

22 FEBRUARY 2021

MONDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2021

Mr Speaker took the Chair at 9:21am.

Prayer.

MR SPEAKER: I announce the commencement of the Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

I would also like to use this opportunity to express greetings with respect to the sanctity of the Parliament this new morning. I also convey salutations this morning to the observation of our country. Furthermore, I extend greetings to the Chief Executive Officers of the Government Ministries and Corporations.

WARRANT OF APPOINTMENT

Mr Speaker read out the Warrant of Appointment.

I, TUIMALEALIIFANO VAALETOA SUALAUVI II, O LE AO O LE MALO OF THE INDEPENDENT OF SAMOA, in accordance to Article 82A of the Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa (“Constitution”), based on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly and approval in FK(21)5, on the 4th February 2021, I APPOINT –

LUAMANUVAO KATALAINA SAPOLU

In the position of **Ombudsman**, for a period of 6 years, on the conditions specified under Section VI.A. As in the Constitution and stated in the Ombudsman Act 2013.

GIVEN BY my hand this day 19th February 2021.

Signed: Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II
O LE AO O LE MALO.

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MR SPEAKER: Well, that is the warrant of appointment for the Ombudsman.

**SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2020/2021
– continuation debate on second reading – Day 24**

MR SPEAKER: Before the Work of the Assembly adjourned last Friday, the Hon Minister for Women, Community and Social Development was speaking.

Well, with respect I call on the Hon Minister to stand and continue your speech, pursuant of the matters raised by the members of Parliament.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA TALALELEI TUITAMA (Minister of Women, Community and Social Development): Mr Speaker, I would like to add on to the prayer that you have conveyed to our God Almighty. We would sleep in peace at night while trouble lurks to tempt us, because we do not adhere to the will of God. What about today? Now we meet today in good health. May the love and goodness of God bless our fellowship today. Thank you for the good life and salutations to the Hon Prime Minister and the sanctity of Cabinet.

Mr Speaker, before the adjournment of our Assembly last week, I was addressing the trainings that were carried out by the Ministry on the Strategies for constituencies. As we are all aware, the conditions of the Strategies have already been made clear and I will no longer address it. The only issue is that it was raised by some members, the various needs of the constituencies which are included in these Strategies that have already been implemented and registered. And I will briefly address for example, the types of strategies, because after Strategies are registered, the Ministry will conduct its work again...these are some of the requests stated in the Strategies, as they want to know how to implement this and that duty, and other requests that they have provided, then discussions will be carried out by the Ministry to better understand what the wisdom and discretion is in the villages, communities and constituencies that have submitted their Strategies.

Education for youths on diseases and health problems caused by unsafe or forced sex as well as pregnancies that affect girls under 16 years of age. Discussions were also conducted on ways to help young people deal with problems to help them mentally and to make sure they do not make the wrong decisions, such as suicide.

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One important part of these trainings is to discuss ways to prevent the excessive consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs especially by the youths to stop and eliminate abuse within families. These programs were implemented and funded by a branch of the United Nations or the United Nations Population Fund, which was called the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. So the work of the Ministry, they deal with finding partnerships as mentioned before, whereby requests are made for those who have special knowledge on matters that are required by the constituencies and they will go together, such as the Ministry of Health, the Police Department, if it is a matter of Law, it will also include the Attorney General.

There are trainings for people who take care of those with Disabilities. They are known as carer, which was funded by the Government of Australia through special programs for people with disabilities, or the Samoa Disability Programme. Firstly, providing equipment for the implementation, such as wheelchairs and canes for people with disabilities, this was also requested by some of the constituencies in their Policies. This equipment was funded from this special program, the Samoa Disability Programme, funded by the Australian Government.

Thirdly, trainings on ways to oppose violence against women, as requested by some constituencies, and funded by the Australian Government, through the program for the development for women and girls of Samoa or the Samoa Women Shaping Development Program.

The fourth is providing of assistance in response to the demands of the Women's Committee, such as contributing sewing machines to perform the preparation of clothes to carry out the trainings so that the women to establish their own small clothing businesses to earn income to take care of their children and families. These trainings were funded by the program by the Australian Government for the development of women and girls in Samoa as well as other trainings that have been implemented through the assistance from Government of China. These sewing classes are carried out with the assistance from the Government of China, whereby a large number of sewing machines were provided, as well as fabrics and all the equipment needed for these trainings.

Furthermore, allowances were also provided for food for those who were attending the trainings every day. Special teachers are brought directly from China to conduct these trainings. And when the trainings are done, the sewing machines and equipment used are donated as gifts to the women and to all the people that attended the trainings, in order for this development to continue for these people starting from within their families or constituencies. I talked with one of the special teachers from China, whether he was a business owner in China, or if he was an expert.

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Then he told me his story, he did not learn sewing in China, he was educated at the University in Japan for 5 years, with which he then applied for this opportunity to come to Samoa and teach sewing. They are not just people who taught themselves to sew at home. These specialists that have been brought in to our country for this program have been educated properly and have obtained the adequate knowledge and skills for the specific job, and now they are sharing their knowledge with us through this program.

Fifth, is the implementation of vegetable farms for some of the Women's Committees and various Organizations in the villages and within our constituencies, through the program for employment opportunities for the young people, which was funded by various Organizations of the United Nations, the One United Nation Youth Employment Programme. And also the special programme called the Samoa Disability Programme, funded by the Australian Government. Assistance was also provided by our companies, such as the British Tobacco with the funding of plants in order to respond to the needs of some constituencies to encourage healthy eating of vegetables and fruits to reduce diabetes and high blood pressure for our people.

One aid that was given through these Strategies for constituencies is to respond to the needs of the constituencies, which has also been implemented is the development of reservoirs, and as mentioned before the country is dependent on these natural reservoirs in times when there are problems with the water supply that is circulating and distributed through the pipelines. But there are still some reservoirs that the work is dependent on, like the underground water, as these are springs that are found in our coasts, whereby the spring will erupt, and it will make way for the water that is used for this purpose.

Some educational developments for women and girls have also been conducted as well as youth groups in matters of Leadership or the Leadership Capacity Building Programmes, which was implemented through the Women in Leadership Samoa Special Programme, funded by the Australian Government.

Some of the requests that were submitted, asking for the construction of Committee Houses to support the activities of the women's committees, well, documents to support this request have already been submitted to the Embassy of the Government of Japan, as well as the Embassy of the Government of China in Samoa.

Our Ministry also submitted a letter of appeal to the United Nations Office in Samoa, requesting for some assistance in response to the demands of the constituencies.

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For equipment to carry out the work for the collection and cleaning of garbage and rubbish, such as biopolymers and plastic waste that are situated at the bottom of the lagoons in the coastal areas of villages and districts. Well, my constituency also made a request regarding this matter, and we are waiting for a respond. We made appeals for aluminum boats that will be used by the untitled men of the village to collect the waste that is polluting the coral on the coast and to collect garbage that are not biodegradable, as it is destroying our coastlines and lagoons which is also affecting the marine life that our country depends on for food. Well, this is the goal of not only our constituency but also other constituencies, as there is a desire to clean our environment through the collection of rubbish that is destroying our coastal areas.

Mr Speaker, now I want to address the partnerships. As stated by some of the members, even though one of the members that spoke about this matter is not present, the Honourable Member for Lotofaga, and complained about the lack of real partnerships for some Private Organizations. But I can sincerely proclaim, that is one of the goals pursued by this Ministry, which is to work in cooperation with our partners, especially Private Organizations. The work that was carried out for the measles and awareness programs for Covid-19, the Ministry specially invited some Private Organizations such as the Nuanua o le Alofa, Faataua le Ola, the Samoa Family Health Association, Samoa Victim Support, the Branch of the World Health Organization, and also the Ministry of Police and the Ministry of Health, to join together in the efforts that this Ministry is spearheading.

Funds were also given to the Private Organizations to assist with the work they are implementing, especially the participation of their members in the programs of the Ministry, which includes the Cancer Society.

Currently, educational programs are ongoing in communities and villages on ways to oppose violence against women and children, as well as children and people with chronic illnesses. Private Organizations are also in attendance such as the Faataua le Ola, the Salvation Army, as well as the Ministry of Police, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour. This Ministry also carried out programs together with the Samoa Cancer Society. And the Organization was able to earn some money due to their participation.

I would also like to mention that the Chief Executive Officer of our Ministry was able to attend the memorial service of the Cancer Society in Samoa as stated by the member for Lotofaga. Furthermore, we are also working together with other Private Organizations under the Special Program for people with disabilities or the Samoa Disability Partnership Programme, funded by the Government of Australia.

