

27 FEBRUARY 2021

SATURDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2021

The Deputy Speaker took the Chair at 2:12 in accordance to Standing Order 27(1).

Prayer.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I announce the resumption of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

I take this opportunity to greet again the dignity of this House. I can never proceed as I must heed appreciation to the Hon Prime Minister and the Cabinet, members, thank you for your patience.

Furthermore, the honorable Associate Ministers and this Side of the House, thank you very much for today. There is view that we do have other engagements nevertheless you have agreed to meet us through your service to the country given your callings.

To the sacred salutations of the Heads of Government Ministries, well done to you and your perseverance. Your attendance is very much invaluable upon our Proceedings.

To the support of Samoa, you are a country that is revered, grant me your sacred support whilst the chosen Leaders of the country embark with its discussions for the sake of our country's prosperity.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

The Clerk read out the Presentation of Paper pursuant to 49(2).

1. P.P.2020/2021 No.138, Annual Report of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology 2019/2020.

**SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading – Day 27**

MR SPEAKER: During the adjournment of Proceedings last night the Hon Minister of Revenue and Expenditure Committee had already spoken together with the Ministry of Police and Correction Services.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Respectfully I call upon your honour to give your response in relation to the raising matters by the Parliament. The Hon Minister of Finance.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI (Minister of Finance): Mr Speaker and the esteemed members of Parliament, we are in the spirit of appreciation as we come to the final Sitting of this XVI Parliament, given the abiding and loving arms of our Lord and Master in Heaven. Praises be unto Him for His Love and Kindness for guiding us here today in order to carry on with our duties and responsibilities in accordance to our Leadership callings we were chosen to do right from the start of this Parliament in 2016 until today.

Mr Speaker, I greet the dignity and notable members of Parliament gathered here, greetings to the honorable Speaker of the House of Leaders of Samoa, greetings to the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers, the Associate Ministers, Chairpersons of Parliamentary Committees and the members of Parliament of Samoa.

I greet the Heads of Government Ministries and Public Bodies gathered here today in our Parliamentary Sitting, especially the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, the Parliament staff who are working effortlessly as well as the police officials who working for the protection and security of our Leaders and in its Sitting here in Tiafau.

I would further like to greet and welcome the support of Samoa in your honorific salutations *i Aiga ma latou Tama, faapea le usoga a Tumua ma Puleono i Salafai*.

Since Parliament is covered with a dark cloud due to God's calling upon one of the Members of Parliament, the late Vaafusuaga Toleafoa Ken Poutoa, I wish to convey our sincerest condolences to the wife and children, relatives and families of the constituency of Lefaga and Faleaseela. Bless your journey Vaafusuaga and may you find a place in heaven to be with your Master.

Mr Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity granted to clarify some of the issues raised by the members of Parliament in accordance with the Supplementary Appropriation (No.1) Budget 2020/2021 tabled before Parliament together with matters related to the current responsibilities undertaken, the Hon Minister of Finance is tasked with economic related matters of Samoa.

I wish to begin an explanation with the existing economy of Samoa as well as the previous years.

The recent financial year 2019/2020 that ended in June of the previous year 2020, there is belief it will a year that will mark a significant rise in our economic developments given the various major projects including the Pacific Games in July 2019 which received thousands of incoming athletes and their families who have generated us high revenue.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

It was an unforgettable view the strong support of the country in assistance to the purpose most particularly the huge benefit poured into our country and the many hotels that were fully booked, restaurants, handicraft sales and many other local developments that had benefited from this hosting. Nevertheless, no one knows or aware of what will happen, like the measles outbreak that had hit us in 2019 and the Covid that is continuing to affect the entire world.

At the end of the financial year, there was an economic recession of 3.2% due to the serious impacts in our tourism sector as one of the main pillars to our economy including the impact upon our trade when restrictions were enforced to markets where our local goods were sold and the employment of most of our local workers. When news was received on this pandemic effects globally, our Government did not wait any longer. Immediate essential works and services were enforced right away for our security so as to prevent this virus from reaching our shores.

Mr Speaker, it is not cheap nor easy the works implemented continuously by our frontliner workers for the protection of Samoa. I further observed with great concern the safety of these workers who have offered their lives to safeguard the country at all times. Millions of monies are being utilized to purchase the necessary resources and special gears for these frontline workers, and to pay the isolated locals traveling in, most especially the needed preparations in support of the works of the National Emergency Organizing Committee.

Since Parliament is being covered with a dark cloud through God's calling upon one of the members, the late Vaafusuaga Toleafoa Ken Poutoa, I wish to express our sincere sympathies to the wife and child especially the constituency of Lefaga and Faleseela. Have a safe trip Vaafusuaga and may you find a good resting place in heaven with the Most High.

Your honor, I have mentioned these matters given the constant queries upon the works of the Government and its current response to the impacts of Covid-19. I further wish to state the 2 stimulus packages that the Government had publicized in April and June of the year 2020, where an appropriated amount of nearly \$150million was made.

As aware, there are 5 principal areas that are given priority and emphasis of the Government including, first, special funds for the protection of Samoa from contagious Covid-19 disease or the health and medical responds. 2. Household assistance. 3. Support for the private sector.

4. Ensure the preparation of sufficient food security, so that Samoa is not affected with the calamities that are faced by other countries, as there have been died due to food shortage. It was also broadcasted on televisions the continuous long queues in progress in order for people to obtain free food.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

And 5, General assistance for other private including schools, development and internal affairs within the village communities, communication and priority services needed for our safety. I will provide the details regarding the assistance provided by our Government for some of the major areas so as to reduce the Covid-19 pandemic in the country including, 1. There is observation with regards to plentiful food available at this time, not only the crops within the country, but also goods imported offered at any time.

Government has released aid to the agriculture sector for its 2 stimulus package programs, so that the country does not go into poverty. The building of houses and machinery have begun in order to produce local goods with the hope to increase goods and food for consumption, so as to maintain the availability of food supplies and also to raise local businesses and employment opportunities.

Pension has raised significantly to \$160 from \$145 since the first month. In addition to the various services such as traveling between Upolu and Savaii, as well as medical treatment and medicinal for eligible senior citizens who have reached 65 years old.

Since Parliament has been covered with a dark cloud through God's calling upon one of its members, the late Vaafusuaga Ken Poutoa, I wish to convey our deepest condolences to his wife and child, especially families and the constituency of Lefaga and Faleaseela. Bless your journey Vaafusuaga and may you find a place in heaven with the Almighty God.

Henceforth, if it is a pensioner traveling from Savaii for Apia twice a week then additional medical checkup must be done, treat first and admit them in Motootua so as to regain strength with medical supplies being paid by the Government, no doubt a compensation cost of \$1,000 per month will be paid by the Government.

The NPF has also received this benefit more than once, the dividends for the country through its contributors, where a dividend cash payout of 1.1% was made in December 2019 at a total amount of \$7.8million. 5% disbursement in July 2020 at a budget allocation of \$35.5million, 1.5% in November 2020 at a total cost of \$10.6million and 1.5% in March this year, at a total value of \$10.6million per annum.

In summary, the total contribution by NPF to Samoa's economy through its membership contributions was \$64.5million during the Covid-19. Houses have been built through the partnership with ADRA for the vulnerable families who are not safe in their home places and surroundings including the impacts of this contagious virus.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

The exemption of food duties for the required goods each day as stated by the Hon Minister of Revenue last night. This is one huge benefit which was a blessing to the whole country when duty exemption was imposed on food items needed on a daily basis.

This huge aid was undoubtedly a blessing upon the people who were laid off since the impact upon our tourism industry in the previous year. The cost of water and electricity were also minimized for each households including the privates sector, during the implementation of our two stimulus packages in the previous year. The Government had undertaken the first stimulus package of 2% interest for 3 months for borrowed money of individuals.

I am pleased to make aware the 11,799 recipients that have received this package at a total spending of \$2.3million. The State has paid for the interest of borrowed money for all our partnerships of the Development Bank of Samoa for 3 months which had benefited 2,290 receivers at a total amount of \$1.9million.

One of the programs is currently undertaken in assistance to the agricultural products for the protection of food in the country and agricultural program through financial aid of \$4million utilized by the Development Bank of Samoa. Loans and interest rates were also cancelled for the Samoa Housing Corporation, and 2,723 recipients had benefited from this. A huge amount could not be obtained by the Corporation as a result of the urge provided for the country during the challenges faced by Samoa with regards to the pandemic disease.

There is a huge assistance granted to the education sector at \$18million from the one government grant. An increase of \$3.6million this year from \$14.4 million in the previous year. A program which was initiated by the HRPP Government in previous years to further push our children. There is a special money allocation for the improvement of accommodation facilities for the Ministry of Health workers in the rural areas, this assistance is to strengthen the health services in order to raise high its service delivery in any village community where health clinic services are located.

Raising assistance for village developments including the Ministry of Women programs on weaving and the revival of women's hygiene groups within all village communities. These women groups will boost improvement within each village in order to value and strengthen the message to heed cleanliness within the homes especially for younger children as made aware in the previous years, especially when it is a central location to implement Government programs including immunization programmes regarding our normal daily living from many years ago.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

The registering of all residents was also used with a direct \$50 disbursement made to all registrations for this purpose. Once this plan is achieved, it will greatly assist us by providing and confirming the information about each individual in preparation for major projects and direct assistance from the Government in the future.

I wish to acknowledge one of Government's vital assistance and the release of its funding allocation in assistance to the services provided by our Government partners, the Non-Government Organizations or the NGOs. This includes le Mapuifagalele, Loto Taumafai, Nuanua ole Alofa, Goshen Trust, Samoa Cancer Society, Samoa Victim Support, Agape Association, Nursing Association and many other organizations that are partnering with the Government and are offering assistance to the works of the Government and thus bringing our country prosperity most especially any assistance offered during these times of difficulty.

Your honour, Government is donating various relief assistance to the private sector and their workers during these challenging times. As known, the partnership between the Government and the private sector has been for years now, and as such, Government is lending a helping hand to them for the sake of our people given their salutation, as the private sector is the engine of growth for the country. So Government assistance includes the support for unemployed workers by setting up special courses at the National University of Samoa and the Australian Pacific Training Coalition or the APTC to prepare them all in the future when borders are reopened and when employment recommences. There are 699 people who have been registered and have benefited from this program.

Government has already released unemployment benefits to more than 2000 people including employees with reduced working hours, thus most of this funding goes hugely towards the tourism sector.

Furthermore there are over 200 people who are now eligible under the Government programs through the Ministry of Agriculture, specifically the unemployed to work on replanting the trees in specific the cocoa and coconut which is the main priority of the Government. This program will continue to strongly encourage farming products in order to create more employment for the majority.

A 2% stimulus package will be paid by the Government for 3 months for the borrowings of 1,665 private businesses to 4 bank institutions using the money allocation of \$3.1million. Relief assistance has also been granted as assistance to the private sector for exported goods including exemption tax.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Financial support such as the cancellation of lease payments for a period of time has been made to Government Offices such as NPF, ACC, Faleolo Airport and the Matautu Wharf, Fugalei Market, Savalalo, Vaitele and Salelologa and other Government housing that are used by other people of the private sector.

One of the major financial supports by the Government for our tourism development hotels was making good use of these operations to isolate thousands and thousands of our local returnees since the month of May of last year. For your information, \$6.3million has already been spent on the various hotel operations the Government is using which excludes \$3million given to quarantine sites for our returning residents. This was a huge assistance from the Government for our local hotel developments at the time and furthermore, it has also reflected Government's intention to protect Samoa at all times.

It is necessary that I make a mention of the various financial assistance by the Government which has provided enormous support our private sector, most particularly our tourism industry every year. Mr Speaker, the allocated amount of up to \$13million is utilized to fund our awareness services for our overseas markets including the normal duties undertaken by the Samoa Tourism Authority every year.

Other than this direct money allocation, there are many Government projects that are used to bring in this financial assistance for the developing of our tourism industry as provided in detail below:

Firstly, build a fitting environment to raise the services for the private sector businesses including tourism developments or a conducive environment for the private sector development including the following, build and improve infrastructural services of the Government right up to Faleolo and the western area. Improve electricity and clean water in any corner of the country. Develop airports and ports for the traveling of visitors and the necessary goods imported for the export of our local products.

Install road signage from town towards the rural areas and conduct street naming so as to make daily traveling easier and to obtain opportunities to develop local businesses using telecommunication and advance technology.

2. The Samoa Airways now exists to find cheap airfares and extra seats for inbound tourists into the country. For your information now, the Samoa Airways Company continues to make trading with those who are leasing the aircrafts to look at the time and what should have been done. Because if the aircraft was here at present time, then the aircraft would have remained not operational and not generate us any revenue. As such, findings are still underway, so that we can reach a decision this year as soon as our borders are reopened.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

A Museum has been built the same with Apia City Lookout in addition to the various services we have available so as to attract tourists in the country.

Improvement of ferry services for traveling between Upolu and Savaii, and between Samoa and American Samoa. Yesterday the country has monitored the arrival of the ferry from Australia. Which is traveling between Mulifanua and Salelologa. The ferry is also secured and there is a separate waiting area for passengers and specific area for vehicles. But I wish to relay gratitude to the Hon Minister of Works for arranging this development. This is a good additional service for the security of our traveling.

It is a project to again beautify our Apia Waterfront entirely. It could also lead us to strengthen the production of goods in Samoa in order to provide cheap prices for our locals but also to create employment for the majority. This is the final assistance with regards to some of the projects and infrastructural developments in which the Government is aiming to raise so as to increase the standard of our economy, most importantly the support towards our tourism operations and the private sector. As such, it is necessary to repeat a clarification for the sake of the country, that these financial supports are still continuing for all areas of the country.

Mr Speaker, with regards to the matters mentioned above, this is the image of a country with strong leadership that reflects priority for its people. And no doubt the reason for the strong support and faith of our foreign partners where our financial support comes from at all times. Based on the belief that public funds are managed well and that Samoa is also compliant.

With transparency, accountability and principle of good governance. Our partnership is very important. We try our best to adhere to the policies and report back to our partners. That is where we give our strong support because there was no issue with our reporting back to them in accordance with their demands.

Mr Speaker, the month of January of this year, there was a special investigation by the International Monetary Fund Article for Consultation to monitor the economic situation in Samoa. This investigation takes two to three year's assessment for most countries of the world. Nevertheless, the assessment for Samoa is only done on a yearly basis. The meaning of this explanation is that Samoa values its partnership with major Organizations who are monitoring the economy of the world. Therefore this is an important indicator which confirms the revelation of Government, there are no secret indicators or secret information for a forsaken economy, implemented by the Ministries that are dealing with Samoa's economy. This work is now completed, and the result of the assessment has shown the likely reduction of Samoa's economy to 7.8% for the current financial year 2020/2021. We have about 4 more months left.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Mr Speaker, in accordance with this key indicator and the various countries around the world and the Pacific in particular, the economy for the Government of Fiji has dropped significantly from 10% to 21%, although this should not concern us. All nations are putting in place appropriate measures, in order to operate their economies during these difficult times. Majority of Pacific Island countries are facing very high unemployment rate. This covers the tourism industry including the Public Service. Due to the difficult situation faced by their economies. Other Pacific countries are relying solely on foreign borrowings in order for their economies to operate. But they are no comparison with the situation in Samoa, we are still acquiring revenues to operate our economy and order our goods from overseas for our daily demands.

