Asserted that he may continue the next sitting day.

**Proceedings were adjourned at 1:10pm
Parliament will again reconvene on Tuesday 23rd February 2021 at 9am.**