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The Organizations include the Nuanua o le Alofa, the Samoa Victim Support, Women in Business Development, Goshen Trust, Support Organizations for those with mental health issues, the Soul Talk Organization, Samoa Spinal Network Organization, Samoa Association of Sign Language and Interpreters, Samoa Blind Persons Association, the Deaf Association, the Society for People with Disabilities, the Special Olympics of Samoa, the *Aoga o le Fia Malamalama*, Senese School and others. These Private Organizations have also received monetary assistance to carry out their work and programmes.

This is the assistance provided by our Government for the Private Organizations to help with their work and their efforts. There are times when these Organizations are invited by the Ministry to participate in some programmes, but they do not want to come. There are also instances whereby funds are given to some Private Organizations to implement their programmes, but when inspections are carried out, there are no programmes conducted with which these funds were requested for. And in the end, the staff of the Ministry of Women and Girls would take action to help some of these Private Organizations.

The assistance of the Ministry is not limited to carrying out its implementation, but they also assist with the compilation of Reports, in order to be able to continue to support our partnerships with Private Organizations. This matter is very important, because we do not just hand them the funds without terms, we conduct follow up inspections to make sure the money is being used properly for the activities it was requested to be used for. And if the funds have been used, reports and records are to be provided, because this information is needed by our partners who provided the funds. These reports and records are verifications to ensure that the funds provided through the Government for the implementation of these programs, are being used appropriately. That is a sign of the sincerity of the words and statements about our partnerships that is implemented by our Government via the Ministry of Women and Girls, Communities as well as our country.

One of the most important partnerships, which is encouraged by the Ministry, is to work together with all the village in the country through the village representatives and women representatives of the villages as well as the representatives of the Government. The essential part that should be known is that we are working in partnership with the Women's Committees in villages and communities to promote developments for the benefit of the villages and communities and the general welfare of the people of our country. And this important partnership is still ongoing.

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As I have mentioned, there are about 20 Private Organizations that are in partnership with out Ministry of Women and Girls. Therefore, I would like to say that the accusations that there are no partnerships between the Government and Private Organizations are wrong.

Mr Speaker, now I come to matters concerning policies or the village resolutions. The minor Legislations that are included in the policies, which are now known as the by-laws of each village. This is one of the important tasks that I am overjoyed about because from my observation, some communities still continue to record resolutions or policies of their own village. These policies or resolutions as provided for in the amendment of the Village Fono Amendment 2017, the heads of the village councils had clarified resolutions on serious issues that were dealt with by the chiefs and dignitaries and decisions have been made about it and it has been recorded as a means to respond to similar issues if they arise again in the future. This is an important matter that is recorded in these village policies, the resolutions of the types of crimes as well as the punishment for a person, or a group who carries out these types of crimes. These offenses include the abuse of women and children, as well as the punishments that have been determined by the village itself in accordance with the accord of the alii and faipule of the village.

There is ongoing work to include all villages, to ensure that all of these village policies are registered as required by the Law. This work is very essential to guarantee the peace and well-being of all people in the villages of our country. This is a very important project, and we want to convey our gratitude and congratulations to all the districts that have already integrated their guidelines for developments. In particular, thank you to the assembly of chiefs and dignitaries of the villages who have already registered their national policies, or resolutions to our Ministry. After these village policies have been registered, a copy is then given to the Police Department, a copy also to the Officer of the Attorney General and a copy also for the Judiciary. These are our Government bodies that are responsible for problems that arise in the communities, such as crimes. As the wisdom and prudence of each village has been provided for them, to consider and assist them in their decision-making. When such serious matters occur with the Acts.

Mr Speaker, as you are aware when our country was affected by the measles outbreak, at the end of the year 2019, this Ministry has contributed a lot.

MR SPEAKER: I beseech the Minster, as I call upon the member for Palauli le Falefa, Afioga Faumuina Tiatia Liuga.

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Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga (Palauli le Falefa): Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. The Hon Minister should take a break. This matter is very important as the Hon Minister has moved to address the Covid-19. The issue pertaining to the Village Act and the Act from which it was based on, because the villages are listening and to make sure village council fully understand these areas. We attend the village councils and there are plenty of opportunities to explain all these aspects. The issue mentioned, for the Judiciary to take into account the village punishments if the accused is convicted of the crimes that have already been determined by the village and its punishments. In other words, this connection is of huge importance, in the decision-making of a village, pertaining to their village laws to punish those who broke the law. The same condition should also be acknowledged by the Criminal Court. With all due respect.

MR SPEAKER: Very well, thank you. And I apologize to the Minister, as this question is very important. Since the country is listening and observing. The punishment that are carried out in the village, but when it is brought before the Court it is continued. This is because village punishment is different from civil punishment. But the Speaker would like to ask, will the village also receive a copy? Since a copy is given to the Ministry of Justice and a copy for the Police Department, but there might not be enough copies for the village. But also, is there a condition to ensure they persevere. I call on the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi (Prime Minister): Mr Speaker, this matter is quite important. In particular, all the members have attended many village councils and have carried out punishments. And many of these punishments differ, as most of the punishments are conducted step by step. Especially when the person that is being punished refuses to carry out the punishment. Then they will move straight to the decision-making. Therefore, these aspects are important, so that it is also understood well by those who object. Those who oppose are people who cause problems in the villages, especially when they look for a lawyer, for this case, in terms of exercising their rights. It is due to this kind of dispute that makes the Amendment of the Act very important. It values the communal rights, the rights of the community councils. Due to multiple cases like this, it ends with the division of a village. Since even the lawyer does not understand the conditions, as the lawyer does not consider the status of the village councils and the importance of these forums in the Law. It originated within this Parliament.

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I remember the time when this Act was presented, when the Tootooalii was alive, it also caused such disputes and unrest for lawyers. And news articles were filled with protest because many of the countries do not legislate these village Acts. These are the customs and traditions of each country.

Mr Speaker, this is the point that I wanted to address, due to the number of complications arising. And in the end, dissolution occurs....it caused some people to leave, and it caused the villages to be divided. Then the matter reached the Minister and decisions were made. In regard to this matter and the importance of the decisions made by the village to control bad behavior and immorality. Because these things will end in conflict, whereas no one will acknowledge the decisions made by the village. This will destroy the sanctity of the village and its prestigious council.

The restriction of the person has caused unrest and problems within the village. Especially in the matters of religion. The Court has also laid down its decision on the conditions pertaining to religion, which has been clearly stated. Your individual right will not be impeded, but in regard to the church and such matters. You walk to attend another church which is close to another village.

It is very important for the Government to respect the decisions of the communities, because if the matter is referred to the Criminal Court, as the case progresses, the Judge for the Criminal Court will ask. Did the village carry out a punishment? If you say yes, then the penalty will be reduced. Therefore, addressing this matter here is very important, due to the abundance of people that do not understand these aspects, and they oppose the implementation of the punishments. On the other hand, the authority of the village council cannot impede the rights of the individual to come and plead his case. And most of the case like this, for example, murder. There is a penalty to uphold the sanctity of the social relationships, within the village. But this does not prevent the right of a person to bring the matter to the Criminal Court. And with this situation there will be no restraints, the police will come and arrest them, because this is a serious crime.

So this point should be made clear, because the customs and traditions for punishments go hand in hand with the Law of the Criminal Courts. Therefore, the rights of an individual and the rights on the opinions of the village council are acknowledged. I am talking about these things because many incidents have occurred in our village. A lot of things happened, not only incidents with marijuana but there was also murder. They will still carry out their punishment to the village to maintain this honorable authority, but it does not prevent the right of the individual to bring his case before the Law. Especially if the Police Department was alerted, the police officers will not be stopped. They must conduct their duties to arrest the person that committed the crime.

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So, upon their arrival, they will have the protection of the village, to assist in the implementation of the support of the village to police.

Mr Speaker, this is important as it will showcase that the village council are also part of the country's police force. The Police Officers are also exercising their own prominent authority. To apprehend the criminal, or prosecuted, or they are escorted by the village. In this village, the residents and the leaders of the village fully understand, as they possess a deep sense of foresight and discretion.

MR SPEAKER: Very well thank you, it is now clear. Thank you, Hon Prime Minister, I believe the matter has been clarified on this important matter. Because this is also happening in my village at Fasitoo-uta. In the support of Satuala... these are things it is based upon. Thank you. I call upon the Minister.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA TALALELEI TUITAMA: Thank you Mr Speaker, I also am grateful for the interruptions to further clarify this matter. But I want to answer your question Mr Speaker that is it, after registration a copy is given to the village. Then the village will go and make copies, as we all know today there are a lot of computers to make copies. Each matai should then be given a copy. Then be aware of the Laws that will guide the village or constituency.

Mr Speaker the Hon Prime Minister has spoken, this is exactly the situation that exists. If it is registered in the Court, when the case comes to the Court, the Court will take into account a sentence that has already been implemented under the Laws of a village. But it does not stop them from making their own decision, according to the offense.