At the conclusion of these investigation, the readjustment of Samoa's economy was based on the following. 1. Delay in the implementation of other major projects due to unforeseen circumstances which includes border restrictions. Also the challenges with the ordering of machinery and resources from markets who are mostly affected by the Covid-19. 2. The huge impact of our economy by the two floods from the month of December 2020.

It has been recorded the aggregate cost of \$71 million for developments that were destructed including all clearance works for the township area. 3. Unconfirmed time schedule for Covid-19 vaccines, where the reopening of our borders for our economic recovery depends on most particularly our tourism development.

Mr Speaker, warmth gratitude was felt at the conclusion of investigations. Which clearly provides an immense contribution of our stimulus package, of which 2 were done. It was implemented, and the IMF has stated that this has lessened the impacts of Covid-19 upon Samoa's economy and has provided much assistance to the most vulnerable. They have also supported the attempts of the Government to encouraging major developments. It has also managed to create employment opportunities for the majority in order to support their families and to further push the economic cycle process in times where these processes were very much needed.

This is also reflected in the IMF investigation the strong and fast economic recovery of Samoa for the next 2 years ahead. Furthermore this forecast is assumed to be based a strong belief that there is good preparation set out by the Government already for the next 3 years ahead. With regards to foreign reserves, the status of funding allocation for trade is now set aside and is very strong and was not done for the first time. Hence, I will now elaborate the following matters.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I beg tolerance to the speaking Hon Minister, as I allow the chance to the member for Faleata.

Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi (Faleata West): The first thing your honor, because I am not really clear of the IMF term you are using, recent investigation has just been done and there is the financial situation for Samoa and its economy. So what is IMF? Please. Because us from the backside area would like to know. Secondly, you have spoken of the last project, and the new boat that we will have for Salafai. I am aware that there is an existing boat in place whilst I was still in Parliament. Which means that the current ferry is not long enough, and now we are getting another one. I am therefore unsure about the length of this boat.

I hear that there are two separate areas for placing vehicles and passengers. So how big is this new ferry? And what is the cost? Does this mean to say that traveling will be made a lot easier and improved for the island of Salafai? Is it possible for your honour to explain it a little bit, if the IMF and whatever reason is this investigation for? Does this mean that foreign experts will be taking all the money and fees to the world, and Samoa is in this situation. I wish to acquire understanding. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister of Works. Perhaps we can gain assistance.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang (Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure): Thank you for the opportunity, the Minister of Finance has not yet responded to the IMF, I have thought that the member has longed understood of IMF, as for the ferry we have all the details of the ferry. But let us go for a tea before I can show you this ferry. Because we have already explained this matter, yet again I am elucidating it again. However you did not state this in your speech. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is also important for us from Savaii, leaving aside...but the main thing is that the ferry is now here for Salafai.

Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi: I did question the Hon Minister of Finance, because I wanted to get clarification on IMF, as IMF is not understood by the majority. But when it comes to Lealailepule, well you are all aware. Lealailepule is well aware of IMF, WEF, while the people listening in.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

I beg lenience to the Hon Minister of Works; it is correct that you did speak of this vessel. But we do not know it, what this vessel is all about. It is a three story or four story ferry because these major developments is received by Samoa on what we are doing and prioritize for our people. But it is not me who is questioning, it is for the sake of our people. Please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister of Shipping of Samoa, will you respond to this query?

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai (Salega East): Mr Speaker, can you...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Olo, what are you upstanding for.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: This is similar to Lealailepule's query,

DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, you should be upstanding. We are going backwards. You did not mention this in your remarks.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: There is no Standing Order on that matter.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is. If raising matters are not mentioned that regards Government response...

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: It is a big boat lest it is stranded in Salelologa.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sit down Olo, thank you. I beg tolerance to the member you have been here for quite some time now. We do have our Standing Orders, and you are not allowed to raise new matters except for matters that were already raised in your speeches, in which the Government can respond to. Matters that were raised...although you are pointing to papers which covers it. Olo did not mention anything in relation to these matters. Such is what is happening with matters that are again building up new thoughts, whilst the Government is attempting to clarify which is unfitting. I beg the pardon of the member.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: I beg forbearance, the only thing is to state whether you had mentioned this matter in your remarks. It is clear that there was no such thing mentioned. The main idea is that I did give a speech on the Supplementary Budget of Parliament. That is the reason, but the member is saying something new...

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Very well, I have received you well. There is a time for me to... when we come to the consideration of the budget. Perhaps if I delay this statement, then I will pity your honor. But I beg tolerance, I did not mention although I did not mention this in my statement regardless the Government response shall resume. You did hear it. I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance to resume the speech in response to the statement of the member, who had spoken last night about this financial matter.

Go ahead about the vessel and do mind what the Chair had said.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: I wish to firstly respond to Olo. I have listened and am of the view that this vessel will be stuck in Salelologa. No it is no big vessel Olo, this vessel is specifically for our passageway we currently have. Such as the Express we have, such is it.

As for Leala, this is no three-story vessel, it is only on top of...it is like the Express we have. The main thing is that this ferry is quite bigger and is quite speedy. Well is that good enough.

Afioga Aliimalemanu Alofa Tuuau (Alataua West): Can I be allowed an opportunity Mr Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will grant you a chance honorable Chairperson, since you have an input in this budget.

Afioga Aliimalemanu Alofa Tuuau: Thank you for the chance. It was stated in the statement that this was covered in a direct assistance from this boat from Apia to Tutuila. The question I therefore wish to make, is this ferry from Apia to Tutuila different from the ferry that is now here for Mulifanua and Salelologa? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call upon...this is very simple...Go ahead.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: Thank you for the question, Chairperson and the Finance Committee.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: This will prolong our works.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: The boat here, was built by Japan that goes to Tutuila, that was gifted by Japan and will arrive next year. As for our existing ferry, perhaps it is this Friday we will go and see it and launch it, Friday of next week. But the funding will be done by the Shipping Company this ferry from Australia. With due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I call upon the honorable Leader of the House.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Sailele Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi (Prime Minister): Even shipping services, there is the thought that ferries were operational. For up to 3 hours before we had the new ferry from overseas, it took 3 hours for this boat to get wet in the ocean. There is only one reason for plans upon these ferries. Our economy has improved and the number of traveling people to Savaii and Upolu have increased. So what this means is, this is just a statement on a ferry traveling to Savaii. But the ferry belongs to Samoa entirely. We have a growing number of people coming from here too. So our main motive is to make ease the traveling to Savaii, most especially for family faalavelave. No doubt this is a long-term plan, which came from this House, the need for ferry requirement especially proposed ferries as the general elections is nearing. Similarly for those who wants to travel to Savaii to vote and return again. Such is our appreciation to the Minister and the Committee, there is no waiting for this ferry until it is completed. So the ferry prepared by the Government of Japan, it is a huge ferry such as the big ferries from Japan. So this ferry is an additional boat for our traveling. I have thought that no questions would be given again on this boat which could generate additional revenue earning for our economy. And up to this day, this is one matter that is being constantly raised, given existing Government restrictions so as to open the passageway for ferries today on Sundays. And the truth is, majority of us who go to Savaii, they would travel to run errands and go for visits. They are there to pour out wealth for the hotel developments. So there is plentiful time especially during the weekends whereby up to the hotel in Fagamalo, all hotels are fully booked. So this is no lie the long-term plans of the Shipping Services. For inter-island travelling given our growing population especially family matters that are often occurring. I am of the view that this is no thought-provoking matter, the main idea is that the Hon Minister has given his statement. And the main thing for us to do is to convey our appreciation for another avenue for us to sail smooth our journey.

This is the assistance.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will repeat this again. Well done to our long-term vision, especially when as we draw near the country's general elections. This is therefore fitting. Thank you to both Hon Ministers.

I call upon the Hon Minister to provide the definition for IMF. You can translate it in Samoan, I guess this is what the Faleata member wants.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Thank you very much for the time granted upon me to give clarification. This is called International Monetary Fund, that is the Samoan translation. Note that majority of this Parliament, with regards to this international monetary fund, consist of doctor specialists who oversees each country and the standard of their economies. Why is there a problem with these economies? They are the ones who make consultations. When the IMF comes, they take 2 weeks of stay here in Apia. They firstly meet with the Minister and the Head of the Ministry of Finance, the Governor of the Central Bank. Because it seems that these are the main areas, that engages with the IMF. So they come and investigate thoroughly, then we can have a meeting with them, before they have another meeting with the Ministry Head of Finance and their staff, they question debts, where are the debts taken, or guarantee, with regards to the financial report. |So the arrangement of the Budget, policies. It is similar with discussing with the Governor of the Central Bank and staff, on these matters. As also known by the Central Bank, they are the ones who look after the banks, and revenue earnings in the country, as well as money going out of the country.

Such is the plan, to give all, and the Ministry of Agriculture in another day, to make consultations, and give reasons for issues arising, and export and things like that. So they are there to implement a diagnostic on what issues and why they could not be resolved, in order to raise high our economy standard. So that is their job, and everyone listens to the World Bank and the IDA. All rely on this financial support in accordance to the recommendations from the IMF when they return.

Such is also reason why many countries, they take 3 years before they do it, as for Samoa we had requested during our meeting with them. Despite our busy schedule, we still want them to come every year in March. This is a good month because after our talks, we would know the things that needs improvement, in accordance to our budget and policies. This is the brief clarification, so this Corporation is very important.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I allow the chance to the Government Leader.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Sailele Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: I think that it was in the year 1971 when we became a member of the Investment Monetary Fund Organization. While in 1973 we became a member of the World Bank. It was indicated by the Minister of Finance, there are forums for all associated member countries. And their role was to come and consult the state of our economy. It was in the year 1972 they had come and in 1973, they had conducted an article for consultation. During those days, there was a number of people that had attended with the attendance of almost all business operators. During the operation of the tourism development in Siumu called the Hideaway. It was here where we had conducted the article for consultation.

Since working for the Ministry of Finance. Our Sittings would go on until 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and we would finish at night. During this particular night, the moonlight had shined beautifully. And we had gone together with a few male workers from our Office. We knew that by 6 o'clock, we would head on to have our dinner, took our rest from our meetings which were specifically discussions on the budget. 6 o'clock came and we had gone for a swim in the ocean. From here on to the end of the Hideaway there was a waterfall. And while we were swimming, the ocean was right up to here, the tide started to come in. So the other boys were saying, we have a fishing net to cast. During the fourth reading, we were casting it out. So coming inside the deep area, by 1 in the morning the moon was right in the center. Then we decided to check our net. When we came back, the lights of the rooms for the officials were still on because they were still working.

I went and told the other foreigners, hey why are you still doing those work. Let us go and have a swim. At 1 in morning? Yes, it is nice that the tide is low. Assuming, there would still be a little bit of the tide, but when we got there, it was all dried up towards the reef and it was almost 200 yards and the tide had dried up completely. When we got to our fishing net, there were 5 small sharks that were hanging on it. We came back and showed it to these men, you see you have missed out on the amazing experience on how to catch these sharks. The reason why I mentioned this, is that it is not new that they will keep on coming. Now that we have improved, yet they are still coming and coming. The question is, why do they keep coming? Because there is a reason.

In between visitations a defect might occur within an economy. Whether it would drop or would it rise, these are all recorded. Because it is inconsistent, and it does not remain still as previously stated, these assistance from overseas, are being inspected. What does this word mean, spy. To spy so that they are aware of where it has gone to, so just when there are uncertainties all foreign assistance we ought to receive will be cut off.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

That is why, we keep reminding, and reminding still, of accuracy and precision at all times. Because of this group, and also the World Bank, and the Asian Bank, as they would come around to assess the progress of our economy most particularly all Pacific Island countries.

We were there in the year 1995, at the conference that was held in Spain. We got there, and we waited for quite a long time, because we wanted to meet with the board of the International Monetary Fund. We waited for almost an hour, and out came the group from Papua New Guinea, the plea of Papua New Guinea. Well I asked the Minister, “Brother what took you so long that we had to wait all this time?” They replied, just a few more days to finish off our reserved funds for trades, just a few more days. Well we came to seek refuge here at the International Monetary Funds to request for assistance, and once there is a problem, this is one assistance they would be able to provide, to bring aid in order to help with the continuous economic flow, so that there is enough money to maintain the continuous investments for trades so that it does not stop. There is possibility that aid will be ceased if they see that we have a problem.

In the year 1983 during the rise of the Human Rights Protection Party, there was a strong demand brought forth by the International Monetary Funds on set of strategies now done by the Government, because the reason why the Government had gone bankrupt was due to no investment savings for trades made to provide continuous trade consistency for Samoa. When the Government came on board, there was a big problem. Previously, they had managed the structuring of Government policies so as to be in line with their own strategies as they were the ones receiving this financial aid, given their shoulders in times we require assistance to fund investments for trades.

So once the policies and operations of the Government are problematic then these foreign aid will be cut off permanently and this is why the Minister of Finance had spoken about it with me adding to it, responsible Government is very important, they would lay out distant remarks, and these people from outside are not foolish, these people are where the assistance are from, they are very sharp in terms of capitals, so when we mess up we will be cut off. It is very fragile in terms of international conditions especially at these times when all Governments are facing difficulties, from the Covid-19 pandemic and the impacts upon global trade commodities.

Mr Speaker that is my additional discourse on the raising matters.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY MR SPEAKER: Well done to the Hon Leader of the Government. The hearing aid of the Parliament is clear. Well, now that Parliament has well received you. The same with the general public the importance, so that understanding is made on all these matters. With that, I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance to continue with your statement.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Thank you Mr Speaker. Well, the state of funds is well managed as well as the implementing works of the Government on daily requirements or cash balances. With that, I convey my acknowledgements to the Ministry and the entirety of the Organization for conducting their share on collecting taxes and revenues to fund the works of the Government.

I would also take this opportunity to acknowledge our partnerships for the assistance they provide annually. I am happy to let know, that our debts are well managed, we are noticing that there is still a reduction each year based on our economy.

This evidently states the stride of this Government on its declarations that loan will only be conducted when needed, even though our normal revenue earnings is strong and possible to make our loan repayment to pay our debts.

So as to firmly clarify the scope of what I had stated above, I would like to outline some of the important highlights within 5 years ending this Parliamentary term. Firstly, the economy of Samoa has increasingly improved now, if we look back at 2015 until now. In the year 2015, the overall total for Samoa's economy was \$1.9 billion. The following year 2016 it had increased to \$2.09 billion.

In 2017 \$2.11 billion was recorded while in 2018 and 2019, \$2.23 billion was recorded, followed by a \$2.17 billion in the year 2020. Mr Speaker, \$270 million was added in by 5 years of this Parliamentary term, and that is the end result for the work and great development that was led by the Government for a solid economy for the prosperity of everyone.

Secondly, the total public debt. Mr Speaker, the Government is continuously following guidelines on the process of debts. Everything is understood on all states as laid clearly on the annual Report for Financial Year as well as Parliamentary Annual Report, on all loans and debts by the Government to conduct and fund great developments each year.

Secondly, total public debt. Mr Speaker, the Government is continuously following guidelines for managing its debts. Everything is understood on all areas as clearly laid out in the Budget each year including Public Annual Reports, any debt is referred to the Government for conducting its major infrastructural developments per annum.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

The truth is Mr Speaker, it is crucial for any Government, to have capacity to be able to handle their debt service ratio by using their gains to repay their debts. Samoa has only 11% revenue used to make repayments for its debts. Therefore 89% of our income are reserved for the works and infrastructure to support the economy and development of Samoa.

