

FRIDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2011

The Speaker, Sir Allan Kemakeza took the Chair at 10.19 a.m.

Prayers.

ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all were present.

SPEAKER'S MESSAGES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr Speaker: Honourable Members, before we proceed I wish to take this opportunity to welcome you all to the third sitting of the 9th Parliament. Before we proceed with the business for today, I want to formally announce to the House that the High Court has ruled that the honourable member of Parliament for North Malaita ceased to be a Member of Parliament at midnight 30th January 2011. The High Court has determined this matter and I understand that the court has made a declaration to that effect under section 52 of the Constitution. In the spirit of mutual respect between the three organs of the state, the House must respect the High Court's ruling. As such the North Malaita seat is vacant.

Secondly, in view of some recent events it might be helpful if I were to clarify briefly for the benefit of honourable Members the purpose of the civic education programme which my Office conducts. Constituency civic education visits are a very, very important part of the National Parliament's Civic Outreach Program. The focus of this key activity, which is conducted by civic education officers and others from the National Parliament Office and the Parliamentary Strengthening Project, is to raise the awareness of our people in the Provinces about the role of the National Parliament as the national legislature and supreme oversight institution, and the forum for national debate and dialogue on the vital interests of our nation.

We all here have a fundamental responsibility to ensure that our people are as well informed as possible about our roles in Parliament, and indeed the role of this place in the overall governance of our beloved Solomon Islands as enshrined in the Constitution.

During the year, the civic education department of my Office has visited a number of Constituencies in the Provinces as part of our Civic outreach program. We are a small Office, this program has not been of long duration, and our human and material resources are finite and carefully used. But I serve notice on honourable Members today that we do intend to visit all constituencies in due course. I trust all honourable Members will welcome this. It is vital that such visits are seen to be what they are in fact - strictly neutral and not politically motivated.

This is a civic education program for the purposes of enabling our people – however remote their location - to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the country as fully as possible. It also informs our young people about Parliament and its importance, and encourages them to revere and to respect its function. The program has no other purpose or

motivation. It is for that reason that the program is conducted under the auspices of my Office which is not political but neutral, and it is the Speaker who approves the visits.

I accept that it is important that Honourable Members are fully informed in advance about any visits. I gather that in the case of a recent visit by a civic education team to a part of East Kwaio, and despite several attempts, the honourable member was not reached and the Office could not therefore forewarn him of the impending visit. This was unfortunate.

Several attempts subsequently have been made by my Officers to contact the Member to tender their regrets, but they have been unable to contact the member of Parliament for East Kwaio. They will continue to seek contact with him. So may I take the opportunity afforded by this Statement to express sympathy that a miscommunication occurred and the MP for East Kwaio was not forewarned of the visit, with the hope that the honourable member will (now) accept that the visit was made on the neutral and wholly honourable basis that I have already explained.

On another matter, I wish to inform the House that I have received communication from the following, in response to the motion of sympathy that was moved and passed by Parliament on Friday 1st April 2011:

1. His Excellency, the New Zealand Acting High Commissioner to Solomon Islands, Mr. Jonathan Schwass;
2. The Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives, Dr The Rt Hon Lockwood Smith; and
3. The Chairman of the New Zealand Pacific Parliamentary Friendship Group, New Zealand House of Representatives, Mr. John Hayes ONZM.

Honourable Members, because of time my office will distribute their letters in your various pigeonholes today for your reference.

Honourable Members, those are the announcements from this chair and we will move on to the next item of our business for today.

STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTIONS

Motion of No confidence

Hon DEREK SIKUA (*North East Guadalcanal*): Before I move the motion, I would like to humbly request the honourable Prime Minister whether he would like to take the step to gracefully and honourably tender his resignation forthwith.

Mr Speaker: Honourable Prime Minister, do you want to comment on the request?

Hon DANNY PHILLIP (*Prime Minister*): I thank the member for East Guadalcanal. I thank you for the opportunity to also comment on the aspect of the motion that is asking for my opinion, but it is not a thing the Prime Minister has to decide for himself. We have talked about the thing, but before I do so, with your concurrence, Mr Speaker, if you can allow me to say a few remarks as well.

Mr Speaker: Honourable Prime Minister, if you accept the request of the honourable Leader of the Opposition that you are going to tender your resignation, then I will comply with section 34(3)(d) of the Constitution, and that is to suspend the sitting for an hour and allow the Prime Minister with section 34(3)(d). And when we return before you comply with that section of the Constitution, and receive a letter from his Excellency the Governor General and then you can make your statement before the House.

So now I will suspend the sitting for one hour to allow the Prime Minister to comply with section 34(3)(d) to comply with that in relation with the Government House and then we will resume after one hour.