Mr Speaker, and the respects of the House, remember, that all of us sit in our village councils. You all know, and we are aware that when it comes to punishment, there is a guilty party, and there the not guilty one. When it comes to punishment, which is a serious sin. There are 100 pigs, but where will you get 100 pigs? How is it carried out? Most of the time...there is apology, that only 5 pigs are found. Then they get down on their knees because it has not been accomplished. Then a response will be, that is enough and do not do it again, such are the practices of village affairs. It is not that strict for the majority of villages. There is always the spirit, and the purpose of these Laws, is to put them up as a deterrent, to restrain them, from not doing it. There is no intention of the village, for the people to be enslaved in such situations. This is just to establish a big fine, as well as stating it is more than hundreds, say \$50,000 fine. The incentive is to confine the village, so that it will not happen. But it is not to enslave the village.

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When a fine is implemented and paid forth, most villages, are satisfied with an apology and tears if a given punishment cannot be met. This is how we live in our community.

MR SPEAKER: Pardon me the Hon Minister of Women. I call upon the member for Falealili East, Afioga Fuimaono Teo.

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo (Falealili East): This is an important part of the speech by the Hon Minister, but I just want to add on to the clarification by the Hon Leader of Government. It is important, it does mean that laws in the village will not be carried out, then you think you must come and register. This is on the village councils' consent, to come and register their rules or not. The significance of this matter is during investigation of the trial, the Court should ask the village for these Laws. On the other hand, our villages and communities should also understand. The laws that are made in the villages, should follow the Principal Act or Main Act. Because there are some villages that have their punishments and laws that are completely different from the Constitution.

That is the part that the men and women of the Court look into in order to be able to regulate the level of punishment. The important part is the Amendment of the Law, the Village Fono Act 1990. Now there is also the matter, when a punishment is done in the village before the person is punished, the person is called. The defendant will be called, to come and give a statement, for the village to hear before a punishment is implemented. Because in those days, that was how it was. The decision that has been made by the elders is the one that is implemented. However, now there is this part, where the person is called to give a statement, then a punishment is determined. It is a crime if the village does not implement this. I am saying this, because last Friday, one of the elders was banished, he has been banished for a long time maybe 8 years now, I will not say the village. However, the banishment of this elder, the village did not call upon the elder, to come and state his side of the story. The old man tried going to the village to take his fine, however, it was refused. The food was used but the other fine on traditional mats was not used. Now it has come before the Law, the Law is now looking into this area. The decision was called on Friday, for the old man to return to the village. The Alii and Faipule did not obey this rule, to call upon the old man for a statement. Because the man was standing to protect his land, the land of his family, but the village is banning it. This is further clarification, the Law now has additional provisions, unfortunately at first there was nothing. With respect.

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MR SPEAKER: Thank you Associate Minister for your assistance on the matter, I believe it is now understood, thank you for your help. Such is the work done together, I call upon the Hon Minister.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA TALALELEI TUITAMA: Thank you for your assistance, the member of Falealili. You have mentioned that the Law has additional provisions, meaning it is now strong. Mr Speaker, the speech by the member is correct. This is consideration in detail of the Bill that emphasizes this matter. Those who are punished, should be called upon by the village, to voice their defence, to clarify the situation, then the village can proceed with making a decision on the statement given. The interruption came about Mr Speaker, when I was at the matter, of discussing the measles which was near the end of 2019.

This Ministry contributed a lot, as they worked together with partners and members of the country, to support this big Ministry. In the major work faced with the Ministry of Health, in visiting all schools, and all families in the country. To ensure that all measles vaccinations are implemented, as our Government wants. It is a project that I believe Mr Speaker, was successful because of the cooperation. Not only the Government Ministries and partners, but also the support of the public, especially the work carried out by representatives of the village and Government, and women representatives who worked with our partners as I mentioned. The Leader of the Government has already spoken about this, the matter regarding the dyas by which Government work was closed, as vaccinations were carried out. But when the second work was carried out more than 2,000 people have not been vaccinated. A lot of the work has been done by the Ministry and its partners, to find those who have not been vaccinated.

Mr Speaker, as we were finishing work for the measles, it was at that time the world was affected by Covid-19, thus the Ministry did not wait. We took action and started work together with our partners to assist the Ministry of Health. By implementing programs, to inform the country on measures on the prevention of Covid-19, especially the preparation in all aspects so that we can respond, to the effects of the disease, if it comes to our lands. These preparations were great in every way. Not only in preparing the environment but also overall hygiene and protection, also in terms of food produce, encouraging people to grow root crops and fruits, as well as food sources, to fall back on during challenging times.

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The Ministry together with its partners also carried out the distribution of plants, like taro shoots, plants that grow quickly, mature quickly and can be used quickly. This included cassava, sweet potatoes, as well as vegetables for some families and communities, who needed this assistance.

Some aid such as material goods was also distributed, and goods for hygiene in families, for protection which are called hygiene packages. Or packages of material goods that can assist in prevention of these diseases, like masks and hand sanitizers, this was given out to families to assist them, especially the elderly. As well as mothers and children that have health condition. It was also possible to distribute vouchers for food and vouchers for cash power, which was funded by the United Nations Organization. Although we are still safe at this time, from the disease, but it continues. Warnings and reminders are sent to village representatives, Government representatives and women representatives of villages. To continue to monitor prevention in villages, communities, in order to reduce anxiety and confusion if the disease comes to our country. For example, cash power was distributed to families who have low income and have permanent health conditions and young children. This is about 375 cash powers at \$20, which was distributed to families. The total of \$7,500. Another one, are food packages vouchers, with the value of \$200, which was given out to about 800 families, to assist them in these times. As well as hygiene packages, which includes toilet soap, toilet paper, detergents for cleaning toilets. As well as other things, about 1250 of these packages were given out, with the total cost of \$136,000, which was given to families with low income and those with permanent health problems.

Mr Speaker, I will now come to the development of private water scheme. This is one of the developments of our Government, the Ministry of Women and the Samoa Water Authority are working on together. Currently, there are about 30 private water schemes that have been built and are being used by the people of the communities that have private water for drinking purposes. Some villages that were under this program, have amended their decision and have returned to using the water under supervision of the Samoa Water Authority. For transfer of water to their houses and homes.

This is a good aspect, Mr Speaker, because the Authority are concerned about the private water scheme. They want to have private water, but it is not well maintained so that the water is safe. For private water bodies, they have the responsibility of finding the water, to obtain water that remains completely clean, for human consumption. In the month of December last year, the private water project of the village Saaga in Siumu was completed. At the moment, the last private water under this Ministry, the development of private water, for the village of Paia in Savaii is also underway.

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And it is expected this work will be completed within the current quarter. The development of private water is now given to the Private Water Scheme Organization. They will continue it, the Private Water Scheme Organization is availed for requests from villages, who need a private water scheme. It will no longer be under this Ministry; overall administration is given to them. The expectation of private water schemes, the management is given to the village to look after the water pipes that may leak water. They also implement the fees on water that are appropriate, the expectation for this money, is collected and saved. When repairs need to be done, this fund will then be used to repair and improve their own private water.

Mr Speaker, now a word in regard to our Samoan traditional fine mat.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Elder Tafua, of Aleipata Itupa i Lalo.

Afioga Tafua Maluelue Tafua (Aleipata Itupa i Lalo): Pardon me Mr Speaker, I do not wish to intrude on the speech by the member. Perhaps it is also good to interrupt once in a while, to give the Hon Minister a break. But I stand with utmost respect, since the Hon Minister is moving away from the matter of private water schemes. I note from the speech of the Minister, that there is an Organisation of the Private Water Scheme. We also heard that now Saaga in Siumu and Paia now have private water developments. The Hon Minister also mentioned the leakages of water pipes.

However, the purpose of my question, since we are now in the period of Covid-19 and the chaos of the disease in water E. coli or the germ that is generated from...is the germ that is carried by us. This is reason for the question, because there is word that these villages are to look after the safety of their water, especially private ones. Considering that we are now in a period of the spread of diseases and also with the report seen in the newspaper, on E. coli that is found in some of our waters, but not the whole country.

The spirit of my question with respect Hon Minister, please is there a measure put in place for safety from his disease E. coli because it is also found in the records of SROS and the hospital, that there are continuous tests done on our waters, drinking water especially Government managed water. As for the water that is captured by Private water organisation, nothing is...I do not understand about it. This is why I am upstanding with respect, whether these water catchments are tested for the safety of these communities who use private water. With respect.

MR SPEAKER: Very well. I appease the Hon Minister as I call upon one of the senior members of the House, Hon Afioga Faumuina Tiatia Liuga.