Right now the percentage of debt to Gross Domestic Product of the economy is now reduced to 48% compared to 50% which is the given limit. This is a great reduction compared to the 58% rise in our debts during the year 2015 due to the required preparations in response to the effects of natural disasters that had struck the country in previous years.

When we look at other countries of the Pacific like Fiji, the debt has increased to 83% in accordance to their economy. But there is no need for our country to be concerned because our debts are well manageable, especially our capacity to pay our debts using normal public income. Mr Speaker, there are voices that are saying that we should loan more to distribute to the country during this period. This Government is used to facing challenges. We have surpassed tides of difficulties with our journey, as the country had faced natural disasters and strong cyclones, earthquakes, tsunami, great floods and transmittable diseases, including the impacts upon the economies of the world in previous years.

Mr Speaker, even though we are fortunate to have received virus vaccines to treat and prevent the spread of the Covid-19 disease, it is unsure when the world would return back to normal. Meaning, the economy must be wisely managed at present time, because we do not know the path of the storm, only the Lord is aware of what will happen in the future. Consultation and preparations are in progress to fulfill the 3-stimulus package phase 3 for the first Financial Year, but preparations would depend on the capacity of our revenue earned to implement it.

3. Another important area I wish to make known is the persistent state of our reserved funds for trade or foreign reserves for orders of goods from overseas. It is an accustomed channel that is attempted and followed by most Government to achieve, the period is 4 months for trading of imported goods whenever a country encounters any major difficulties.

For Samoa Mr Speaker, 11 months and a half are the capacity we have attained at this time. Which means, if any severe natural disaster arises at this time thus putting a stop to work and all the proposed developments for the economy, the durability is nearly a 12-month period for our reserved funds to maintain order of supplies from overseas countries. This method is desired by most island countries in the Pacific. Just so you know, the limit achieved by most small island nations of the Pacific, is just 6 months for ordering their goods, whereas for Samoa we are nearing 12 months or the entire year.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

4. The state of our domestic revenues that is collected through taxes, revenues and regular earnings, has reached \$631.2 million compared to the \$493.2 million that was collected in the year 2015. This means, it is indicated by the basis as stated, the increasing state of the economy due to the increase in earnings that is encompassed within the country, and that is amusement for having a stable procedure for the work of all Ministries responsible for collecting taxes, for funding developments and services of the Government.

5. It is reflected in the annual public expenditures for this 5 year Parliamentary term the continuous prioritization of the education sector and the health sector. Education has increased to 48% the direct assistance from the Government and the Ministry, from \$81.9 million in 2015 to \$103.3 million in 2020. Separate from this allocation, \$18 million has been reserved for the year 2020/2021 to assist schools through the one government grant which has benefited the various Mission schools in the country including private schools. These allocated funds by the Government of Japan and the Government of China through the Government are used for establishing school buildings for local communities that are fortunate enough to have received this direct funding assistance.

6. For health, 42% there is an increase money allocation for the work of the Ministry for the year 2015, which recorded \$83.9 million to \$103.2 million in the year 2020. Separately, there is an allocated amount for patients seeking medical treatment overseas or the overseas medical treatment scheme that has increased from \$5 million in 2015 to \$8 million in the year 2020/2020. It counts thousands and thousands of Samoans that have been taken for treatment for numerous years under this policy by the HRPP Political Party.

I would like to voice a future plan of the Government regarding the establishment of a referral center in Samoa for specialized treatment to treat our own people without having to travel overseas again, given the separation from families during this time and the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

7. Government has conducted various developments and major projects which costs millions and millions of monies within the past 5 years including main roads, cemented roads that have been constructed and the restoration of new school buildings and new hospitals in the town area and the rural side areas.

Construct and raise the standards of airports and wharves for the improvement of domestic flights and international traveling. Enhancement of electricity, water and other essential services for all people. Increasing salaries for Government workers and advancing resources and Offices for work. Continue the improvement of parts of the country that was affected by natural disasters as well as several ongoing developments with verified agreements and partnerships already been done and will soon be in progress.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

8. I would also like to take back the dignified Parliament to some of the milestones that were achieved by our economy and Government which other Pacific nations are now using as a measure in terms of public finance reforms as follows. Firstly, manage well the Annual Reports of Government Ministries and Public Enterprises – updated Annual Reports submitted to Parliament. Part problems are no longer occurring, Annual Reports are no longer followed up for the time period of 10 years or more.

Secondly, enforce and encourage the terms and conditions of products and services for the Government, procurement operational manual. All terms are clear and beneficials have been officially publicized regarding their biddings for major infrastructures of the Government. 3. Establishment of the Audit Committee or the internal auditors for Government Ministries. 4. Improve and push the services to monitor the economy. 5. Prepare well a cover to consolidate all public financial budgets through its revenues, expenditures, financial grants, and other regular areas that are reported by the Government annually.

6. Enforce and encourage the policies for revenues as planned by the Government annually or the cash revenue broadcasting model. 7. The arrangement of economic review conducted by the International Monetary Fund. Other countries take 2 to 3 years before the implementation is done and therefore our foreign partners are looking highly at us with their trust, because Samoa does not have any hidden or conceal information as all areas are clarified and explained well with regards to the economy. 8. Samoa has become the first Pacific country to have conducted a review about its economy which is called the Palestine Exploration Fund Annual Climate Change Assessment. This assessment primarily concerns a country's environment in delicate areas that could extremely be affected in times of natural disasters.

The truth is Mr Speaker, developments speak for itself as conducted by this Government. Several achievements have been achieved together with serious challenges where the Government was able to respond to in order to quickly recover its economy in a strong and convenient way. Mr Speaker, it brings about a gratifying spirit given the high standard Samoa is in with regards to politics within the Pacific and the entire world, our input has stood out. The United Nations has also benefited us in January 2014 since our continuation, a graduating country from the least developing country to middle income countries.

I would also like to talk about the respect received by Samoa from the International Monetary Fund Organization in which Samoa is also a member of the Committee in the Pacific that manages financial assistance like the International Development Association or the IDA also known as the world-bank and the development bank of Asia or the Asian Development Bank.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Samoa's Minister of Finance has become a representative from this region to the Committee of the Asian Development Fund. These opportunities are desired by all the countries of the Pacific, especially during this period of time for them to be able to voice their concerns and to raise direct funding assistance for their Governments. There is also the appointment of a local Minister of Finance to be the Deputy Chairperson for annual meetings for the Asian Development Bank in May of this year 2021 using virtual conference. Praise God for His callings, for we are just ordinary people who are chosen as representatives of the Pacific who are providing good suggestions and are recognized by these major International Organizations to assist with the development of the economy of small island nations of the Pacific.

Then I come to Government long term plans honorable Speaker which centers all operations of this Party...

DEPUTY MR SPEAKER: I appease the Hon Minister of Finance as I call upon the Hon Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: Thank you. I did not want to interfere with the beautiful speech of the Hon Minister of Finance, but I notice that it has been a while since the subject I had talked about on debts from outside has passed.

Mr Speaker, I saw in today's paper, the raising matter by a member who still opposes the wharf development, and revealing the cost of \$250 million, when I had given in my statement that preparations are underway. There is still waiting for the feasibility study however it is not known how these numbers come about when the design of the wharf has not yet been verified.

The paper today states that the project costs \$250 million, and that the children of the district will struggle to pay these debts. Perhaps it was clarified several times by the Hon Prime Minister that our debts, the important thing is that we have the capacity to pay it, this was also reaffirmed by the Minister of Finance. Money is sufficient. These funds used for paying these debts are our own money, it is our very own income we are able to gain within the country, which we are still saving. However it is now in today's paper that it costs \$250 million. It further states... that the cost has not been set... the feasibility study is still incomplete to ensure the kind of wharf we are preparing for. Regardless I furthermore see in today's paper, their rejection and their publicizing of these matters. Yes. These are not true and accurate. Until we receive the feasibility study with the set cost then we will find out the price of the project. Although he has revealed his thoughts that the cost is \$250million when nothing like that has been prepared. With due respect.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY MR SPEAKER: Well, I allow the assistance from the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, I also indicated this matter. I had thought that the guy is out of his mind. But I beseech you, people just out of their minds.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong (Urban West): Mr Speaker, can I respond to this matter?

DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is only fair that the people are receiving two sides of the story. But do say what the paper is saying this morning.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Mr Speaker, perhaps those just the paper's writings, but I will still show my objection of the wharf. Even \$100 million or \$20 million or \$300 million or billion, this side will still oppose this wharf establishment in Vaiusu. Thank you.

DEPUTY MR SPEAKER: Thank you now that we have heard.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, well this is more proof that the man is indeed out of his mind.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Mr Speaker, well who is going to pay this? It seems this is the biggest question. Is it paid by the Government, or the country or Vaiusu, or is it paid by Faleata 2. With due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is very crucial. Allow me to speak, I appease the member standing. The discourse of the Hon Minister of Works and Infrastructure is significant. The reason for saying this, is to bring clarity upon everything inside this House. The House is where honorable and truthful information comes from. If the country is listening in, I implore you, it is here where all decisions of the House are done. With regards to all documents and whoever is directed to, no, that is not righteousness. Now that we have received the statement and assistance from the Hon Minister of Works, for the awareness of the country, is it this not honesty. I call upon the Hon Prime Minister.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, this letter, has been circulated to you all, you will find this on page number 26, 27 and 28 until page 29 in Roman numeral, it details all the loans of the Government.

It was stated by the Minister, if there is only 11 sene from \$1 earned from Gross Domestic Products. The Gross Domestic Products Mr Speaker, this is the total income of the entire country. If for instance 11 sene from a \$1, because when converted into percentage which is the meaning of this term eleven percent. Now what is given here is very clear, to pay off the country's debts, using all these \$1. So what is used for the remaining 89 sene? That is used to operate the economy. That is why it is important to listen to those that understand these matters. I pray that the district understands, bring forth members that are understanding, because it is embarrassing to always give and make corrections. It is a shame for a constituency to hear of their elected members being corrected in Parliament as they are unaware of the state of matters being laid out. Look, you have had these papers for a while for over a year now. This includes all the debts and the details about the matters discussed by the Hon Minister, the total of our debts and the capacity for us to repay these debts.

That is the main thing we look at, these people from outside are intelligent people, they analyze the strength of the economy, and the ability to repay debts. That is how it is measured. It is clearly clarified in the speech of the Hon Minister as well as the assistance given by the Minister of Works who was the former Minister of Finance. So there is nothing to worry about, but if you are a person that opposes good things, continue to do so, but allow my constituency to judge you. This supplements a bad image of the constituency by making corrections to the elected member in Parliament, because it goes to show. If you had relaxed, no one would have known about your weakness. Talk about the things that you know, but do not talk about the things that is out of your knowledge.

Mr Speaker, well I am quite hesitant to speak of these matters, and the disturbance within the dignity of the House. Because these matters are quite obsolete. If you do not understand, it is only relevant that you sit back. It is unseemly inappropriate for us to stand up and give clarifications to you, not once, nor twice but several times now.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

Mr Speaker, I have also clarified, that the people working for these Organizations, are intelligent. It is here where judgement is allowed by economist and those implementing policies such as New Zealand, Australia, Japan, China and America. No Government would want to give assistance to a Government that does not plan ahead. The grant can only be given to a Government that they perceive is not worried about anything.

But if this is your evil heart and lack of eagerness to create any prosperity for the benefit of the constituency, as their economy is nothing compared to your economy. Then I beseech you as that is not the intention of this Government. The Government tends to provide and conduct developments for the prosperity of all individuals that do not have the same your blessings as yours. But at least they are now receiving you, so you do not want to create any development for the benefit of vulnerable people within your district. If you would have sat back and relax and not say anything, your district would not have known that you are selfish.

Mr Speaker, well that is the assistance.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Mr Speaker, well, am I able to respond to the accusations given?

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, you can. Well the only thing is, if you are to rise again, according to Standing Orders, the Government will have to respond again. That means, it will take up our entire evening, if you keep on responding, our work will remain here. Therefore I will allow you the chance, but the Governments will have to reply again.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: It is fine Mr Speaker. The only thing I wish to convey great acknowledgement. No, I am also not stupid. Those people from overseas, do not live in Faleata No.2, they live overseas where money is coming from. But I beg tolerance, I am arguing for what is best for my constituency. Let the district decide, if I come back in the next general elections, then that is the answer.

But if I do not come back, then do bear with me, I must stand up as my constituency is involved here. But many thanks for your assistance. The book that was held by the Hon Prime Minister, it is on deficit. That means, the wharf cannot be done. Which means, it will most likely be done on borrowed money.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, it is noted. I call upon the Hon Leader of the Government.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, the reason for saying this, you look at the strength of the economy and the various opportunities we can get to assist with these matters. There is no Government on partnerships with this Government that would want to provide any assistance. No Government would want to approve a loan or provide assistance to help a country's economy if they are not able to repay their debts.

So any Nation of the world that is how it is. Even yourself...Do you not have any loans? I am asking you, don't you have any loans? You too used to work previously in your former employment, and you had also used the power of the Electrical Power Corporations. What, do you want me to talk about these things? Mr Speaker, I refuse to elaborate further these matters. Because one of businesses had also gone bankrupt, closed down, why? Mr Speaker, it appears that I am no longer withholding now, this subject, your wealth is quite high.

What the Government is trying to do, is to conduct and implement any development that will benefit the general public. He is standing from this particular district. You are not the only one standing from that constituency. The member of Vaitele had risen, the representative of Vaitele. Nevertheless, your objection will not avoid the establishment of this great development. The power was fixed all around and it was in 1989 that the whole of Samoa had received it. After the general election in 1988, there was a massive downpouring that was very intense, and it was reported that some villages had their graveyards and coffins being washed off to the shore, because they were not dug deep. It also destroyed the bridge at Vaimoso which was reason this bridge was rebuilt.

There was a meeting conducted for the improvement of the economy where a decision was made for a program to carry out in the entire country to gain electricity. Not long were electricity works carried out in the rural side area, and a statement was given by the former EPC Head that this was impossible to do. The Tootooalii asked, while I sat next to him. Why is it impossible to do it? The response was, there were no heavy machinery to dig up dirt to for the poles to stand. An order was made, why sit and wait, I have longed instructed you fix electricity around the entire country. Yet you are still sitting around without informing me. See what month to dig up the holes, do you understand, in villages, there are several men that are able to help dig whatever depth. The program then proceeded.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

They then proceeded towards Falealili, to the house of the member who does not support the Government, just like you. He declared, that wasting power is not permissible in his constituency. So an order was given, that they should carry forth with the following villages. It then proceeded as ordered, and what happened next? They kept crawling back, pleading for his constituency to be added in. All because of jealousy. So what happened next? The entire country is now receiving electricity except for a few families in the rural areas, as works is still in progress.

This happened during the year 1989. The reason for saying this is because there is only a few such kind of people. A person that despises and avoids such great project from happening. Now that I have talked about it, while the constituency is listening. You make the decision of the member for the benefit of the constituency.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well I beg pardon of the member, two of you are upstanding. The instruction and order can the two of you take your seat while I give my explanation. Thank you. See how pleasant it is. Relax a bit, to make noise belongs to the game of cricket. Because there is a time when you run and will not reach because you are out. So jumping in...I beg tolerance to you both we have already discussed, consideration has been made with regards to the wharf at Vaiusu. The Government has responded, the only minor matter, are the public statements made outside of the House, for that reason, I wish to make a statement. It is only here in Parliament where all matters are done based on integrity. The Minister has stated, there are plans by the Government which have already been responded to. As such, I wish to advise the notable members, I will give an order, discussions on this matter will now be terminated.

Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi: I wish not to oppose your decision, but since my constituency has been mentioned, while I am here. Therefore just this slight thought.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is only relevant that you should rise, as Vaitele was mentioned.

Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi: Thank you. I had obeyed the thoughts of the Hon Prime Minister on the subject at first. We should not respond to unnecessary talks. Although the matter being raised here, as Parliament is also receiving them, it is only misconceptions that are being constructed.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Firstly, they say that military... that time is a... is false. The cost that was stated, is false. That is why I remained seated; these are just false statements. Why then do we have to mind them? The member should note well the same with us and the country. China did not want a wharf. China did not just come and asked, would you like to build a wharf? No, the developments of Samoa are anticipated for a long road ahead.

Lastly, I beg tolerance your honour, because this member is constantly saying that it is his district. It is not his district, it is my district, his district is located inland...

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Mr Speaker, I am the member for the Urban West Constituency. Staring from Vaimoso to Puipaa, all the way to the mountains and towards the coastal area. That means, my District is larger than the district that Lealailepule is in.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is now noted... it is apparent.

Susuga Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: This is a very wonderful discussion we are having. We talk and laugh, and the time is also getting near. They think that the further downgrading of this wharf, will cause the Government to think in due time that they would lend a shoulder based on assumption when really, they will not appear. I am well certain of all these things. In saying that, it is him and the rest of them that have this thought, they refuse to accept anything good by us, for the prosperity of the district as it will only acknowledge us. Then they will go head and expose these works to the public to make the Government think that the country does not need it.

It is also reason I would publicize some of these considerations from people who are insane. Do not mind it. I also strive, that every time I receive these publications, I would give my own broadcastings, and vice-versa, so as to counter these types of intentions from people who are jealous.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well I beg the pardon of the Hon Minister; it is now clear...

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: There is this bit if possible, to...

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Mr Speaker, it is done, I declare that it ends here. Well you are right then, but it would be nice if the wharf would be taken to be established at Lepa, then I would be glad and agree to the wharf. With respect, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well that kind of thinking, a person is free to express its own thoughts. I allow the Hon Minister.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: Well thank you. The reason I want to stand up. This member is once again mentioning the term deficit. Now I know the person behind it. I assumed it was the Hon Laauli, however it seems that the advice given here is taken falsely by Laauli as well. Laauli has longed understood of these matters, and deficit cannot fund whatever you are speaking about in the budget. The Government itself seeks funds otherwise, bring it for free or get a loan. Why worry about a loan? We are still capable of repaying it. And do not worry, these loans will not be paid by the people of Vaiusu. It will be paid by the funds sought by the Government to fund the budget... It has not been allowed... it violates our Sitting.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Mr Speaker, I am listening, thank you very much, the matter is now received...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the Minister conclude his speech...

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea (Gagaifomauga No.3): Mr Speaker, my name is being mentioned please...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes Laauli we will get to that, but let...

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Because I am being tangled up with the statements of Papalii.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: No it is my apologies to Laauli...

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Your words are false, point of order please.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: Because Laauli was the one who had raised deficit last night. Which I assumed but now I am certain that is was an advice given by his younger brother sitting beside him. I am trying to correct this bit.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Mr Speaker, I am not Laauli's younger brother please. I am his senior brother, not his younger brother.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do sit down and allow the Minister of Works and Infrastructure to finish off his speech.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: When the clarification of a statement prolongs it will result in stupidity, nonetheless we shall leave it like that. If you do not understand, then so be it. But I am just stating what is right. Because deficit is not a loss.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aion Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, I cannot seem to tame myself from rising to move a motion, to remove these kinds of mindless people. That is where we should be heading. A member who continues to come here and showcase its rudeness within this House. A time is coming near for me to move a motion, to remove these kinds of mindless people from the House. Because it seems that the debates of the House are being demeaned by these people. It is unfortunate to have such kind of members who have no brains.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I announce, I now conclude the discussions on this raising matter by the Hon Minister of Works and Infrastructure. But I observe that, you are upstanding.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Yes, I was pleading.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The correction you made is now being transcribed in our records.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: The topic that was discussed by Papalii. I was not guided by the thought portrayed in the accusation saying that this was the advice by the Hon Leatinuu, and reason why I stood up. This was also my own perception. That is also my interpretation of the word deficit. If that is also your interpretation, then do you own interpretation, and we will do ours, and let the country be the judge. Then it will be laid on the right track.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

As for the perception saying that I have been misguided by someone else. I am led by my own feelings and beliefs. But if that is your own belief Papalii, then that is your own will. But do not say, that I have been misled by someone else. No, let us pursue and allow the country to judge on what is known as bankrupt.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall allow the Minister of Communications, as he is urging for a chance.

Afioga Hon Afamasaga Lepuiai Rico Tupai (Minister of Communication and Information Technology): Yes, I beg tolerance Mr Speaker as I rise, lest a thought arises on where these funds come from. But there are only two lines that could be said. If this is the wharf, this is the income. If this is the wharf, this is the income gathered. It is here where we will start to get funds in order to pay what we are discussing. This is very simple Mr Speaker, Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The reason for giving you Hon Ministers the chances is because you have a collective responsibility. You assist one another because you are the Government, the Cabinet, you are before the table where the major deliberations of the Government are discussed. This is reason why I give chances. Well I beg the pardon of the members wanting to speak, the subject has concluded. I will allow the Minister.

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo (Falealili East): It is not about this topic honorable Speaker just a minor matter. Mr Speaker, until I get your approval.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now we shall move on to the Minister of Finance, but unless it is...

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo: I cannot stop Mr Speaker, if so. Because we are thoroughly observing, whom do you allow to rise and speak freely? And whom do you speak to when he or she has violated our Proceedings. I am observing it, it was only twice that I had stood up on the previous night, and you used the word, I was screeching in the House. However many have stood up a hundred times, without granting any chances. Yet you did not give any advice. With all due respect.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I beg the pardon of the member, I have made the decision, and I have allowed it because there he was being accused. Therefore, they can stand up, the matter is now concluded. The final response is by the Government. I apologize as no one is allowed to rise again on this subject matter as I have already given my ruling.

I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance, to resume your remarks.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Mr Speaker, with a statement on future developments of our Government, the core function that process the entirety of this Parliamentary term. In the spirit that the HRPP does not travel in the dark, in relation to implementing project developments, without executing any preparations at first.

I had previously announced the future Government strategies or the Samoa 2040. This plan lays out 7 main objectives that will be prioritize by the Government, in order to push forward a strong economy within the next 20 years ahead. These 7 targets will be given priority, including: 1. Raise high the development of the agricultural sector. 2. To ensure a strong and stable tourism development 3. Enhance advance technology. 4. Create more employment opportunities for seasonal workers. 5. Provide security and protection for Samoa. 6. Development to countering severe impacts of climate change. 7. Provide quality trainings to services related to health and education.

All preparations have already been underway for these strategic guidelines. And now the Government is preparing to make awareness campaigns and start implementing right away its strategies for the prosperity of Samoa, as we head on to another journey for another first 20 years. There had been a few challenges faced by the Government during the preparations of these strategic guidelines, such as the major changes that was later amended when the world was affected by the Covid-19 which had caused uncertainty for some other developments and objectives. There were alternatives, 1. A heart is filled with gratitude now that this major development is now achieved, and we are now ready to conduct and give priorities to these core values that should be increasingly improve. So that the objectives and goals are achieved arranged for Samoa in the next 20 years, as laid out in the following areas, 1. Achieve and raise high the economy each year. 2. Improve and increase employment opportunities every year. 3. Foster the state of public revenue for its project developments. 4. To prosper and improve the state of the economy for all indigenous people. Mr Speaker, there are several major developments of the Government that are now being laid out, in support of the plans so as to achieve the main goals of Samoa 2040.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

No doubt the priorities of our Government for our fisheries and agricultural development. These developments include access roads which has connected communities and land areas they are developing. Programs have begun with our partnerships with international organizations like the World Bank, the International Fund for Agriculture Development and other partnerships called the SAF-FROM, Samoa Agriculture and Fisheries Productivity and Marketing Project which is currently administrated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Government is solely pushing through the Development Bank of Samoa low interest loans for the purpose to assist the farmers and their local farming developments.

Funds have been allocated to establish warehouses and machineries for the Scientific Research Organization of Samoa to start the production of local products using our own local resources available here. There are also certified conditions for the farmers, who are eligible under this finance assistance, the concession of the Government that can create employment for the children of Samoa. For development that can respond to climate change as already discussed by the Ministers of Cabinet some of the major projects that were consulted with the Ministry of Finance and foreign partners. Which has the approval to conduct in a near time. This includes: 1. the reservoir in Alaoa which costs US\$100 million and will be fully funded by the grants from the Asian Development Bank and the assistance from the Government of Australia. 2. Continue building the cement drainage at the water catchment area in Vaisigano for the safety and security of nearby settlers in this part of the country. Consultations are ongoing with the Green Climate Fund to settle some of the conditions before the start of the project sometimes this year. I wish to make known one of the funding assistances of this project to families, Private Organizations and Businesses near the catchment area in Vaisigano. The first \$3.9million has been released to 192 requests and developments from the previous year. There is also final preparations for the 319 requests this year at a total cost of \$6.9 million. 3. The cross-island road from Tanugamanono to Siumu. There has been an official approval from our partners to fund this, but there are current discussions underway on the layout design and contractors.

4. Main roads to the westside area of Upolu. There is the continuation for the west side area from Malua to Faleolo, and the main road to the eastern side area of Upolu, and from Moataa to Aleipata, the east coast road. Requests have also been handed over to our partners for funding assistance.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

5. The Government is prepared to fund through its budget the seawall areas and other public assets needed for the general safety of the public, especially confirmed village communities where coastal areas are insecure presently due to strong sea waves and sea level rising. 6. The relocation of the Salelologa township area so that all Government services are made available for all, including employment opportunities and developments to push forward local businesses in Salafai.

7. It has been 2 years since the Government insurance called the Self-Insurance Fund was established. It is an insurance reserved as a backup to improve for major developments of the Government that may be affected in the future from natural disasters. For your information, some of the major developments of our Government, there is security from this insurance. This includes the Main Government Building at Matagalalua, the Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi Building, School Buildings, Hospital Facilities, the National University of Samoa, and the Parliament House here in Mulinuu, and other costly assets of our Government.

For the tourism sector, plans are underway by the Government which includes negotiations for a new aircraft for the Samoa Airways company. Establishing and repairment of the airports within the country, for both Upolu and Salafai as well as direct assistance to the tourism sector. As conducted under the stimulus package of the Government. There are also preparations underway for other major project developments as prioritized in Samoa 2040. This includes: 1. Improve and restore advance technology. 2. Seeking opportunities for seasonal workers employment as in discussion with our partners. 3. Conduct appropriate actions to enhance security for all people of Samoa. 4. Particularly programs and educational development and health, we have obtained because I had mentioned them previously. Furthermore, many other plans we are trying to bring assistance to, based on the funds we have gained especially the ability of employees to do the work.

Mr Speaker, Government long term plans for the next 20 years are interlinked with one of its mentioned plans. The Strategy for Development of Samoa SDS, which is a 5-year plan. It is an opportunity that could monitor the works and projects implemented where the achievement of required goals depends on, the overall summary set out under the Samoa 2040. Mr Speaker the strategy for the development of Samoa has been prepared for the next 5 years ahead, which contributes all the works and key indicators for 14 sectors of the economy. That includes 1. Finance Sector. 2. Agriculture and Fisheries. 1. Finance Sector. 2. Agriculture and Fisheries. 3. Trade Commerce and Manufacturing Sector. 4. Tourism. 5. Public and Administration. 6. Health Sector. 7. Education Sector. 8. Community Sector. 9. Law and Justice Sector.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

10. Water Sector. 11. Transportation Sector. 12. Communication Sector. 13. Energy Sector and 14. Environment Sector.

Mr Speaker, these strategic plans have been consolidated and prepared. Which is included in the Samoa 2040 and the Strategy for Development of Samoa in the first 5 years through consultations conducted with the entire country including all Government stakeholders which gave their open thought and farsightedness in accordance with developments and appropriate processes that must implemented in order to raise the standard of our economy. There is great expectation for these strategies and long-term plans, which will help achieve the objectives of our journey, by raising the quality of healthcare for our people. In English, improving the quality of life for all. Mr Speaker, these development and strategic plans of our Government are well managed...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I interrupt while you are wailing your vessel your Hon Minister of Finance, as your share is significant. However we cannot set aside what is required to be done regarding our work.

Since we have gotten to have come to our normal recess hour, I therefore announce that the Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly be set aside for normal recess.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly now suspended at 4:10pm and resumed at 5:00pm.

Debates and Government Responses of the Legislative Assembly now resumed on the second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No 1) 2020/2021.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I announce that Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly shall now resume. There is belief that there is renewed strength upon the dignified Parliament from our afternoon refreshment. With that I wish to acknowledge the Clerk and staff of Parliament for all preparations done today. Well done to your efforts for the respected Parliament.

During the setting aside of Parliamentary Proceedings, the Hon Minister of Finance was speaking. With that I call upon with respect the Hon Minister, to resume your statement.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Afioga Salausa John Ah Ching (Faleata East): Mr Speaker, requesting a chance, a point of clarification please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sure.
Go ahead honorable member for Faleata.

Afioga Salausa John Ah Ching: Thank you very much for the opportunity Mr Speaker. The speech of the Minister of Finance is very pleasing with regards to the strategic plans of the Government for the next 40 years. So these are the wonderful things for the sake of the listening country, for them to sit and wait patiently the time to receive blessings.

It is just a minor matter that was pointed out, preparation number 6. It indicated seawall areas, so what I wish to know please. Whether this includes drainage for river course or have been something you have missed out on, or should it be added to it, the river routes. With all due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: It has been noted... I allow the member for Anoamaa East.

Afioga Alaiasa Muagututi'a Moefaauouo Malagaitutogiai Sepulona Moananu (Anoamaa East): Well thank you for the opportunity Mr Speaker. The House of dignity has just been nourished with refreshments from our recess.

I would sit back and feel the spirit of gratitude as the Hon Minister has mentioned the funds that have been approved for repairing our roads in the Eastern side area. It is a challenge up to this day that we are facing on this part of the country. With that I acknowledge your honour, not only with the roads on the Western side, as we have experienced the wonderful preparations by the Government, the same with the Easternside area where the good plans of the Government will also progress.

However, I have noted a few records by numerals as read out by the Hon Minister, which is reflected here as I had previously discussed in terms of Debt Service Ratio. Now that the Minister has submitted the picture but for the understanding of my constituency, \$2.1 billion given in the Gross Domestic Product, while 11% is spent on loan payments. That means it is \$238 million, while revenue collected by the country is \$638 million as understood by my constituency, leaving \$460 million for project developments. These are the kinds of extraordinary numbers if your constituency understands well with only a few people until they hear the member's voice then the people of the constituency would want to understand soundly.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

But I beseech your Hon Minister please, there are a few matters I am not aware of and whether you will discuss it. But with regards to pyramid schemes, and other types of investments such as what we have today and things like coins and that sort of thing, whether possible for you to explain it further, for the sake of the general public, because there is a lot of misleading information being spread around the country that is deceiving the people. With due respect but bless the continuation of your speech.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The recent member's thoughts are highly recognized as he is one of the members of Samoa's Institute of Accountants Association . As there is great understanding of these things as recently stated. What a blessed constituency. Well, you clearly made clear that point. Yes, the constituency listens to its elected member which completes everything else. Nevertheless, listening to someone other than the member, well that does not matter.