Mr Matthew Wale: Point of order. Section 34(3)(d) is right but the Prime Minister wishes to make a very short statement on that then we can suspend so that the minds of those of us on this side of the House can be eased too that he has pledged himself to take those steps. Thank you.

Hon Danny Phillip: Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for your concurrence on my request. I would like to announce that my intention to resign on the floor of Parliament is not because of the request of the mover himself. It is a position that this side of the House has taken collectively, and with that I would like to make a few remarks before I do that. The House definitely looks very nice, it is full of con artists, and that is the problem. ..

Mr Speaker: Order, order.

Hon Danny Philip: Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for that. Exactly 14 months ago honourable members of Parliament, I had resounding victory on the 24th of August last year. And you can appreciate that I gave that victory to my dear mum at that time. However, today is not so much a victory day for her and for myself, but I think it is a victory day for the country, if you like. The intimate reasons for which the motion has been constructed and the way the perpetrators of the motion have been doing things with the media, and so for myself, for the people that I represent and the people of this country, today is 11/11, but it must not be double jeopardy, meaning that you can get rid of the leader of NCRA but you cannot destroy NCRA. So I appeal to the people on the other side to come back and form NCRA. Thank you.

Mr Speaker, with deep humility and for and on behalf of this country, I think it is very important to go the way the country wants me to go. I would like to thank this side of the

House, the people who remain loyal to me regardless of what, I would like to publicly say that I am sorry that—

Mr Seth Gukuna (*interjecting*): Put them down.

Hon Danny Phillip: Renbell you stop, this is not your time; you even look like the Renbell ship.

(laughter)

But I will have you on during the course of this meeting, even if there is no motion, I can tell you the truth.

Mr Seth Gukuna: Point of order.

Hon Danny Philip: Sit down, this is not your time, this is my time, you have no permission to stand now.

Mr Seth Gukuna: Point of order.

Hon Danny Phillip: Sit down.

Mr Speaker: Order, order, member of Parliament for Rennell & Bellona and my hardworking Chairman of Housing Committee.

Hon Danny Philip: I can spill the bid if I wanted to and allow the motion to be debated here, and it would not be easy for you guys too. But for the purpose of this country, honourable members, and this country must listen that I have no regrets of the good intentions that I have displayed during the course of my short leadership. But you have a problem too that after this motion, after my resignation you must create a good government and leadership for this country. With that, I would like to tender my resignation.

(applause)

Mr Speaker: As I have said to comply with the Constitution that I have mentioned earlier by the Prime Minister, I suspend the sitting for one hour and then we come back after one hour. I suspend the sitting.

Sitting suspended at 10.37 am for an hour

Parliament resumes

Mr Speaker: Honourable Members, I wish to inform the House that I have received confirmation from the Government House that the Prime Minister has tendered his resignation in accordance with section 34(3)(d) of the Constitution. The Governor General has accepted the honourable Prime Minister's resignation and therefore the motion proposed by the member for North East Guadalcanal that the House be resolved that it has no confidence in the Prime Minister is negated.

I now call on the Prime Minister to exercise constitutional power and move the adjournment in line with precedent of this House, I suggest that the honourable Prime Minister moves a special adjournment so that at its adjournment today, the House adjourns to the day after the new Prime Minister has been elected.

Hon Danny Phillip: I move that at its adjournment today, Parliament adjourns until the day after a new prime minister has been elected in accordance with section 34 of the Constitution. For the interest of this House, it is very very important that we must enhance the progress of the election of a new prime minister. And so I move that Parliament be now adjourn.

Mr Speaker: Honourable Members, the motion is that at its adjournment today, Parliament stands adjourn until the day after a new Prime Minister has been elected in accordance with section 34 of the Constitution. Before I allow members to speak briefly, I say briefly, on this motion, I wish to remind all members to adhere to the rules of debate when making their contributions. I will endeavour to give as much leeway as possible to members as possible in terms of the contents of their speeches. However, I will not allow any comments or reference that in my view is in direct breach of Standing Order 636. Therefore, the floor is now open for debate.

Hon. Derek Sikua: Thank you Mr. Speaker and I thank the honourable Prime Minister for moving that special motion of adjournment. On behalf of the opposition side, we have no problem with the motion and we are very happy to support it as it will give time for Parliament and members of Parliament to consider who they would like to nominate to be elected as the next Prime Minister of Solomon Islands and of course for a new government to be formed. And so for that reason we have no problem supporting his motion. Thank you very much.

The motion for Parliament to adjourn until the day after a new Prime Minister is elected agreed to.

Hon Danny Phillip: I move that Parliament do now adjourn.

The House adjourned at 11.50 am