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Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga: Thank you Mr Speaker. Since one of the villages of my constituency is part of the private water scheme. There are two water catchments that have already been tested and it is safe, this is the water in Sili, which includes Gautavai, Papa and Puleia, it is very safe. The other water catchment that is also safe is in Salailua.
With respect.

MR SPEAKER: Very well. Alright Falealili, is there any other matter you wish to address?

I call upon the other member of Falealili, Afioga Aumua.

Tofa Aumua Isaia Lameko (Falealili West): Thank you for the opportunity. Mr Speaker, a question please. Because in my understanding it is the goal of our Government to get clean water that is being used by the Water Authority. The water in our villages of Sapunaoa and Saleilua is the one used by Government. We also requested a private water scheme, unfortunately, a private water scheme cannot be done because there is Government water.

Therefore, I want to know, where is Government putting emphasis, is it Government water or private water where there is no chlorine injected. With respect. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Very well. Is there another interruption to correct...

I call upon Afioga Gafatasi Fuimaono Teo.

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo: Mr Speaker this is the same matter, it is important because... Thank you to villages that now have their own water schemes, the only thing is to test it whether it is safe. As for my constituency there is a road going inland to Salani-uta up until now, we are still waiting on our request. I thank the Minister if there are now plans, for the water to reach our side. It cannot be tested now since the water has not arrived. With respect.

MR SPEAKER: Your issue is that there is no water, right?

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo: Mr Speaker that is accurate.

MR SPEAKER: Well, I call upon the Minister to speak. Perhaps you do not have long to go for your speech.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA TALALELEI TUITAMA: Mr Speaker, I have 20 more pages left then I will finish. Thank you. Perhaps I will finish it tomorrow.

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MR SPEAKER: I am concerned since you are now old.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA TALALELEI TUITAMA: Mr Speaker, I will quickly answer this matter, there are 2 Ministries which have been queried in regard to our Ministry, Samoa Water Authority and the Ministry of Health. To clarify, the testing of E. coli and other diseases in water is the duty of the Ministry of Health. They go around to carry out these tests whether it is safe. Also E. coli is not a disease. E. coli is a germ, it is the name of the germ that is found in water. It is caused from water that flows downhill that is not safe, which goes straight into drinking water.

As for the private water scheme, it is under another entity. I have already mentioned that it has been allocated elsewhere, it is no longer under the Ministry, it is now under the Private Water Scheme Organization. If there are any problems or issues that may arise, you can contact the Samoa Water Authority where the Private Water Scheme is partner for assistance.

Mr Speaker, I will now continue with our side. Last year, a training course was carried out for weaving and making siapo as well as the Samoan traditional ietoga. The expectation is for everyone to get the opportunity to learn how to weave and make these important handicrafts of the country, and the determination of Government to increase the number of Samoan ietoga weaved, so that the big ietoga can be removed. We feel for the young men who have to carry this heavy cloth, which is mainly used at gatherings, and change it with this new smaller sized *ie Samoa*.

This Ministry has also confirmed the large amount of wealth obtained from our Samoan *ie*. Because as I mentioned before in this House not too long ago, the price of these *ie*, is not less than \$5,000 for the *tosi tasi*. The Ministry believes that there is a scarcity on the weaving of this *ie*, because the majority do not know how to weave it. The process of preparing the leaves *lauie* and weaving the *Samoa ie*. A plan was set up by the Ministry, where skilled craftswomen were called, those who weave the *ie Samoa* to carry out training or workshops which was implemented by the Ministry, women committees as well as young women who do not work were invited, if they want to find success through the wealth that comes from the Samoan *ie*, come and learn how to make this important heirloom of our country. This program has already been done, and we have witnessed the growth of weaving houses since this training was implemented.

We would also like to express our gratitude to our Government for sharing the relief funds for The Covid-19 pandemic of more than \$1 million was distributed out to weaving committees, to assist some of our people who are facing these difficult times.

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These funds benefited all mothers who participate in weaving committees, our program is also encouraging the planting of *lauie* and *lauua* trees, because of the belief that there should be enough raw materials or *lauie* and *lauua* to be able to make the Samoan *ie* and *siapo*. It is a very successful development, and the Ministry continues to follow up all the weaving committees in the inspections that are carried out on the weaving of the Samoan *ie*.

Currently there are 82 weaving committees in Upolu and 56 in Salafai that have already registered under our Ministry. The new weaving committees that registered after training, for Upolu there are 26, and Savaii 7. This adds up to overall total of, 108 in Upolu, and 63 in Savaii. There are 171 weaving committees now in the country. Up to now, the total number of Samoan *ies* since this event was implemented in 2013, the *tosi tasi ie*, is 2,250 that is in the country. The *tosi lua* is 204. The *tosi tolu* is 133. And this is the situation that our Government has noticed in the current state affairs like funerals, we noticed that we rarely see a *tosi tasi ie* displayed. Because it is expensive, it is like a family product that is kept in search of money and wealth to be sold abroad. This means, the majority of the new woven *ie*, is the *tosi lua* and *tosi tolu*. And now we have also encouraged it. We stopped the *tosi tolu*, but now our Government is encouraging it again, to weave the *tosi tolu* to use for *faalavelave* in the country since some women are hesitant to use the *tosi tasi*. I have already explained, that the *tosi tasi* is 1 millimeter in diameter. The *tosi lua*, is 2 millimeters in diameter, *tosi tolu* is 3 millimeters in diameter. These strips cannot be done like how the *lauie* was stripped back in the day, using a special knife or a seashell, now we use a needle. Because it is not possible to get this narrowness if you use another tool except the needle, then you will get a 1 millimeter, 2 millimeter and 3 millimeters. Now, women are encouraged to be active in weaving the *tosi tolu* to use for our *faalavelave* so that we will stop using the big *ie* that we have now.

Mr Speaker, now moving on to the Women Committee. We have already implemented...

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, there is an aspect where the work of this Committee is very important, because there is a lot of money that is spent each year. It is an amount that is criticized by some, whether this arrangement of carrying out this program be left to the Committee alone like it was in the past without the involvement of the Government.

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It is a large amount of money that has already affected the Government and a lot of funds have been spent. Most of this money used, also includes funding for visits to rural areas, and the majority of the fund is given out after the work is complete during the day of fine mat exhibition day or *faalelegapepe*.

This means it is an invite for women in Upolu to come to Apia and in Savaii to come to Salelologa. There is the thought of saving Government funds, the Government has reached out to carry out the work, the work usually carried out by mothers, work the Government should not be involved in. But what the Cabinet is trying to emphasize, is for the Government to lead and continue, and over time it will be let go.

There is an important aspect of this allure to encourage women to make their own weaving houses. In the beginning when these weaving houses were made, there was always a spirit of reluctance, the mother wanted...why would I go there for nothing, when it is best for me to stay home and do our chores, when I have time, I will weave? As for the spirit stated by the Minister, it generates ideas, to come together and have a weaving group will encourage the happiness in weaving. Because one mother would be happy to see another weaving their own mat. It is like working together to do something, Mr Speaker, this is a way to make mothers happy to set up a weaving house, especially if there is something else. This is to encourage conversation because mothers like to talk, talk to their spouses, to their family, talk about what they are doing. This creates a spirit of happiness to keep weaving these traditional *ie*. It is the initiative of Government to push this incentive, so that we will continue to have these family heirlooms to use during *faalavelave*. There I also word that the Hon Minister has already spoken about, these heirlooms we are working on, this is the culmination of Samoan respect. In other words, it should continue on and on, and for the Government to stand behind its customs and traditions to push and initiate, to promote good things. This goes in line with the assistance to facilitate family *faalavelave*. It is the same because these are the things that go in line with reducing the number of tinned fish from 48, now there is a cartoon of 8 or 6. This has made it easier for some families during *faalavelave*. Perhaps if the Cabinet had not supported this, I do not know if there were a Government that would go ahead and emphasize our customs and traditions on the area of *faalavelave*.

Which is what we are doing now, as noted from the speech by the Minister, it seems their plans have resulted to the preparation of these smaller *ie*, to be used for *faalavelave*, because it is something that is continuous, considering the difficulty of finding the big *ie*. Not only are they big, but there is also a lot spent on preparing it, but it is ugly.

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Now it is prepared, if you are listening this *ie* is prepared, but the key that makes the *ie* stand out, is the border, the feather decoration.

The decorations used for the two woven fine mats for faalavelave and a labelled number 1 fine mat both have similar preparations. So whenever they are displayed, they are almost alike, given the beauty of the decorations shown as well as its length which is quite bigger, but it is easier to take and also holds more magnificence at a ceremonial service when these fine mats are demonstrated.