I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance to continue with your discourse.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Thank you Mr Speaker, I will respond to that outside when we adjourn our... on these things.

Mr Speaker, the developments and plans of our Government go in line with the developments that were laid out since the start of this Parliamentary term. But all these encompasses with the most paramount Law, whenever you see something that must be done, do it right away. Information that are being made by the minority are false and misleading, the Government will always wait until the time of the general elections are near then they would execute developments.

The truth is Mr Speaker, the works of the Government continues every day. The HRPP Human Rights Protection Party values the country by offering the various types of services for any Samoan at any time plead the Government Leaders for assistance. Although the main concern is whether they are relevant with the procedures and undertakings in place.

Mr Speaker I will point out some of the matters that were raised by the members in accordance with Government Ministries and Public Enterprises I am currently overseeing.

Firstly, the National Provident Fund. The 5 years period for this Parliamentary term, our assets have increased to \$278 million tala from \$578 million in 2016 to \$856 million tala, as currently recorded in statistics.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

The profits have been set out in a very stable state, with \$59.8 million tala profit being recorded in the year 2021, compared to \$30.4 million tala in 2016. Given the high revenue increase, the profit was also raised as submitted to contributors. And the \$33 million tala that was distributed in the year 2016, and \$64 million in the year 2020.

Mr Speaker the investment percentage had increased from 7% in 2016 to 10% this year for employees, and another 10% from their existing Employments.

This change had increased savings for investors to secure their future when retired from work. This is separate from the benefits of investors as I have mentioned above, such as profits that are being distributed. This is one Government Organizations that is able to provide assistance to the country during this period of time, the members are also able to loan from its own investment savings, in order to implement its developments and wants of families each day.

The NPF is currently a shareholder for great project developments in Samoa and foreign countries. Not only are the members gaining benefits from it but it is also one of the tools that the country is holding shares on based on the developments and large organizations in Samoa including the countries of the Pacific where opportunities are attained from where NPF has become one of the shareholders that is benefitting the NPF contributors continuously.

Mr Speaker the NPF is also partnering up with New Zealand Companies that are employing our people through seasonal workers employment. That means, not only is there job opportunities gained for money to be sent home in Samoa, furthermore money is also invested at the NPF for raising families in the future. So it is only New Zealand that this service is applied to presently, but the purpose is for our locals to attain this opportunity for any country to be employed in, including Australia.

I further wish to announce, that it is not long to go now before we have the opening of the Main NPF Office in Salelologa township area. There is also observation on the continuous partnership with the 3 Companies that are using the Yazaki building in Vaitele, which are NPF assets that are collecting profits in order assist the increase in benefits for the investors annually.

There are continuous findings in progress by the Organization on whether possible to establish a special Insurance company for investors' healthcare most particularly at present time where the pandemic crisis is spreading and could affect the lives of our people.

Mr Speaker, I advise the NPF Executive to conduct this investigation urgently so that it could provide assistance for the investors that are affected in terms of this contagious disease spreading at this period of time. 2 of these Organizations includes the processes of the Central Bank of Samoa.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Mr Speaker these are a few main indicators that is compiled by the Central Bank of Samoa, which clarifies the state of the economy. In terms of the state of living, or inflation...

Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga (Palauli le Falefa): Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I beg tolerance to your Hon Minister of Finance, I allow the Hon Member for Palauli le Falefa, as he was stated in your main address.

Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga: Thank you Mr Speaker, also the Hon Minister of Finance for the apparent clarification made regarding the managing of our economy and the utilizing of wealth given from your hand and ours.

I had requested and had advised the Minister, in terms of voluntary contributors. Because the NPF is also accepting it, but the investors are not treated equally, their investment are continually deducted, as I said earlier about the others such as the farmers, the fishermen, and a few church ministers. These people, it is fine for church ministers with a large number of congregations but the reverends with less numbers in their church, this is one savings we rely on when we reach the retirement age.

Such includes my request, and whether the Minister and the NPF Board are looking at rediscussing an amendment to the Bill so that there is equal benefit for the unemployed who are agreeing to invest their money with the NPF, with all due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, with respect I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance to respond to the discourse of the respected member.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: I appreciate the member's query. In accordance to the NPF matter, we are looking at a way to carry out an insurance service for investors, because we will not live permanently, it is necessary to look at the state of things presently, so as to extend the availability of other services for local existing organizations.

It is therefore fitting for the Board of Directors and the Administration to consult and submitted for us to examine. But the thing if such is the case, it is not the same as the case of those that are working and paying contributions, as there are also contributions made by their employer.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

This is an area that must be crossed examined from the Law, investigation of the Law, when under review, if possible to do, then there must be a trial so that the NPF is well informed.

Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga: So honorable Speaker if...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I beg tolerance to the Hon Minister, as I allow the respected member of Palauli le Falefa.

Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga: Thank you Mr Speaker for the opportunity, as well as the Hon Minister for shedding light on this area. I will give an example so that you know what we are trying to give.

If it is the contributors who are employed, once you get paid, then you are eligible to all benefits. An example is, if you had joined today, and the following day your spouse and child dies, you are entitled to the benefits. But a person who is voluntary, it takes 2 years to wait. With due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, that means there is a difference on what the member is trying to emphasize. I call upon the Hon Leader of the House.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, perhaps it is better to lay it before the Board of Directors and the Executive who are receiving this matter. I feel that it is difficult for the Minister to respond immediately given that there could be multiple reasons.

There could be several reasons why especially when voluntary contribution was mentioned. It does not mean that it is voluntary, then the pay they get will be regular. There are days they get paid, and no pay in other months. There have been a lot of things like that have come to me. So they do not receive pay fortnightly, or get paid every 2 weeks.

But there are many complexities to it, nonetheless, you have given your thoughts. Do set it aside for them to inspect whether there are any complications, and impacts on the investor's funds, because remember when it comes to new investor. Why entitle when they have just joined the funds. Their money has just been invested here. Which means they either return or no longer come back regardless, the main idea here is for the investor to receive the interest in accordance with their money given. That means, if funds are invested, then it is the money of other investors that you are using.

As such, there are several complications but do leave it to us as you have given your thoughts. The Office will look into it.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, well...

Afioga Hon Tuitama Talalelei Tuitama (Minister for Women, Community and Social Development): Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I grant the opportunity to the Minister of Women, Community and Social Development, go ahead.

Afioga Hon Tuitama Talalelei Tuitama: Since voluntary contributions was mentioned, but for the knowledge of the Parliament we are not eligible to join. We comply in accordance with the Law whereby you will only receive these benefits when it comes to 2 years. Well I too had queries on this matter given our existing Parliamentary Pension Scheme.

Then I requested the NPF, that I had wanted a contribution of my pay to be cut and go directly to the NPF... and they said it was not possible, because there is existing Parliamentary Scheme in place. It is therefore impossible to join in that sense such as the statement given by the Government Leader, as your contribution must be regular.

So this is consistently ongoing until you want to take a lump sum whenever you receive your money and make add it to your NPF contribution, but it is impossible to deducted from your pay as it is going to your Pension. But there should be a way, if a member feels that they want to invest to NPF, then why not? This is my assistance according to the subject thank you.

Afioga Aliimalemanu Alofa Tuuau (Alataua West): Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Chairperson, I allow the dignified member, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

Afioga Aliimalemanu Alofa Tuuau: Thank you, since the subject of pension is now mentioned. Well, for the information of us members, for those that are about to reach the age of 55, you can do a voluntary contribution but it will be deducted directly from your Bank Account. Well this also involves us new members who had requested what we are continuing now, but is different from the Parliamenatry Pension. For your information, thank you for the opportunity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I trust the matter is now clarified to the member who had given its thoughts, and therefore a response to the matter has been given.
I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance to continue with your speech.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Thank you Mr Speaker, as discussed on inflation, there is significant drop in the percentage of this indicator from the first 1.91 to 1.76 within the time period of 2016/2020. That means the Government is able to control inflation, through operations and implemented developments in support of the economy of Samoa.

It is shown by these indicators, some of the efforts attempted by the Central Bank to freely exempt the market of trade, through the law of good days and the bad days, which is why there is a reduction in product prices when there is great supplies on the market but with raised price, whenever there is high production of goods. That means there that production is high in the country, which is the real reason why cost of living is lowered when compared to the past 5 years.

There is continuous inspection and appropriate procedures carried out by the Central Bank to end illegal money trade within Samoa, including its partnerships with other countries. One of the duties and responsibilities that is prioritized by the Central Bank, is the monitoring of financial services within the country for insurance Companies including the management of small loan firms where interest rates are getting high.

The works of the Central Bank are now progressing towards protecting our people given the harsh and inconsiderate treatment by some of these companies that are managing small loan firms for the general public.

So the plans of the Central Bank have begun to rearrange the cost of loans for businesses and individuals, through consultations with people who are investing their money in the banks simply to reduce deposit rates or translated as to reduce lending rates. Most of the times majority of the people would take their money to be deposited in the banks with the belief to receive deposit rates of no less than 7%. Note that if the bank accepts 7% deposit, and if this person wants to make a loan then surely enough, this will not be below 10%. Such is the target of the Central Bank, for them to be able to control this sort of situation.

Going forward, plans are in progress for the verification of some the projects of the Central Bank. Which suggests the confiscation of illegal businesses...

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Mauli: Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I implore your Hon Minister, is there anything you want member for Palauli West.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: There is a matter that affects the wealth of our tourism. The pillar of our economy which also includes the Central Bank the Hon Minister is now speaking about whether possible to allow me give an explanation and advice on it please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well the clarification does not come from you but from the Government. What you seek to clarify, that is the correct word that must be used. But I call upon the respected member.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Thank you for the opportunity, I rise in accordance to the state of our Tourism Industry which is completely bad, and has therefore blocked all forms of assistance for us.

But I acknowledge the Hon Minister who had pointed out several forms of assistance such as the 2% soft interest rates imposed on some local business companies. Furthermore, \$100, \$200 gifted to people who are no longer employed I think it was a one time payment already given, which means that it only took one month for this money to be utilized.

Also, the assistance by the NPF, made through the contributors, thank you for this wonderful assistance by the Government. Meanwhile, there is the assistance that is yet to be given to our local tourism businesses. Mr Speaker I would compare our Tourism Industry to a virus that is contracted by a patient in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Whereby the only cure left is the IV whilst awaiting for a transfusion bag. So what is therefore needed for this part of the Industry is a blood bag. Like capital, money to circulate the flow of money for the Industry since our borders have been closed for a year now and no word has been said about it.

What the meaning of my statement is, this is the Central Bank's role during these extraordinary times, they need extra time to all solutions before they offer their assistance, such as what was done when we had the tsunami and the recent cyclone we had, where assistance was made... the first Minister had implemented a special...

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, it is apparent, but leave it to the Minister of Finance to respond, yet all is clear now. It is not just the tourism industry that is affected but all local companies and businesses. Allow the Minister answer as it is all clarified now.

Afioga Afamasaga Lepuia Rico Tupai: Another thing with respect your honour, is that the church of the member forbids blood transfusion.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Go ahead Hon Minister.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your thoughts have been recognized, I observe intently, it seems that your statements are going backwards. Any time you rise and sing, you would always this same song. But it is required that you must bring the entire picture and purpose of Government's plans, we are all aware of what you are opting to discuss.

With that I implore the respected member, while I give the opportunity to the Minister to resume his remarks including what you have just stated. Other members have finished in time that has passed, however it has...

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: I am almost there, please just a slight opportunity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I entreat the member, your thoughts are well noted, so I grant you the chance. I call upon the Hon Minister to...

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Mr Speaker I will continue with my speech for future plans, the Central Bank's plans are ongoing for ensuring some of the projects of banks which includes the prevention of illegal businesses which the member calls pyramid schemes, creating of joint information for all people. Know your client database.

Strengthen partnerships with foreign Organizations like the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, complete and start and use modern programs for financial trading. Modernization National Payment System and continuous awareness within the country, Central Bank services, as well as criminal acts for those who do not comply by Government financing guidelines.

Then we move on to the 3 Organizations of the Samoa International Finance Authority. Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to convey my acknowledgment to the Executive and employees, for the contribution of Organizations on financing the Budget of the Government annually and the observation of the \$15 million submitted from the Financial Year 2020/2021, to assist with the Government's Main Budget Address.

This Organisation also provides a lot of direct assistance to Samoan athletes who are competing in international competitions, as well as children who are preparing their talents in the games that are being held in Samoa.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

The good financial performance of the Corporation is still observed, which has increased its profits from \$22.3 million in the year 2016, to \$23.3 million at the end of 2020 Fiscal Year. Despite facing some challenges due to the sensitive situation affecting businesses in partner countries. Many legislations were implemented by the Corporation in the past 5 years. It not only strengthens the guidelines for the management of its projects, but also the compliance with the International Laws that its businesses follow.

Some major preparations of the Organisation are currently underway, including preparations and actions to remove Samoa from the list of countries affected by partnerships with the European Union or the EU Black List. All these efforts are being worked on by the selected Committee that includes the Ministry appointed by the Cabinet, they will negotiate and carry out the necessary work to quickly resolve this matter which is expected to receive an answer in October of this year.

SIFA is also ready to complete the necessary preparations for the construction of its new center in Mataigialalua, soon in the year 2021.

Investment funds are trusts of Samoa or the Unit Trust of Samoa. Your honor, this is one of the dreams of this Political Party that has benefited the country in this period. And I am happy to announce some of their achievements, along with the planned projects that should be implemented in the near future. Some of the milestones achieved by the Management Company and the Unit Trust of Samoa, includes the following:

1. Increase of 87% from 1,763 to 3,300 the number of unit owners within 5 years from 2016 to 2020. There were only 200 who bought units in 2011, which had established this unit. And now we have reached 3,000 unit owners at the end of the year 2020.
2. Capital or income from the sale of units have increased by 123% within 5 years from 2016 to 2020, Unit Holders Fund from \$57 million in 2016 to \$126 million in the year 2020.
3. The total amount of money to be redistributed, dividend paid are already given to its unit partners since the foundation of the fund in the year 2011.

Of the \$30.3 million, 82% of this fund or \$25 million, was distributed within the last 5 years of this Term.

4. The money invested in the fund, started with \$16 million in the year it was established in 2011. Now it has reached \$160 million at the end of the 2020 financial year.

5. The year 2017 saw the official opening of the unit registration program on the web, allowing unit holders from anywhere in the world to check their account balances. This program goes hand in hand with the purpose of the UTOS app, it is now possible to check account balances using mobile phones.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

In additions to this, vodafone Samoa Mtala has also been used to pay interest on the accounts of the unit holders and there is no need to travel to the main office in Apia to perform this service. 6. These are some of the Governments major developments that UTOS was able to assist in establishing from the beginning. 1. The purchase or holding of 25% of the shares of the Bluesky Company which is now Vodafone Samoa. 2. The purchase or ownership of 20% of the shares of the Submarine Cable Company which manages the communication line above the sea. 3. Financing the construction of the Government House, Samoa Center in Auckland, New Zealand. 4. Funding the construction of the new Government office for the High Commissioner of Samoa in Wellington, New Zealand which is expected to be completed sometime this year. 5. About \$47 million is currently being released to some private Government Organisations, for the projects that want to implement.