Mr Speaker, the entire aim and similar complaint given, what exactly is this program about? The fine mats are done for their own faalavelave, and so why does the Government encourage it, the same with the tapa design or the siapo. These are the two main treasures or inheritance which we solely rely on whenever we have traditional exchanges (faaloaloga). So, comes hundreds of years later, this will be an ongoing task, which we must value as Samoans. The term inheritance has just been valued after they have been treasured entirely as mentioned by the Minister. And I wish to congratulate the Minister and the Ministry for pushing forth with this program which should be continued, as we are proud Samoans of our culture and traditions.

During one of my recent trips to Fiji, the Fijian Government was giving the ava ceremony which was the norm between us and Fijian Government. Their respects given is a normal practice done between us, with their gift of a whale tooth with a mire fastened to it I beg tolerance. During the time of oratory speeches, which is filled with oratory speaking chiefs inside, there is the display of the tosi tasi fine mat. Now that Banimarama has seen it, his forefather, the mother of his mother is a Samoan who understands our Samoan inheritance. When I saw Banimarama and the displaying of the beautiful fine mat. What they are used to is that once the fine mat display is made the official from the Ministry would take it right away. And once they receive it the Prime Minister could not calm himself down and calls over to bring it to be laid beside him. Banimarama does not want this mat to be lost elsewhere as it is very beautiful. These fine mats, whenever a white person comes, they want to take it or even a siapo. Where to take it? They will take it and laminate it in a glass frame and pin it up in their room. When a guest comes into the room, they will show it off to them this fine mat from Samoa. So right now with regards to our inheritance, who would not be proud at the splendor and sustenance of our local artefacts treasured by the Minister and the Ministry.

MR SPEAKER: Well done thank you this matter is now clear.

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The Government's intention was to put it to the future to develop and encourage our inheritance/treasures, and this is furthermore our culture in another way. Treasures, this is the culture of our country which we are very proud of.

Since we have now come to our normal recess hour, the Hon Minister's statement will conclude when we come back from our break. I announce the suspension of our Proceedings for our normal recess.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly set aside for normal recess at 10:47am and resumed at 11:35am.

Debate continued on the Government Response on the second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021.

MR SPEAKER: I wish to announce the resumption of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

During our recess the Hon Minister of Women, Community and Social Development was speaking.

I call upon the Hon Minister to resume your remarks with due respect.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA TALALELEI TUITAMA: Mr Speaker, we have gained new strength from our break upon the Leader of the House, the dignity of Parliament. Well done and thank you to the Clerk and the Office of Parliament.

Continuing on with our explanation, given the raising matter on fine mats in the interjection made. Mr Speaker, I have talked about the exhibition. We have witnessed this display for many years ago. And I have seen it with all honesty, this is one main day for the women of Samoa, the weaving houses of women become joyful together and before day breaks, the women would long prepare the display of their woven fine mats.

The women's expressions are very pleased with the opportunity to showcase their talent, especially their hard work for many days. Because it is not like the small fine mat, we see which takes 2 weeks to weave. If such is the size we have in Samoa, it only takes a week because of its length. As for these fine mats, it takes 6 months to weave one fine mat before it is completed.

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When comes time for the exhibition of fine mats, it is wonderful to see the singing and dancing and the showcasing of their happy appearances feeling thankful that they have achieved their purpose of exhibition.

Mr Speaker, there is the exhibition I had attended, I was shocked when I received the *tosi* 1 fine mat and it was really nice, a 12-year-old girl had woven it. There was another fine mat by another man. That gave way for me to say to my Ministry to not limit this to women only. Majority of the young youth are unemployed whereby I had given an example regarding a man's job and this girl. If a girl starts weaving for 6 months' time, the encouragement by the Government is to earn \$1000. After 6 months' time, the fine mat will be complete, sell it for \$5000. \$6000 for 6 months. Therefore, \$1000 per month if the money earned for *ie tosi tosi*.

So coming to the lad, find this \$6000. Go and plant the plantation, with 3.000 taro shoots. 9 months later the plantation is matured. Once the plantation is matured, the other 1000 is stolen. Perhaps the taro under 1000 will only be used. If a taro costs \$1 per taro, therefore, by 9 months' time he will not earn 1000 or perhaps just \$900 tala.

MR SPEAKER: I wish to remind the Minister, there is also the *auasamo*.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA TALALELEI TUITAMA: Thus, when the *asamo* is added, it will only come to \$500, afterwards they will ask again for money. Such is the example, when a lad develops a plantation for 9 months in the rain and sun, dirty, itchy, all these before the fruit is bore. Whilst the mother sits in the shade, such as what the Leader of the House had said, do talk to the other mother, talk about their husbands, gossip about the other mother, and at the end of the day, after 6 months there is the earning of \$6000.

A simple example to provide a clear clarification. Why not push our children that are unemployed, and a few men to weave together with the women. If a woman weaves and gets tired, the man can take over and weave 2 feet whilst the woman can take a break. This will complete this woven mat thus avoiding the 6 months deadline. Those are the examples honourable Speaker, in fixing this matter. The foresight is there but these are just a few examples.

There are two areas I have observed whether appropriate for this assistance to be given. There were talks on the decorations of the Samoan fine mats. The fine mats from the past as observed, were made out of tiny feathers. These feathers were from the *segavao* bird and the *manutagi* bird. There was warranty not to extinct these birds in the past. Therefore, there is the natural feather and the green colour, red color, yellow color that is spent on this Samoan fine mat.

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We have already consulted with the Ministry; it has been advised a look out for colours that do not smudge. Because such is the length for some of these fine mats I have seen, it is eye catching to see a very decorative fine mat, however it has been covered with the chicken feathers decoration. Therefore, the Ministry has already conducted consultations, to seek colours that do not smudge to avoid the hard work, lest there is a spread from the smeared colour of the feather.

Mr Speaker, I am aware the talks about the Samoan fine mat, but I will come to Women's committee. The Ministry has also completed the works of engagement with the women's committee of Samoa. To provide clarification to the village of the President of the Women's Council, for the purpose of the Government. For collaboration, encourage development for health, and the general cleanliness of schools, economic development growth including weaving committees and others. The agricultural development includes gardening farming for food consumption. This includes programs that are against domestic violence within the homes. The focus of this undertaking is for all women to be included, it is vital that women are valued from all village communities in this committee, so that all women gain the opportunity to project developments by our Government for the benefit of all people. So that all women are included, for them to gain the benefit given by the Government. In further, this is one of the requests that must be adhered to so that the women's committee is eligible for registration to the Ministry.

The essence is for all women's committees to be included. One of our meetings, I had raised this part, regarding the term inclusivity. Therefore, for all Women's Groups to be included. Such is the reason I had attempted in accordance with the Act and the selection of women's representatives from the women's committees. Then to the village council of chiefs who verifies it, before it is referred to the Ministry and then to the Cabinet Ministers for the approval of this representative. So, through this process, since it is just the non-traditional villages, there is a statement under the Act, and the Ministry is attempting to expand this women's committee, to incorporate the women's committee for non-traditional villages. Such is the essence of this Legislation that will be discussed by our Parliament in a later time. As known the women's committee has already released, the registration is now completed for the funding allocation passed by Parliament under the Government's budget support for the Covid-19 pandemic.

There is continuous works so that the registration of all women group committees can be done for all villages of the country, so that everyone gets the share of the benefit for their developments.

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The Government has belief of the roles of these committees for the benefit of the general public. Such is reasoning the Government is not biased as they are looking broadly at other vital responsibilities of the women committees as clarified. Currently, there are 208 women committees in total from around Samoa that have been registered. However there a few documents that needs completion for some of the committees for registrations. Such is the reminder again, for the sake of the country that all committees come under the Women's Council under the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development. Other women's councils are confused by other women which are not a body of the Government. They are owned by individuals. There is no relationship with the women's council of Samoa, under the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.

It is good that I emphasise this area honourable Speaker and the dignity of Parliament. With regards to roles, there was a lack of understanding by some of the women. We are still continuing our awareness programs to clarify them as there is one women's committee tasked with these roles and duties, which pertains to general hygiene.

There is the gardening development project, whereby there is the preparation of the environment and general cleanliness within villages. Together with prevention of domestic violence on women and children. Also, the weaving groups that comes under this project for women. There is no more committee for this and that, there is only one women's committee which shares the various roles for each village. The women's committee has already been registered from our Ministry, Upolu is 113, Savaii is 76, non-traditional villages, have already registered their committees of 29. The total women's committees existing in Samoa is 218.

Mr Speaker, I wish to make a statement to those whom the Government now entrusts including the benefits upon the villages of Samoa. Collaborate with this Ministry will be your contribution to the development of our country. These representatives are Upolu 125, Savaii 84. The total village representatives in the country are 209. Secondly, Government representatives, Upolu is 46, do note that these Government representatives but is specifically for non-traditional villages. And there is a round in the town area. A total of 46 Government representatives at present. Women representatives, Upolu has 118, and Savaii has 77. The current total is 195.

Then I come to village representatives. As provided under the Internal Affairs Act as stated under it the selection of these members by the village council of chiefs. And when it comes time for this role to be terminated, then the village council is advised.

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In the previous year 2019, each were given copies of their responsibilities to do. And we had observed this task during our fellowship with the Ministry. Perhaps this was one of the things that has misguided the village representatives because there was no affirming answer to this matter. Other village members were new, and they did not receive the roles and responsibilities they were supposed to carry out. On that note, the Ministry has already prepared a booklet which enlists all the duties of a village representative as stipulated under the Internal Affairs Act. But it is disappointing as there are still those that could not follow through with this Guide. Clarification has already been given to village representatives including women representatives and Government representatives. In monthly meetings that is still ongoing every month, for them who are working and are paid by the Government Ministry.

If there is a village representative who opposes the Government, that is its own freedom, but it is a must that they resign in order to take the role of village representative as it is impossible to execute this service to the Government, if there is disagreement towards the Government. Similar to Government representatives and women representatives, your freedom and choice is not provided. But our Ministry will not accept your rejection upon the plans of the Government executed by the Ministry or any other plans of the Government.

Mr Speaker, perhaps this area is now understood but I will move on to women's representatives. The women's representatives are chosen by women's groups and is approved by the village council of chiefs, as reiterated in the start. This position is also provisioned under the Women Internal Affairs Amendment Act 2009. Right now, our Ministry is embarking to incorporate all women of Samoa within women's groups, not only with non-traditional villages as well as traditional villages that are located close to the township area.

I wish to convey gratitude to the women's committee, there is cooperation and collaboration Not only with the health, the women's groups of our village, as well as agriculture and vegetable gardens, also the Samoan fine mat and the preventing of domestic violence on women and children. We have made countless contributions for the wellbeing of our country, if we had collaborated. May the plans of this year be blessed.

Mr Speaker, this is the last Sitting, for this Parliament, and as alluded to earlier members, such is the heart-warming spirit felt today. Mr Speaker, Hon Leupepe Toleafoa Faafisi, I wish not to acclaim you, although the feeling of gratitude cannot be put aside. This is the third Speaker that has sat in that Chair, ever since I was a member for the last 20 years. You have been quite outstanding in undertaking your role as the Speaker of the House, especially in managing the Sittings of Samoa.

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There was a Parliament whereby we shared the same constituency, and even though our constituency is now divided into 2 electoral districts, we are still one constituency. Your honourable is from Apulu, the sanctity of Apulu, the sacredness of Faletolu, the village of Faleasiu. For this reason, I am proud and grateful. There were plentiful days where you lacked strength regardless of this matter, you never gave up given your calling. Well done to your bravery, and your perseverance, we shall push forth together. Perhaps a time will come for me to visit you and play cards together. May the goodness of God add more strength upon you and so as His blessings.

The Hon Prime Minister, Tuilaepa Fatialofa Auelua Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi, even though there are remaining days of our fellowship as the Cabinet, I wish to record a word for the sake of our listening public. No strength from the words of our language can elucidate the supremacy, and deepness of gratifying feeling for me to undertake this role as the Leader of the Independent State of Samoa. It is a must that any Samoan should feel the same way as I do with respect to your wisdom and gift from God upon you, for the prosperity of Samoa. We have seen the growth of these blessings and benefits for Samoa due to your leadership, your effort, and your foresight. Thank you for your blessings upon this constituency and myself. May blessings from heaven be upon you, and the support of faletua Gillian, and your family. It is grateful so see that you still have renewed strength to continue your leadership for Samoa. In the words of the country, let the wind choose the right person and I wish not to make aware that you yourself is the right person or tautaimatapalapala. For that, we wish you blessings upon the upcoming general elections and the continuous leadership for the Government of Samoa in the new Parliament ahead. Bless you.

To the dignity of this House, the sacred and chosen members of this XVI Parliament, the Hon Cabinet Ministers, and the dignity of Parliament. We are the voice of our constituencies given their demands and developments for the welfare of Samoa from us as the chosen representatives of our constituencies. Well done. The acknowledgement of this Ministry for your advice, to further improve our service. Whatever effort we were able to bring forth, together with the funds the Government was able to give, we trust, it will never satisfy some of the requests that was put forth. Whatever troubles or issues you have observed of this Ministry, may it be a lesson we take to improve our service for the Ministry in the future. Because true as the Leader of the House had said, Rome was not built in one day. Whatever mistakes done by this Ministry and was observed by the Cabinet and Parliament.

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We beseech you from all of us here in the Ministry, may our mistakes be covered in your farsightedness and your consideration before our Lord and His gospel. May blessings be upon the general elections of the country.

To the rest of my fellow members who will not make it back in the new Parliament, God's days are abundant, and the sun will rise again. To my fellow members who will rest with me after this Parliament, well done to your bravery. Blessed are we for we have made the most difficult decision and became victorious from it. True are the words of the Bible, "It is only the person that can conquer its impulses that is greater." May blessings be upon us and our vote when we come to our general elections. When the HRPP succeeds again, it also our victory together. We will part ways with the heart filled with satisfaction due to your collaboration during this Parliament. So may God add more strength and knowledge upon you in order to continue your service for Samoa in any way the Lord desires.

Mr Speaker, lest I forget Atua. I wish to take this chance to publicize my acknowledgement to the honourable Associate Minister of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, Afioga Salausa Dr. John Ah Ching. Well done Salausa who is my Associate colleague, my fellow member, my brother on the medical side. We do have a connection in the village of Lepea. Words cannot explain the importance and truthful your support means to me during the work we had undertook together for the Ministries we were chosen to oversee. Not only with the Ministry of Health for 3 years, but also the Ministry we are currently undertaking for these 2 years. Where we worked in the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development. I will pray that you will come back in the next Parliament. Your good works will bear fruit and you will earn the labour of your own works. It is only God who can reward the works that we do. May blessings be upon you in the next general elections.

Mr Speaker, the acknowledgement to the CEO of the Ministry is not forgotten, as well as the staff who are serving for the health the last 3 years of this Parliamentary Term and our team work together Well done to your service and support in times of difficulties for the security of our country. Most importantly, I wish to acknowledge the Lady CEO of the Ministry as well as the Assistant CEO and the entire staff of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.

Congratulations to the Hon Lady CEO, our collaboration has been observed, as there was no issue noticed, but just collaborating diligently and delightfully in the drive to complete our responsibilities and purposes and the faith of the Government upon us and the Ministry.

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Well done to your service. May the goodness of God renew and increase you strength, as well as the knowledge in executing your responsibilities you have been called to do.

Mr Speaker, allow me to acknowledge the support of my constituency of Aana Alofi No.1. Hail the Sa Tuala clan, the Mavaega clan, Taulagi clan, the clans of Tuiaana Tamalelagi, Hail Tamaaitu and Maugafa, as well as Galumalemana le Aloalii and the sanctity of Faletolu and Fuaifale. *Ua api le uli, ua sina foi le galu. Ua faaifo i le tuasivi faiva o le manusina, ae ua faaifo foi i fanua tuliga na i le tuasivi. O le a faaifo nai le naaloo le tuamafafilimalae, ua gase foi le galo i paau.* My constituency, your respect is immense which is reason I am here for this 5 year Term that is about to finish. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. It is through your support which has blessed my duties, and the recognition of our constituency's seat not only in Parliament but also in Cabinet. Blessed are we, for this is a supreme respect we have achieved. Who would have thought the house of Asomua would be lifted to the hills. These benefits are not for me alone, but it is because of your genuine support and powerful prayers. Thank you very much, to my beloved village of Faleasiu.

What exactly is the measure for your high respect? I beg your pardon since it is the best we can do as your servant. All our subvillages now have access roads. Which needs no elaboration, the access roads. Right now, a lot of constituencies have pleaded for access roads, when already, 4 of our subvillages have access roads. So some of these access roads are beginning to be in a bad state due to the poor maintenance by some of the subvillages. Roughly \$1.5million public funds was spent on constructing access roads.

The improvement of our spring water pool is now done. Our village is very happy with the restoration of our natural spring water pool. It was no small public funds that was utilized to execute this work. Close to \$100,000 was spent on this project.

Our school buildings and sports grounds has also improved. Our children were squashed for a lot of years in Sapulu school building. In addition the insecurity of young children on public roads when walking from Tauaoo and Moamoa to the one school in Sapulu. As such, we now have 2 secondary schools, one in Sapulu and another in Moamoa. In which very recently, there was the launching of additional classrooms for Sapulu school.