6. Mr Speaker this is a golden opportunity to not only invest the publics money, in good and safe conditions. But it is an important opportunity for any Samoan to feel proud to have a voice or a role in the Government's infrastructure. It can be said that a unit owner, owns the telephone company Vodafone Samoa who has a founding share at UTOS. I would also like to announce the plans of the Unit Trust of Samoa, for the future as follows. 1. To increase the ways to invest the Funds money not only in Samoa, but also in foreign countries. 2. To create offices or sales agents of UTOS in New Zealand and Australia, to make it easier for its services to reach its unit holders. And other Samoan citizens who live in foreign countries, who want this service. 3. Continue to assist Government to finance some of its important developments. Like building a new Government Offices in American Samoa, as well as Suva in Fiji. UTOS can help with this if necessary.

4. Adjust the role of the Corporation to be able to invest the money in unit owners in land and buildings, as well as commercial assets, Commercial Property Development Projects. 5. Extend their services to Savaii and rural villages, including the establishment of a new office in Salafai. It may be possible to set up this office when the Government Office building is built in Salelologa. 6. To achieve 10,000 of those who become unit members of the Trust within the next 5 years. 7. To reach \$200 million in investment, the total investment portfolio of the Trust within the next 3 years. 8. Lastly Mr Speaker, is the establishment of a Government buildings in the area where the old flea market is located in Savalalo, to be financed and managed by UTOS, and can also be their headquarters to further promote their services in the country.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Now to the Development Bank of Samoa. Mr Speaker, I summarize some of the services carried out by the Development Bank to serve the country. Although Samoa is facing challenges of the Covid-19 disease, loan services continue for some partners of the bank, including.

1. Mothers and youth in different groups, differentiators, those loans are from \$2,500, \$5,000 to \$7,500. And it starts with a small business and continues to graduate, then it graduates to a higher number, if your development grows and additional funding is needed. 2. Partnership program, to partner cocoa, coconut and taro farmers with those who have solid infrastructure, and have strong connections in the market, or what is called value chain financing. 3. The Government is putting emphasis and support on the growth and promotion of the development of small business development, the MSMEs which is combined at this time, has reached \$34.3 million in total. It has also been noted that this aid has increased significantly, for development in big island of Salafai which has increased from \$8.6 million in 2016 to \$17.2 million in 2020.

4. The Government is also continuing with other aid programs including the relief where \$4 million was released to encourage agricultural and fisheries development in simple and easy terms, to meet the needs of the country that need assistance on agricultural development. 5. The bank also implemented the stimulus package as a way to ease the burden of the Government, to help not only to lower the interest rate of its loans for all its partners for a period.

But the Government also assisted to cease rent payment for businesses leasing space in the Development Bank building. 6. The Government and the Ministry of Agriculture have started their plans, on the project named SAF-PROM which is funded by the World Bank, and using the services of the Development Bank of Samoa, to release financial assistance to those who are eligible for agricultural development in terms that have been arranged with our partners such as the World bank.

Moving into the future, these are some of the planned developments that should be prioritised by the bank. 1. To strengthen and prepare policies to encourage good management and clear guidelines in various services, including loan programs and usual work of the bank. 2. Strengthen close communication with International Organisations. It not only provides opportunities to help with direct money, but partnerships that share expertise through experts or technical assistance can help with the banks long term programs and plans.

3. The addition of direct Government aid, capital injections from government to support priority development such as agriculture and fisheries.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

4. And the last part Mr Speaker, I mentioned in one of the meetings last week, the long term plans of Government to prepare the Development Bank of Samoa to become an official partner, or the Accredited Agent of the Green Climate Fund in Samoa. Negotiations between the Ministry of Finance and the GCF are continuing, so that all conditions are met in order to achieve this important goal. When this dream comes true, we will have the opportunity to communicate directly to the GCF with our needs, or developments that we want to implement without first asking different partners as it is now.

For clarification Mr Speaker, the United Nations Development Program, UNDP is now one of the branches of the United Nations and is a partner that implements all communications between Government and the GCF. On matters and requests related to the Vaisigano Project. This means that it not only saves time but also gives us the opportunity to communicate directly, without being disrupted by the many provisions we are facing now. The Samoa Life Assurance Company, SLAC. The duties and projects of the Corporation are well managed. In addition to its annual income, this organization is also one of the joint stock companies that are in the middle of some major developments, which the country expects from their services.

As Samoa and the rest of the world are facing the challenges of Covid-19, the management has decided to adjust some of its projects in the future, including the following areas. 1. Planning process and investigations, whether it is necessary to establish compulsory insurance for the frontline of Government, frontline essential workers, to support them if they are affected by their projects.

2. Seek partnership with the ACC, to protect Government staff in times of need. 3. Consult and investigate whether an insurance is appropriate for patients send abroad, Medical Evaluation Insurance. 4. Work with technology companies with methods and services that families overseas can contribute to use the services of the Organization at all times. 5. Make preparations to repair the Main building of the Corporation. It has been used for many years and needs to be repaired and improved now.

Mr Speaker, I also want to respond to other matters different from the ones I mentioned above. One of the speeches questioned the concern of the reduction of direct assistance, or budget support, and asked why it is not clearly organized in the Government's budget. Mr Speaker, this statement is wrong and incorrect. For the clarification of this issue, any assistance that can be given by the partners is fully organized in the budget. The Roman numeral pages show a general overview of all these grants, including each loan. The funds reserved for each Ministry have been able to promote the exact groups or divisions that are currently using assistance from our partners.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

The amount of external grants from their partners is also increasing every year. And we cannot know what will happen tomorrow. It should also be clarified that one of the direct aid, budget support from the European Union, some preparations are currently being completed including the signing of agreements, which are expected to be signed in Samoa at the end of the year. If this goal is achieved, it will also increase grants for Samoa in the future.

Mr Speaker, this is also a good opportunity for me to show again the willingness of the Government to help this country, which has used our money in its inclusion of \$11 million to implement the development of water. It is a portion of fund that could not be obtained from the European Union, due to the agreement we are awaiting.

The meaning of the statement is, it is the discernment of this Government, to answer the wishes of the country. Responding to the country's request, when foreign aid is delayed and uncertainty to carry out important development locally or development that is given priority.

Mr Speaker, negotiations between our officials, Government staff and partners are continuing at this time. And the confidence of Samoa is still high as one of the countries whose Government is highly trusted because of the proper use of its foreign aid. Good and clear preparation of reports of income and expenses, especially having the opportunity to talk with partners at all times. As with the use of technology, like virtual meetings.

We are able to implement one of the dreams of the HRPP Government through the communication line on the sea, or the Submarine Cable Project. This is why Samoa is connected to the whole world in this period.

Some of the speeches also questioned the status of the major project in Vaisigano which is financed by the Green Climate Fund, GCF. Mr Speaker, the first part has been completed as noted the concrete road from Vaisigano to the concrete road in Loto o Samasoni. Drawings have been prepared and contracts have been sought for the continuation of this work, however there are some conditions of the GCF that they have indicated must be satisfied first, these are additional parts not disclosed at the beginning. For these changes, the Senior Representatives of the Government are also negotiating with partners in order to quickly find a solution and resume this work. Now to another issue raised by one of the members. In regards to assistance for our frontline workers, on which the protection of Samoa from Covid-19 depends on.

Mr Speaker, a fund of \$500,000 was announced in our 2nd relief fund. This belongs to the special fund, which is reserved for emergencies that may occur in the future, including the workers who are being affected by Covid-19 disease and losing their lives. This assistance is available for the working staff and follows the provisions that have been prepared when it is needed.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

One of the members also queried how is the Government going to fund the wharf planned to be built in Vaiusu.

Mr Speaker of the House, the request was submitted to Government, this development has been implemented with grants. We have also acknowledged the importance of this development for the benefit of the country, and we have an agreement to put aside all the other plans previously given to China to be implemented by other partners. But request be given to prioritize this development for the benefit of Samoa at this time through the employment of the youth of the country and elevate businesses together with Samoa being the capital to implement a region hub for shipping. But this development is also necessary, because the country will continue to grow in the future. And it must be through far-sightedness because if it is not done now, by the time it is implemented in the future, the cost will be ten times higher.

These are the things that cannot be reached by those who are narrow-minded, especially those who acquire things. They are not thinking of other people but themselves. Regarding the environment and the safety of the coast, the Government has launched many special studies, feasibility studies. The Government has acted in the spirit that there should not be a group overlooked by the Government and its leaders. That is also the reason why the Government does not rush the implementation of this very important development for the country. Discussion and planning started since the 1970s in order to have the scope of all the parts.

It is also necessary to correct some unfounded statements that China is promoting this development, it is very wrong and foolish statement. This development is a dream and a plan of the leaders of the Government of Samoa.

Mr Speaker, there was a question that stated, this last Sitting of Parliament should have been short. And a lot of money should have been saved.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pardon the Hon Minister, but this is a good opportunity for a break. I call upon the member.

Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi: Mr Speaker, I take the floor once again, because I cannot hear well. It is clear in the statement conveyed by the Hon Minister, since the representative who raised this matter about the wharf is not here, but he is. The main concern for me is debt. But now that I heard, if I am hearing correctly in the Hon Ministers speech, it is going to be a grant.

Is this what it means in the Samoan context, that they have the funds to implement this situation. I would be very grateful if this is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call upon the Leader of the House.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Sailele Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, this is what was said, that is the desire of our Government. Now that the research has been done, this is the only part of the interview that has not been completed.

It was thought their visit would come at the end of last year and conclude discussions on this matter. Mr Speaker, the Minister's statement is clear, all these negotiations are done in the spirit of long-term development. These are the ways of our government, to plan and discuss these issues with our partners. This project has been discussed for a long time, and the reason is that it is a big project. The meeting that was held in Papua New Guinea, probably 2 years ago. We had a meeting together with the Minister of Finance as well as the Chief Executive of Foreign Affairs.

In the process of this discussion, there was expectation that the President of China Xi Jinping, would travel to this region at the invitation of our Government. In the talk with the President, he clearly stated the name Vaiusu, the Vaiusu Project. This means if the President has spoken, the very top of the Chinese Government, it is a very strong Government, or the most powerful in the world in terms of trade. It is not taken lightly; it reflects that he does not take lightly the request that is given. There was expectation that he would travel at the end of this year and then finalize all these matters. As you know, this will affect all our other projects. Our big building at Malifa is nearly completed.

This is a building where we will store our heritage, this is a major project. We are doing it without any money being spent, free. This is the same with the playground for our children, the one behind the Government Building. Between the Government building and the sea. This includes other developments already mentioned by the Minister of Police, a Police Academy at Tafaigata.

While our Government is involved in these sensitive negotiations, it cannot stop the enemies. With the continuous complaints that keep coming, such is the nature of life. The Government is used to it. If our Government were to think back to the various good developments. As we implemented the National University at Papaigalagala it was opposed by the Opposition. It is the strong opposition that resulted in it being established. The Government trying to make this big change to stop using the ugly fine mats called *lalaga* (weaving) for *faalavelave* (family matters). Then the Government tried to re-weave a new version of the mat now used, there were also a lot of objections.

The words written in the newspaper as the voice of those who opposed. The Government has taken ownership of the country's heritage. The Government tries to help our families and the country, but those in Opposition objects. The words of protest in 2006 started this program. Why withhold it, do not interfere, but let them show their wealth.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

But you are free to reduce the carton from 48 to 24. Do not do this. This is where the strength is used as mentioned by the Minister of Customs. But it did not stop the Government, why? When the HRPP believes it is good, they will tire of what to say to us. Do not listen to it, misbehaved animals are noisy, they bark and bark and end up tired out. So what is the situation now.

We advise, as the program by Government was to bring in cars, to make it easier for the country to get affordable cars that can be found. At that time, it was prohibited. Our Law was, cars brought in from New Zealand and Australia was not allowed on our roads, since it was right hand drive. Our Law only allowed in cars on the left side. There was a protest that came here, which halted the session of Parliament by the multitude of those who protested. It did not stop Government. After that, we had the other 3 Bills that we concluded recently. Where are we now? There have been protests, protest but the good qualities that the Government has achieved cannot be removed.

Now to the VAGST, protest started from 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978. There is a protest vehicle of Tumua and Pule that I accepted, I accepted it on behalf of the Prime Minister. We and the Ministers of Cabinet, I advised the Tootooalii, to his Honorable to attend the Meeting of the Heads of the Commonwealth which was held in Scotland. Go ahead, do not let this stop you from attending your duties with Governments of the Commonwealth, where assistance is given but let us handle it. Well, the pinnacle of that protest was, say from 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998.

At the end of 1998, the Opposition dispersed when one resigned that made up nine members, nine members needed to form a Political Party and be accepted. Then it was lowered from 9 to 8.

The speech of Tootooalii to the Leader of Opposition, you associate, you want to rule Government, but you cannot get nine members to support you. Now it will be down to 8.

So, a motion was moved, and the Parliament amended the Standing Orders. No Political Party is recognized in this Parliament, unless there are 8 members and then it was recognized. This is why, there is only one Political Party and its Leader which is recognized in our Standing Orders. Therefore, when you come here and there are less than eight of you, there is only one Political Party that is recognized in this Parliament.

Well, now I have heard that there are flyers going around to protest the major development at Alaoa. Now the devil himself has moved to oppose. Even the airport that was opened by this Party in 1985. This is the first landing of a 747 here in our country. The Opposition also protested very much. Then their cars went, they did not come here but parked at Satapuala.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

They said, do not go there, but stay here and watch the 747 land and roll on the tar sealed road. Well, none of them at that time came, they just stood at Satapuala and was too scared to come there, but they were surprised to see that the plane was slowly coming in, it landed, and crawled slowly with almost no sound heard.

Mr Speaker, there are a few loud people, it is a small number, but there is a silent majority, those who have foresight and have common sense they do not make a noise. But we can easily know a few people, like a can with nothing inside, when you bang it produces a loud noise.

Mr Speaker, such are the actions of what is implemented by this Government, there are those who oppose but this Government cannot stop what needs to be done. This is the same thing, Mr Speaker, these are the norm of our consultations in the House. Let them fuss over it, the noise will slowly die down.

Mr Speaker, this is further clarification on the matter.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Mr Speaker, please can I get an opportunity to voice a weakness on the matter where I am affected...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is it that you want to speak about, is it the matter related to Vaiusu?

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: Yes, I am certain that you heard that I was mentioned in this matter. But there are also other comments...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no mention of the name Faumuina, there is nothing at all. Pardon the member, I appease you.

Afioga Faumuina Asi Pauli Wayne Fong: I obey the Chair, but you are aware of the matter I am trying to respond too. But it is no problem, I will behave. As you are the authority.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your respect. Thank you for upholding honor.

Afioga Tafua Maluelue Tafua (Aleipata Itupa i Lalo): Mr Speaker, just a minute please, I second the statement of the Hon Prime Minister about the 747 that first landed at our airport. I was the other person who came in this plane. I want to let you all know, it was great I was satisfied with all the drinks, food, but then I came down our Government had arranged another lunch.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

I want to thank the Hon Prime Minister and the Party at that time for the welcome given to us. I was drunk after getting off the plane but then again with the drinks provided with respect to the House.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Well, I believe this is an Elders words, Tuiatua Faanofonofu. Respect is very difficult. Well, we will not comment further on the speech of the Hon Leader of Government, but I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance. Let us move on and conclude. It is also nearly time for the Minister of Education, he has long wanted to take a stand.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Mr Speaker, there was a question, that this last Sitting of Parliament should have been shorter, a lot of money should have been saved.