Currently, both of these school buildings are packed, due to the growing numbers of educated young people in our village. At the moment, there are 514 students at the school in Sapulu, the school in Moamoa has 402 students, with 9 teachers.

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If we add in our playground, which has become the centre for any sports training in our village, this accumulates to the big amount of money, at approximately \$1.5 million spent for these significant developments, for the common good of our village.

We are also drinking clean water, fresh and safe. It is not a secret every year, our village has been in misery for many years, particularly those of our village who are residing inland at Faleasiu Uta, due to the difficulty of getting water for consumption and on a daily basis. This project has been attempted for a long time. And this project was attempted since the end of the previous Term.

This was a huge challenge faced by the Water Authority, because they tried to drill this water as far inland as the drilling machine could handle. And this was the lowest that the machine could afford to go, it was only 200 metres where the water was installed. However, the goal was not achieved, for the water to reach farther inland where other villagers reside, far beyond the place where the water was drilled. Therefore, a water tank was set up inland, to pump the water to the spot where the water was drilled, which then enabled the supply of water to every family of Faleasiu again, residing inland where the water line was drilled, as well as some of the areas of Fasitoo-uta in Lepale. The total cost of this project to date is \$7.12 million tala.

The improvement of our roads in Sapulu are ongoing at the moment. The road to Sapulu is currently underway and it is not a cheap project. The cost of this major project is \$2.3 million tala. And there are many and many blessings that will be received by those who live along this road, as well as some of our villagers who live in Faleasiu-uta. The amount of money spent by our Government on these developments is about \$15 million tala.

To my constituency, this is not a small blessing. The respects of our constituency, the purpose of me announcing these projects, it is not to praise your member, but it is to extend our appreciation to the Government where it is due, because of its fair share of Samoa's wealth, and acknowledging as well some of our needs that were persuasively voiced. That is the evidence, of the solidarity and sound Governance of the HRPP. And it is a great honour for me as a member to be a part of this Political Party.

There are 49 other constituencies who are in need, just like ours. And the respond from the Government depends on, on the wealth that can be mobilized from time to time. My dear constituency, my village of Faleasiu, the need to work and serve you never ends. However, it has also been noticed that some of the nobles of our district and our community want to serve. And many are qualified to carry the position of our constituency.

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I really admire our meeting in Vaifoa as we prepared for our previous election. I clearly expressed with honesty because this will be the last Term where I will contest for office. The belief is there are those who speak and those who observe. As the saying of the country goes, o le aso ma le filiga o le aso foi ma le mataigatila which means each day has its purpose. Sagai ane ia ai o le tai, fili ile tai se agava'a, choose someone who is worthy. May your craft be chiefly, and take it easy. The last request from your member who is about to have a rest, indeed this is my last request. Our constituency, let us support the Government which has proved the betterment of Samoa with good governance and have already established developments, and it has proven the success of our nation, and has blessed our village as well. God help us with our general election. Thank you for your authority and your support within 10 years when I carried and sat on the chair of the constituency. Clemency will be remembered but destruction will be forgotten. Forgive me for my shortcomings. As the words of the nation goes, *e poto le tautai ae le atoa ia I le liu o lona sa*, even a wise fisherman can make mistakes.

Mr Speaker, I will now conclude my speech by extending my great appreciation to the honest and kind support of my wife and kids in New Zealand, Australia and America as well as here in Samoa. Thank you for your support and sincere love. Should I also acknowledge all my families here in Samoa and abroad, for supporting me these many years, may God reward you for your generousities.

Mr Speaker, if you have observed or noted a stance, or behavior that has been unchiefly in the House of Samoa, I pray that you forgive this member. My fellow Ministers, as well as members of this House, forgive any shortcomings of the member of Faleasiu or Aana No.1 with your Godly prudence.

Farewell and God bless.

The House showed their happiness with applause after the response from the Minister of Women, Community and Social Development.

MR SPEAKER: Very well, the Parliament has listened, the people of Samoa have indeed heard especially the constituency of Aana Alofi No. 1 the village of Faleasiu. The respects of Aiga, Faletolu and Fuaifale regarding the wonderful speech and the farewell address of the Hon Minister, Afioga i le Alo o Tamaalelagi o Tuitama.

Well said, beautifully articulated as these ears are eager to listen to orations made by elders who have not missed a single thing, well done. If the constituency enjoyed listening to the speech, then so is to the hearing of the Parliament.

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Also our prayer may God's blessing fall upon you and your work life as you venture to carry out other duties, may our God be compassionate to guard, protect and fulfill them.

God bless this day, especially the clear and wonderful Ministerial address heard by Samoa and this Parliament, on matters raised by members questioning the tasks and responsibilities of the Ministry of Women. Thank you. A word on behalf of us all, whatever faults of our Parliament, return it to uninhabited islands, forgive us. *E tetele lava i Pesega*, but entrusting that it will disappear in good villages such is the will of God.

I believe the opportunity will now be given to the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour. The Hon Minister Afioga Lautafi, you may take the floor to address the queries raised by members in our Sitting.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL (Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour): Thank you Mr Speaker. I thought we were going to have a break after the conclusion of the wonderful speech by the Minister. But I will not do as I will, as the Chair has authority.

Before I say a word I first want to acknowledge the respects of the House. In the presence of Mr Speaker, the Hon Prime Minister, also the respects of Ministers of Cabinet. I welcome as well the Associate Ministers, to that side of Chamber to Chairpersons of Parliamentary Committees, and to all distinguished members of this House.

I also pay respects to the Legislative Assembly office who are assisting our last Session as well as other past Sittings. I acknowledge the reverences of Chief Executive Officers of Government Ministries, who are the hands and feet of Government. I commend you all for your services.

I voice good tidings of this glorious morning. As the reverences of the morning are laid like the fish in the deep, because the divinities of this morning belongs to God. I greet His Excellency Le Ao o le Malo, Afioga Tuiaana Vaaletoa Sualauvi II and his Goodlady. Also to the Member of the Council of Deputies Afioga Le Mamea Tuiletufuga Ropati Mualia and your Goodlady.

Respects to Tiafau, the grounds of Government, the grounds of political strife and affiliations of Samoa. There is also the support of the clergy throughout several denominations, who are residing in Samoa, whilst the blessings for Samoa and people.

I acknowledge the Judiciary, with respect to the Chief Justice, the President and all men and women of the Court. Least I cannot forget the support from homes, the respects of *Aiga o Tupu, Aiga o Nofo, Aiga o Papa. O Aiga sa tu tafaitoa, o aiga sa tufaletia, ae o lo o siva taufao foi usoga a Tumua ma Pule, Ituau ma Alataua, Aiga i le Tai ma le Vaa o Fonoti.*

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I also acknowledge the support of our neighbors the respects of the Fale Tutuila and Fale Tuimanua. Greetings to the Governor and his Goodlady, the President and Mr Speaker of the Two Houses. The respects of *Sua ma le Vaifanua, Fofu ma Aitulagi, Saole ma Saleaamua ma le mamalu i le Launiu na Saelua. Afio foi lau Afioa i le Laau na Amotasi, Faatuiolomotu, Auva o Tootoo o le Faleula, ia ma upu ia oe le Manuatele.*

Those are the divinities of Samoa, when it is dawn in Saua, the light lightens up in Analega in the house of the lady named Alataua who predicted the good fortunes of Samoa. Now we are basking in the light of Christianity, pardon me. Now be seated on your paramount mounds and immovable platforms, and may these sanctities be remained as celebration of belles, as these sanctities have reached here in Tiafau.

I want to speak upon my constituency of Satupaitea, *aua le Susu o Asiata le Vaimalae, o Oe na Falefa i ai Tumua, ona o lau tausivaatele. Susu le Aiga Samoeleoi o le Aiga na muaimalae i Aiga o Samoa. Susu Tupai o le vaitiu o Nafanua, Afifio Alo o Lilomaiava aua Faanana ma Tuimaseve. Tulou le Aiga Savalomua ma le Suafa o le Fauatea. Afifio Tapaaufanua o le Tonumaipea o le ao o Salafai. Alaalatai le paia ia te oe o le mamalu o ituaiga i le Alataua, Tapaulefano, Nofo a Pule, ma le Matuafia.* Also the support of *faletua* and *tausi, saoa*, the strength of the constituency, also the children, the future of our constituency. Pardon me also for the support of our elders men and women of our constituency.

I acknowledge as well the support of servants of the Gospel who are working in Satupaitea, praying day and night, for blessings upon our constituency. Those are the respects of Satupaitea from Malaeaoga until Falepau. Thank you my constituency, for the prayers and support. Wish me luck as your member conveys a word, in this last Sitting of this Term. I will disclose some of the developments that your member was able to do, especially the Ministry under my administration, in the past 5 years.

Before Satupaitea speaks Mr Speaker, it is unfortunate that we started with a full crew. But to this hour, perhaps our journey has been wrecked by strong winds. On the sad passing of the member Afioa Vaafusuaga Toleafoa Ken Poutoa, I offer sincere condolences, and sympathies of this constituency, on the passing due to the divine calling of God, to one of our crew members. May God comfort his wife Vaelaa and his daughter, family, and especially the constituency.

Likewise, for our brother Lealailepule, because of the passing of his late mother. You are blessed Lealailepule because you have accomplished taking care of your mother till the end. Perhaps that is the reason why you are fortunate.

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Mr Speaker, I would like to comment on some of the issues that were raised. But there are not many issues either. There were also a few issues...i believe only 2 issues that we explained at the time it was mentioned, or on the days that followed, some of these matters was also thoroughly explained and clarified by the Prime Minister. But I will continue to talk about the duties of the Ministry, which is under my supervision, and give overall explanations of those issues.

I will start with the Ministry. There are 9 entities Mr Speaker that are under supervision at the moment together with other duties. I will begin with the Accident Compensation Corporation or ACC. Perhaps it is not a secret anymore the reason why Government established this entity. The mandate of the Corporation is, to reduce any type of impact on the life of Samoa for those who are involved in accidents. The legislations that lead the Corporation are, the Accident Compensation Act 1989, the Non Governmental Organisations Act 2001, Public Finance Management Act 2001 and the Labour Act 2013.

The funding of this Corporation as you know, it is always good to talk about it so that the people who are listening to it understand it. Because many of the Ministry's activities are not clear to the general public. These funds are used to operate this account, which are employee funds. A cent is taken from the worker and a cent from the person who owns the job to be deposited in this fund, as well as the tax or levy obtained from oil and gasoline, which is 5 cents a gallon. The money that is collected, that is invested in this Corporation, ensures there is sufficient funds in case a compensation is needed for people involved in accidents, and there is fund to use. This is one responsibility of the Corporation, to quickly get compensation for those involved in accidents at work or in their families.

One of the major responsibilities of the Corporation is to quickly restore the strength of those affected, to immediately return to a life as usual. Rehabilitation of these people, so that they can recover quickly, and their lives can return to a life as usual. These funds in the Ministry, also helps Government in its plans.

Investments. As for investments, heard by the country, which was used to buy a building. I think it was last year when we purchased the Gold Star which is right beside the ACC building. Well, we built the market here in Savalalo. Yes. The CT scan at the hospital, that is one asset funded by ACC for the health of people. The construction of our building for our Embassy in Australia. This is part of the fund; the Ministry invests this money which is managed by them. In addition to other conditions the Ministry is looking at where this money will be used and invested.

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Looking at the past 5 years, it is clear that the number of those involved in accidents has decreased, and the percentage of them continues to decrease from year to year. This is a sure testimony of the excellent implementation of tasks carried out by the Accident Compensation Corporation together with the Ministry of Health and Fire Emergency Services, and other Departments working together to minimize the chances of our people being affected by accidents. Do trainings, conduct drills, make sure that there are people working in the Department who are experts in this field to train staff, to make sure that they know where to go when an accident occurs, to know what to do in families to avoid any chances of people being involved in accidents. Apparently, these are the things we usually disregard. When we get home and see children's toys and other things lying around. We do not think much of it.

But those are things that create accidents and affects the entire life of a person. They stand on it and slip, those are such occurrences. This is why there are trainings so that we...are always conscious, these things cause accidents. These are all the areas the Ministry is working on. So, the constant decline, for example, in the previous year, there was a 40% decrease on the number of transportation accidents, for vehicles, it was 40%. The number of deaths from car accidents and transportation was reduced at 6%. There is a 24% reduction in the number of work accidents – work related actions based on the next year. There was a 41% reduction in employee injuries after work. This means, they have gone home. It is evident that workers are taking note of ways to reduce their exposure to accidents.

These records are important, because they inspire the desire to keep doing these good things when we leave the workplace. Even when we are working, pay close attention to whether the environment you are working in is good, if there is anything that you might get hurt from when it falls. An accident can happen immediately. In a blink of an eye, and you will be affected for the rest of your life. These are some situations... therefore these records, it is important for people to listen to it, particularly the employees to have the desire to keep reducing these types of percentages. By next year it will decrease again. Because every year as I stated, from 2016 until last year, it continues to drop. This means things are working. We are getting results, speaks for themselves, it is decreasing.

In the wake of our people who are affected and use wheelchairs, the ACC have purchased a special car. I believe this car is worth almost a million, the Ministry brought it to help transport these people travelling to do their special exercises, rehabilitation programs, so that their affected bodies can be restored, to be able to walk again.

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This is why we specially got 79 people who were involved in these accidents, who need this type of car. Before these people had to go in those small cars. But now we have this special car to take them around.

In the past year, our Ministry also provided support to our athletes of the South Pacific Games, especially the transportation of those who came and needed special assistance. Our Ministry also provided the special vehicle to transport our disabled athletes who came.

With the emergence of Covid, the Government needed assistance, and the ACC gave \$10 million, and another \$2 million to assist to ensure there is enough funding from the Ministry of Finance and Ministry, to provide assistance given to our people. Together with assistance given to people leasing at the market to forfeit payments on their blocks, giving them 4 months free of lease to sell their goods, through this assistance. The overall total is nearly \$4 million. So, there is a great contribution from this Ministry to assistance provided by the Government. Whichever desire of the Government for another assistance later on, the ACC is willing to help as much as they can. The Ministry also have plans to establish our new Office in Savaii. We have been given the lease from Samoa Land Corporation to the area situated in town, that is where the work schedule of the ACC has arrived to maybe next year, perhaps our Office in Savaii will be set up this year in order to make it easier for those in Savaii to go and voice their issues there, instead of coming to Apia. Perhaps our department is operating according to the cause of its establishment as well as working under the Act, so far it is going well.

Some people are still questioning the services of this Ministry, discussions are being aired on radio and TV, we are also encouraging to watch and listen to it. Because a lot of people do not understand on who can get compensation and who cannot. Well, we will setup an Office in Savaii, come and visit. If not, call this Office to explain the services of Government given to the public.

Mr Speaker, I now come to the Ministry in charge of gambling activities. This is one Department, this Authority, it is not big, but it was established by Government to authorize the operation of gambling activities because Government have noticed that there are many games like this. Not only in Apia, but throughout rural areas, especially bingo and others. This Authority was established to ensure that no illegal method can enter or be used that can affect those who want to play with clear mind and spirit and get money to invest in their developments.

That was one responsibility, along with the management of the Casino. Well, these are good developments, good developments, but there should be a Ministry to overlook it so that no one finds a way to harm those I have mentioned.

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MR SPEAKER: Thank you. Well, I note that the Hon Minister is well prepared which I believe will not finish today, it is best to finish it tomorrow. I believe there is not much left, but your speech is important. My apologies, but you are one of the elders, you can conclude your address tomorrow.

Since we have arrived at the conclusion and adjournment time of our work, I apologize to the Hon Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labor you may conclude your speech tomorrow.

Since we are in the presence of the wife for the Minister of Women, Community and Social Development in her supporting role as a mother and family, I believe it should be made known to Parliament, especially our country listening. Our duties are supported by our families. It is like that, especially the constituency. As for this morning, I was informed that we are in the presence of the wife and children of the Minister of Women, Community and Social Development.

The Chair believes, compliment and gratitude should be conveyed. Thank you, Hon Tuitama, thus your respects I hold dear, in honor of *Tuitama o Alo o Tamaalelagi, ia ma le Apulu, o le igoa o le Faletolu ma Fuaifale, o ou tafai ma ou faleupolu e faapena ona feagai ma le tausiga o le paia o aiga ma ona Tapaau*. Thank you to your respectable wife, the saying is true, that behind every good man stands a greater woman. It is said her worth is more than a pearl. It is like a tree planted beside a waterfall; it bears fruit in its seasons. Therefore, I express my sincere gratitude. It is no wonder the Hon Minister stood in victory; this is one Minister who strives in his duties for the best of the country, also for the constituency listening in, \$7+ million has been spent on developments of Faleasiu. Well, it seems a lot of money has been spent on Faleasiu. Nonetheless, thank you very much. We will be remembered for our work. Actions speak volumes.

The Chair conveys its gratitude for being here to witness the final speech of the Minister. Blessed is Hon Tuitama. It is like so. God bless your wife and children also your family. Before we adjourn, I call upon the member of Aleipata Itupa I Lalo to conclude our Sitting with a prayer.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly were adjourned at 1:02pm until 9:00am Tuesday, 23 February 2021.