Mr Speaker, this Assembly of Leader of Samoa is prioritized by the Government because there is no other higher, Leaders of the country have gathered to perform their duty, and this is the only opportunity for members to voice a farewell to their constituencies. Not only to thank their constituencies but for the opportunity to contribute to political affairs of Government, but also an opportunity to share their views on the Supplementary Appropriation to support Samoa in this difficult period. There is a reserve fund of the Legislative Assembly to fulfill all the needs for the meetings of the Parliament.

One of the speakers also asked about the policies of the Government changed from time to time. I would like to emphasize the most important guideline used by the Government, which is due diligence at a time of need. Mr Speaker, the Government has guidelines that prohibit excessive spending of Government funds when hosting. This policy or guideline is subject to change based on approval by Government when necessary.

For example, whenever Samoa hosts official visits of Leaders of foreign Governments or Presidents of International Organizations who have partners with Government, the red carpet is rolled out, as well as a traditional welcoming ceremony for esteemed guests that has made Samoa famous in the Pacific and around the world. It is also unlikely that the aid will continue to be released and that our partners and Governments from abroad will continue to show respect, because Samoa will always be remembered with its reverences when they visit. We have been able to achieve these blessings because of the flexible spirit of the Government and the foresight of its leaders to value these partnerships at all times.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Mr Speaker, I cannot ignore some of the issues that are being publicized in the country, which are promises that other Political Parties will implement when they rise to govern Samoa. Mr Speaker, righteousness, the country should be clear on how to finance these dreams and many thoughts if they start lobbying to remove all the taxes that generate the Governments money.

For example, if these dreams were to be implemented including distributing of \$1 million for the 51 constituencies. This means, the amount of \$51 million is needed to fund it, including \$200 for the elderly pension, therefore \$40 million will be spent. If we add another \$100 for 6,000 people with special needs, it will cost \$7.2 million, plus a \$200 million grant to help businesses export goods overseas. If we add all these numerous dreams, a \$298.2 million fund is urgently needed to fund their promises. There are also many other promises being spread around by the media, it is certain that there may be no money to implement them. For revenue of Government they have announced, most taxes will be reduced, Government services will be cheaper, taxes will be removed from other taxpayers and many other promises that have already been announced to the country.

If these plans come true, they have taken \$35.4 million from the Governments revenue. If you put it in simple language, Mr Speaker, the additional expenses will be used to finance these plans, then compared to the revenue lost, it will be very difficult for a promise to come true. This is fraudulent and deceptive behavior which reflects the disloyalty of this Group and their promises. Partners will also look at these guidelines and far-reaching plans, and no partner will want to assist us if they notice that the Government has reached a crisis and no longer uses good governance and clear and fair guidelines the Government of Samoa was established and guided upon for many years under the HRPP Government.

Mr Speaker, I cannot ignore such false and reckless statement made by one of the members of the House saying the Government is bankrupt. The truth is Samoa, the last time our country encountered bankruptcy, or when it went into being very poor was the Government that preceded in 1982 before the HRPP emerged to manage and lead the country. The Government was very bankrupt and had no money to pay its workers, no money for trade, no money to operate Government, no money to carry out...there was no trust from the world especially International Organizations to assist Samoa again.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pardon Honorable... is there something you want to speak on? The Minister is concluding.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker...there are just a few things I want to clarify. I commend the Hon Minister of Finance for the wonderful speech. But do take a break.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, that is the statement I should say, but you are not answering me. What is it that you want to clarify? Do I have to say this again respectable member. What part exactly that you want to understand? If you look here, I have with me the Summary of the Hansard according to the speeches you made.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker or is it Deputy Mr Speaker, (.....)
Mr Speaker, I spoke about the Appropriation, I spoke about the economy of the country.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Tofa Olo you spoke on a different matter.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker it seems we are going to debate this, but I am interrupting the Minister. Well, bear with me as I make an intervention. Hon Minister through Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Olo, I have mentioned your name, please take your seat while the Chair is speaking. We will argue like this. Please sit down. I want to ask you then you can stand up and speak.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: It seems we cannot say anything to you. Well, I will not say anything, you are the authority. But why did you want us to come here, yet you are holding us back. What is the truth of this?

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Olo, no, it is your obligation to attend the session.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: (.....).

DEPUTY SPEAKER: No members were elected to attend this National Assembly of the country. It is not like that. I appease you, have prudence. Apologies Olo but you are not seen as the enemy, I appease your will. I call upon the Hon Minister, you may continue with your address.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Mr Speaker since our promises were mentioned. The words used by the Minister are quite severe of being fraudulent and untruthful. This is why Mr Speaker since the country is listening. Apologies Hon Minister but leave our promises. I apologize, as for your interpretation and your feelings about the policies that we have at this time, let it be. As for your opinion and our matters said to Samoa, well we will profess it when the time comes to do it. But do not say this word fraud again, it is ruthless.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is noted. I appease the member Laauli. It is not a Political Party; members are independent since the Parliamentary term is not finished.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: We are not fooling the country. This is our announcement made outside, it is something already arranged. These words are serious.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Laauli, sit down please.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Mr Speaker, these are ruthless words for the country to listen to.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please sit down.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: We are not fooling the country. Those are the words that should be corrected. This is done repeatedly.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your opinion take a seat. It is not yet time... the speech I have noted here, if you look here, I am also working, to record and make it official.

The speech of the Hon Minister of Finance, Party. It is not yet time to officially announce these things and recognize another Party in the House. There is only one Party, the HRPP that is present now. When we are finished you can do whatever you want. I apologize but I will give the opportunity to the Minister to continue his clarification.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Yes Mr Speaker. Although this effort is not acknowledged, I am the official representative of the Party. Even if I am alone, the Party has already been registered. Whether it is not official in the House you are aware. Mr Speaker please give me an opportunity. The words voiced by the Minister of Finance are not easy to accept.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, pardon me, but the Party is not yet official in the House.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: It is official to all of Samoa.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sit down. It is good for a hero to control his heart, and I will not allow you to stand again. Apologies, Hon Minister of Finance, you may continue with your speech.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Thank you Mr Speaker. There is no...The matter saying that these statements are wrong, and the world has no faith, especially International Organizations to assist Samoa. International banks closed their doors, and they do not want to lend money because it cannot be paid back. It is an exhausting period that we do not want to remember. How about today? Samoa has become a progressive country. We have implemented many major developments, the Government has developed and grown, there are many workers, and the service has also been improved. Our trading currency is good and strong. We have become a reliable partner, a trusted partner in the relationship with countries or international organizations. Samoa is no longer hungry or poor.

The stance of Samoa in political affairs is top. Mr Speaker, it has been noted every year, the Government's Budget Estimates, are only preparations for first 12 months, which clearly sets out the estimated revenue, expenditures and grants from abroad as well as loans. After the financial year, the Government prepares the information of its income and expenses, public accounts and are submitted to the Auditors Office to carry out their audit.

Observing the many years in the past, Government had mostly achieved more revenues than expenditures, or Budget Surplus, even though the Budget had recorded a Budget Deficit or more expenditures than revenues in the start of the year. During the previous year 2019/2020 ending in June 2020/2020, it was recorded that revenues were greater than expenditures or Budget Surplus of \$17.4 million. But it was estimated that \$87 million excess expenditures to revenues or Deficit.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

In other previous fiscal years, the Government was able to achieve a small percentage of deficits, or a surplus after the financial year and public auditing.

I will summarize as follows; in 2016/2017, there was an estimated Budget Deficit of 3.5%, and at the end of the financial year, the recorded deficit was only 1.1%. During the next financial year 2017/2018 a surplus recorded for high expenditures over revenues, an estimated deficit recorded was 0.2%.

In 2018/2019, the estimated deficit recorded was 3.5%, but after the financial year, there was a surplus of 2.7%.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I beseech the Hon Minister speaking, as I give the opportunity to the Leader of the House.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, the issue addressed by the Minister is very important, the difference in the Budget is that only the estimates and statistics are being provided, the money has already been spent and the Minister is discussing the actual revenues received and the actual expenditures spent. That is the only matter I wanted to address.

During the Minister's speech, it was also raised by members, whereby there were 2 different things. The Budget is different as it deals with or handles money that is estimated. That means these funds have already been determined before the beginning of the year. And then it will proceed throughout the year until the end of the year, after which the actual revenue and actual spending is then accumulated, and then the budget is prepared for the actual revenues received and the actual expenditures spent. Such is the issue being discussed by the Minister now. These are the important matters I wanted to discuss, but if you notice, when the members of the House were conducting their speeches, we did not interrupt, as we sat comfortably and listened. Now all the members of the House have finished speaking, and I do not remember anyone interrupting the speech of the member for Gagaifomauga No.3. There were no interruptions when their speeches were in progress, even for Olo. The Cabinet did not interfere, as we sat comfortably and listened.

Now it is time for the Cabinet to stand and explain these issues, but they are still interfering. What did I just witness? The Rules of our House, if a member wants to stand, they must first ask permission from you to make a Point of Order or Point of Clarification, then they will sit down again and wait for your permission. But now, Olo would just stand up nonchalantly and give his statement right away, he does not want to listen to you and the order of the Rules of this House that were based on the respected values.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

A member should stand up and request for an opportunity to speak, and then they must sit back down to wait for your decision. But what has happened now? They just casually stand up and inform you the Hon Speaker, and then they just proceed with what they wanted to say.

The reason for mentioning this issue, is for the sake of the country listening in. Then they suddenly stand up and walk out. So they are showcasing foolish behaviors after another. Well, Mr Speaker, that is the case, we are making an effort.

We remain seated and listened to the speeches of the members, completely until the conclusion. Now it is our turn to speak, but yet after a few sentences it is stopped due to interruptions. It is a good situation that we want to respond to, but we should stick to the usual procedures, whereas they are only able to continue after you have given permission. Those are the procedures. Mr Speaker, since the country is listening.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Olo, I ask that you sit down. The Assembly of the country already has policies in place. These Acts are used to govern the Assembly, as the country is listening in support and praying for its success. Since the members have gathered to make decisions for the country. This is the reason why we give our speeches.

We have already sworn before God to do justice, and to walk the right path. In the Standing Orders 82 (4) it states: “The Speaker will have the discretion to allow or deny the intervention of a member based on the formality and appropriateness of the intervention.” This is the Standing Orders, and not a single member is excluded from it.

Now that the Leader of the House has spoken, I trust that we should address it right now. I implore the member that wants to speak, since it is the duty of the Chair, to regulate the Assembly of the country not only for us today, but for others tomorrow. To the sanctity of the country. The Hon Leader of the Government has spoken, because statements will spread outside. But it is the intention of the Chair since we started with the Lord, we should also finish with the Lord for our blessings. And whether there is an opinion that needs to be expressed, I implore the member to adhere to whatever decision that is given by the Chair. Anyway, in the Standing Orders, if a member wants to interfere or need clarification on the Government responses, it must be declared and then they can sit down. So it is questioned, and if it is appropriate, why should it be rejected? The Chair will allow it. But if it not, it will be rejected by the Chair. I did not come here to reprimand the people of the country, but the Standing Orders of the House, the Bible of the House is the guide used by the Chair.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

I believe that the matter that I am trying to explain have been made clear for the audience of the country. You have the foresightedness and so do I, we were all elected for the prosperity of the Assembly of the country.

Therefore, I humbly implore the honorable member, to obey and follow our Standing Orders so that the National Assembly is kept sacred.

This is the announcement of the Chair that must be obeyed for the success of the Sitting today. God bless the Assembly for today.

Afioga Faaulusau Rosa Duffy Stowers (Gagaifomauga No.3): Mr Speaker, is there a chance please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there something you want to address, as it should be made clear.

Afioga Faaulusau Rosa Duffy Stowers: Yes Mr Speaker, please, I just want to give a Point of Order for some issues which also includes the Hon Prime Minister. With all due respect, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not quite know the statement but...

Afioga Faaulusau Rosa Duffy Stowers: The statements that have been conveyed in the House, since it has been discussed in the House several times. Perhaps it is the justification by a member regarding an issue that is being discussed, whereby it is often forgotten that there are two (2) members for Gagaifomauga No.3. Even the Hon Prime Minister has addressed this matter. But it should be rectified that there are two (2) members.

The other member fully understands the deficit. But the other member does not understand. So it is the female member who understands completely. Therefore, this is not an order but a request, if one of the members wants to make a statement, then it should be stated, I call on the male member for Gagaifomauga No.3. With all due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call on the Leader of the House since your name was mentioned.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, I humbly apologise to the female member for Gagaifomauga No.3. Well, that is the problem, I tend to forget sometimes. But I want to apologise, since the member is correct. It will not happen again.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. As I have reiterated, the decision of the Speaker has been made, and the Speaker's decision is absolute. This is something that should also be remembered. Thank you.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polatiavao Leuatea: Mr Speaker, these words are unpleasant, please give me an opportunity to clarify since my title has been addressed, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, an opportunity will be given since the male member for Gagaifomauga was mentioned.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Thank you. Firstly, I want to apologise for the issue that was stated by the Minister of Finance, because of the circumstances saying that our family is not recognized in the Parliament. A plea was conveyed with the utmost respect, but yet the members continue to make statements about the FAST. I beseech the members, as I request with the utmost respect, to leave our program alone. Until after the decision is made by Samoa on what should be done.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, it has been noted, so move on to point 2.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Point 2, Faaulusau, I will not tarnish our relationship, because I am very chivalrous and respectful. If you have become smart enough, then so be it. Given that you have made proclamations stating that I do not understand. Well, I will humble myself, but that is your wisdom. Let us anticipate the decision of our constituency, to see who is really smart. With all due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, when the Assembly is over, then you can both go outside to work on this relationship.

Afioga Faaulusau Rosa Duffy Stowers: Mr Speaker, that is the essence. We will meet outside when it is over, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, look how wonderful this is. This is exactly what...

Tofa Hon Lopao Natanielu Mua (Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries): Mr Speaker, I request for an opportunity...

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa (Vaimauga East): Mr Speaker, an opportunity please...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I implore the member as the Government is upstanding, the Hon Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, because this is your duty.... well, you may speak.

Tofa Hon Lopao Natanielu Mua: Thank you Mr Speaker for the opportunity, well, for the wonderful statement by the Minister of Finance, the clarification of the Deficit. Hopefully it has been understood, but the only reason why I am upstanding, is that I came prepared with 2 pairs of boxing gloves in my car, so that the two members can have a spar while I will be the referee. With all due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, I... if only I was made aware of this statement beforehand, I would not have permitted the Hon Minister....

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Mr Speaker, this middle man is being provocative. Yes, I implore the Hon Minister that eats steaks, do not tempt me, I can never do such a thing to my sister. Even if she were to come and slap me, I would just look the other. Or I would turn the cheek, like that, but be careful not to overdo it.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Laauli, just ignore the statement, but thank you to the honourable Member. Thank you to the Hon Minister, as sometimes it is good to make few jokes but thank you.

Afioga Hon Lautafi Fio Selafi Purcell (Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour): Mr Speaker please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: But I commend the senior members, since the members tend to joke around, similar to the Assemblies that I watched when I was still in school. Now we will move on, since we are addressing these issues thoroughly. Well, this has been clarified enough and everything is going great. I call on the Hon Minister of Finance, well, proceed with...

Afioga Hon Lautafi Fio Selafi Purcell: Mr Speaker I ask for an opportunity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, I beseech the honourable Minister, as I call on the Hon Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Afioga Hon Lautafi Fio Selafi Purcell: Thank you, it is good that we have these commercials from time to time, which is what I call these types of banter. Mr Speaker, I am upstanding as I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture, because he stated that there are 4 boxing gloves in his car. My question to the Hon Minister, were you planning on using this on someone? Well, that is my question Mr Speaker.

Afioga Hon Loau Solamalemalo Keneti Sio (Minister of Education, Sports and Culture): Mr Speaker, an opportunity please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: It seems that we are starting to go off track....well; I call on the Hon Minister of Education.

Afioga Loau Solamalemalo Keneti Sio: Yes Mr Speaker, I have been sitting anxiously. We have spent the whole night last night talking about this word, deficit. And our Assembly ended but it was still not made clear. This is the reason why I am upstanding, since I am the Minister of Education, so I understand this word completely and its definition.

The terminology that is used by the accountants like us, whereby this side said it is bankrupt, but it is a huge loss. Because it has a meaning in the French Dictionary, which is the reason for my upstanding. The deficite, that is how it is pronounced, but it has the same meaning. The spelling may seem similar, but the definition is different. The deficite is to fall from a tree.

But it also has a meaning in the Spanish Dictionary, yes, it is defcicita, the spelling is almost the same, but the definition is different. It is to fall from a horse, excuse my language....because it needs to be made clear, so that when we leave for today, it will no longer be discussed when I give my speech on Monday, with the utmost respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, thank you, perhaps that can be the introduction for your speech, because our gratitude is piling up.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa: Mr Speaker...

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call on the member for Vaimauga East.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa: This member is filled with respect for the House of Assembly of the country, because it is said that this land...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a Point of Order or....

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa: It is a Point of Order

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Go ahead.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa: All of us have been selected by God to come and convey the words of the country. But it has been noticed in this hour of the evening.... because the country is listening to Mr Speaker. It seems like your administration of this Assembly is being taken lightly. This is the land of faautugatagi of Samoa, and this member for Vaimauga is worried.

But I entreat the Hon Speaker, since the statement made by Olo should not be taken lightly. He said, "This is the last time you will be administrating the Assembly". It is not pleasant to hear this. That is my reason for standing; these words should be removed from the records of our Parliament.

Whether a member returns or not, that is up to God. But let it not be decided by anyone else. This is what I wanted to say, since the country is listening, for a person has multiple connections. We are related through blood.

So, when hearing this kind of statements, it is displeasing to this member for Vaimauga. The Leader of the country has already stated, offensive words should not be misued, as it is settled with respect and reverence.

Mr Speaker do not be gently with your judgement. You the Hon Speaker have the supreme authority over this Parliament of Samoa. As for this evening, well, I will not say anything more. Therefore, I implore you Mr Speaker, to remove the statement made by this member from our records. With all due respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I beseech the member that gave the thought to move the motion.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa: I move the motion, *To remove these words by Olo.*

Seconded by the member for Falealili East and the Member for Safata West.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker, I would just like to ask, what is wrong with the statement? This is my question to the honourable member.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Olo, the motion has been seconded, take your seat.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Other statements made in this House were more severe than the words I said. If we were bantering, that is the case.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question will be put forth, so take your seat. If it was not serious for you, it is serious for me. If that is what you are asking. It's serious, but the Chair is respectful. The motion has been seconded and the question will be put.

The motion was approved.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Olo, I am addressing you directly, since I have been trying to restrain myself. Now it has been approved by the House, for the words of the Honourable Member to be removed but keep them in your heart.

Do you see my eyes looking at you; carry out your endeavours smoothly. God bless the remaining plans we have for today.

I call on the Hon Minister of Finance, continue your speech.

[Words ordered by the Speaker to be removed from the records of the speech of the representative for Salega East "*Enjoy your last time.*"]

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Mr Speaker, the process of the Government's work is still ongoing. It is different from businesses that prioritise the question, if the income is sufficient for the continuation of the work. Or in English, the principle of ongoing concern, because any work by the Government cannot be discontinued. Even with the income needed to carry out the development, there are opportunities for direct aid.

The loans that have the simplest terms, and there are also opportunities to adjust the policies to suit the changes in the environment and the economy that a country is in. Mr Speaker, what I mean by this statement, the distribution and the collection of funds by the Government each year is going well, through the surplus of the estimated revenue that will be collected. Some are the expenses reserved in the Budget, as these projects require many years or multiyear project, to be implemented and it cannot be completed within a year.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

It also reflects the well execution of the policies to protect the funds and properties of the Government. The usual words of the country, (*aua le mana'o i le ia ae manumanu i le upega*) do not yearn for the outcome but be mindful of our resources, but the judgement and discretion will be left to Samoa.

The HRPP Administration speaks through its work. It is a government that is internationally recognized for its good governance and regulations for the managing of its projects. It is trusted by our partners, and it is managed by Samoan natives, who have enough knowledge and skill to develop the country for the prosperity of all people.

When we look back at some of the achievements achieved by our small country, it is now possible to host in Samoa the major summits of the Leaders of Government of the world. The International Games were carried out in Samoa which is something that all the countries of the Pacific yearn for. The Samoan Leaders were also appointed as the Chairperson for International Conferences. Samoa is also at the forefront of becoming a founding member of major International Organizations in the world.

Mr Speaker, it is an honour that reflects the recognition of the HRPP Government in the world. This Administration is mature in the politics of Government, possessing enough knowledge and skill to navigate the journey of Samoa. Yes, words and statements are not important, but the work implemented speaks for itself.

Mr Speaker, before I conclude my speech, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Afioga Leaupepe Faafisi, the fellow Minister Tuitama Leao Dr. Talalelei Tuitama, as well as all the members of Parliament who have announced their intentions of not participating in the General Election of the country in April. Congratulations for your services, thank you for your service to Samoa, for the duration of your appointment.

A special thanks to the Associate Minister of this Ministry, Afioga Mulipola Leiataua Laki. I commend your services and thank you for all the work you have done.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa: Mr Speaker, I request an opportunity because I noticed that the Ministers is about to conclude his speech, but there was an important issue that was mentioned in the speech of this constituency please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, okay, the opportunity is given, the member may speak.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa: I express my gratitude to the Minister of Finance. It was stated in the speech of this member that was given in the Supplementary Appropriation Bill, whereby it mentioned some benefits for the village Mayors. I also carefully observed the emergence of the Minister and discussed the many regulations and the things implemented in his Ministry, which is the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development. But the essence, with which I conducted my speech on the Supplementary Budget, was whether there are some bonuses for all the Mayors of Samoa, since there are only about 400+ village Mayors.

This is the reason for my statement because the Minister is concluding his speech, but it was not addressed.... Mr Speaker if you think about, the mayors in this time of Covid and the.... they are supporting the country. It is being supported by not only the mayors, but the fathers and Mothers, with the many projects implemented within the villages. These are the things that are keeping our country safe. But nothing has been addressed, and the current situation with the virus.

The other issue, which was requested by the mayors, considering that it will take 2 weeks to get the.... but it seems that the salary for Mayor is different than the salary of a Father. Therefore, the Mayors made a request, what if it was made equal? Because the work they conduct is similar. But the request that was made through the Minister of Finance, whether it has been considered because this member has also noticed, in the Supplementary Budget that I saw, the funds that were provided have been reimbursed by this Political Party. So, thank you to this Political Party. On that note, perhaps some benefits should also be given for the female and male Mayors or the Representative of the Government that is being supported by our Government and our country within the Authority of the Village Council. The intention Hon Minister...

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, the interruption has been noticed, I call on the Leader of the Government.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: For these types of matters, they will all be addressed when we discuss the allowance. And the question that is being asked to the Minister should focus solely on the mayors, because it cannot be discussed, since another Minister cannot talk about the issue of another Minister.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

Well, that is the situation, as they will all be considered when the time comes for us to have discussions on the allowances of Mayors and Committees. In case you might be thinking about the Election, it is becoming more and more inappropriate to rush things at this time.

But hopefully when the election is over, then it will be considered together with all the Committees of our Government. Such are the principles. IF the allowance of one group is reviewed, then the rest of the committees will look to us expecting the same thing because there is not just one Committee. There are many different Committees.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, I implore the member since the entirety of the matter has now been explained.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa: Well, that is the essence, since the Minister should have responded. But the Minister is not taking it into account because his term is about to end. As for the statement by the Prime Minister, it is not about the Election, but it is for the general well-being of Samoa, which is why this member has raised this issue.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, the terms as I have already stated, for these types of matters when it is considered, it will not be specific to just one group. Because once you deal with a group, other groups will start to ask questions.

It is for that reason why the Government act in accordance with the policies, so that we do not uplift some people and ignore the others.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, perhaps all the circumstances of this matter have been made clear.

Afioga Hon Tuitama Talalelei Tuitama: Mr Speaker, it seems that the member is addressing my responsibility. And there is nothing more to say since the Leader of the Government has already responded, and that is also the answer for this matter.

But be patient; do not worry because we have policies in place, which were set up by our Government for the implementation of these circumstances. But for now, well I will go outside to prepare.... since there are boxing gloves at the back of the car.... with all due respect.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call on the Hon Minister of Finance to conclude your speech.

Afioga Hon SILI EPA TUIOTI: Mr Speaker, well, I was conveying my gratitude and congratulations to my Associate Minister, Hon Mulipola Leiataua Laki. Thank you for all the work, we hope that God continues to help you in your appointment, for other duties in service of our country.

The Hon Prime Minister, I want to express my gratitude. Thank you for the trust given to the member for Faasaleleaga No.1 to serve in your Cabinet in the position of Minister of Finance. I also convey my thanks and congratulations to the Chief Executive Officers and the staff of Government Ministries and Organizations under my supervision. I commend your services, thank you for serving Samoa. I also want to express congratulations and gratitude to the Chief Executive Officers of the Ministries and Organizations of our Government, and I commend your hard work.

Mr Speaker, now I come to address my constituency. But before I address my electoral constituency of Salelologa and Tafua, I first want to offer Praises and Exaltation be unto the Lord, for His everlasting love every day, throughout these past 5 years. I also acknowledge you, “*ua malietoa ua malotau*”, I commend your efforts. So always put God first, because His hands are a safe haven, with the administration of the Parliaments Assembly. Glory be unto God for it is not wisdom nor strength that has saved us all in our journey.

I express my gratitude to the Reverends and their wives from Salelologa, as well as Tafua. I appreciate your prayers as it has made my efforts successful, because of your devotion through your religious orison. And I can never forget the support of my constituency of Salelologa in all its honorific salutations.

I also acknowledge the devotion and support of my village of Tafua and all its honorific salutations. Thank you for your assistance and prayers which has satisfied the heart.

Now there are many developments that have been implemented in our constituency in the year 2016 up to now which includes the construction of access roads for the residential areas, as well as plantations and other developments. The improvement of water and electricity for the houses and residences, the reopening of the airport in our constituency, for traveling to Savaii and Upolu as well as long-term plans for American Samoa and other Pacific countries in the future.

The construction of the new NPF office, not only to facilitate the needs of this service, but it will also provide services for the children of Salelologa, as well as the Government’s plan to reorganize the town area in Salelologa, the capital of our island of Salafai.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

This plan has been prepared by the Ministries and Organizations of the Government, the Cabinet has assigned people to be responsible for this work, which includes the establishment of a central building of the Government that contains all the Ministries and various services of the Government, and there will no longer be a need for some required Government services to travel back and forth between Apia and Savaii every day.

The Government has also made preparations for Public Primary Schools in Salelologa, which are expected to be relocated far away from the sea for their safety, especially with the increasing number of children, who are taught at this time and require all the services as set forth by the Ministry of Education.

Mr Speaker, I would like to reiterate to the Parliament especially the audience of Samoa on some of the Main Goals with which the Government Budget was established on within the 5 years of this Parliamentary Term. Needless to say, Samoa has few resources that the country's economy relies on, especially with the many developments that is needed to be carried out, as well as the funds required for its implementation. This is why our preparations for the Budget for the 2015/2016 financial year were based on the Main Goal, to balance our demands with the resources we have.

For the current year 2020/2021, we are focused on weaving together a prosperous and stable future. When these important passages are put together, we can say that, although the Government's resources are limited. We can greatly increase our economy and achieve greater results if we work together.

These are our final words, may God's kind be with Samoa, as the country prepares for its General Election for the next 5 years. Goodbye and God bless.

Parliament showed appreciation by applauding after the Speech of Response by the Minister of Finance.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Congratulations to the Minister of Finance. Best wishes to you from this Parliament as well as the audience of Samoa.

Therefore, it is believed that all the issues raised by the members of the House have been addressed and clarified. And every single matter was dissected, as you gave a clear and thorough explanation.

I therefore express commendations and appreciation to your commitment, as your contribution was not minor. Now the country and the Parliament have listened, starting from the year 2016 until today, everything has been revealed. Therefore, we convey our congratulations and gratitude to the Honourable Minister, with the audience of your constituency. Well, your constituency is lucky, as their member was appointed as the Minister of Finances.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading

I commend your services and your patriotism. You have disclosed your efforts throughout this Parliamentary Term, and you have also revealed the long-term plans for the new Parliamentary Term. And so we express our congratulations and gratitude.

We have a thousand words to extend our sincere congratulations to the Chief Executive Officers of the Ministries that you have worked with. It is not an easy work as heard by the House and Samoa, with the plethora of work and developments, and for what reason? It is the love for the country, may God bless the work that was implemented.

Furthermore, I also want to convey my congratulations and gratitude to the sanctity of Parliament, the Hon Prime Minister and the fellow Ministers, the Associate Ministers as well as that side of the House, the Chairpersons of the Parliamentary Committees, and all the honourable Members. Well, as you have witnessed, there are times when the situation becomes intense.

Those are the qualities of life because the devils of this world will never leave us alone. They will continue to tempt us in order to ruin the good things we have done. However, the Assembly of Samoa has put its faith in God. And now we have successfully completed our work today, *e tetele lava pesegea ae matua i le oo*. Thus, I offer my compliments and appreciation to all the members. I acknowledge your patience, your foresight and your prudence.

Well, to the sanctity of Samoa, your devotion is never forgotten. No matter how hard we work, we will always depend on our devotion. In case there are some shortcomings by the members of Parliament that you have elected for the prosperity of Samoa.

My apologies for what you have witnessed and heard. We rely on your matured wisdom. Samoa is a valuable country. Thank you for your support this evening, as the endeavours of your Parliament is successful.

Well, to the ordained servants of God, in every altar, the Parliament also acknowledges you with the completion of the work for this week. I commend you for your prayers, which has provided us with the strength, the wisdom and the knowledge, as support the Assembly of our country with prayers of encourage to the Lord. Now the work for this week is successful.

Thank you to the Chief Executive Officers of the Private Organizations of the Government, thank you very much for your support. The characteristic of hard work is not prejudice. I express my congratulations and thank you especially the Ministry of Finance. God bless your work.

Furthermore, I also acknowledge the Hon Clerk of the Assembly, the Deputy Clerk and the staff. The Parliament has dined and they have been satisfied with your services, may God replenish what has been used. God bless your services.

27 FEBRUARY 2021

**Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– debate on the second reading**

The Ministry of Police to the Hon Commissioner, as well as the male and female police officers, thank you for the security provided for the House this week. That is your responsibility. For the Ministry of Health, we express our gratitude for your work. I commend your hard work for the safety of the health of all the honourable members.

Well, before we adjourn, I respectfully call on the Fetalaiga Saleaula, you are a senior member, to conclude the work today with a prayer.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly adjourned at 7:05pm until Monday 1st March 2021 at 9am.