

14 October 2011

MPs no longer get TOP\$96 overtime per hour instead they get TOP\$40 meeting fees when they convene for any Parliament Standing Committee.

The Hon. Finance and Inland Revenue Minister Sunia Fili revealed this in Parliament on Tuesday.

This is in response to a question by Tongatapu 8 MP Sione Taione whether reports by Taimi 'o Tonga's newspaper is true that politicians are making the most while in Parliament.

Hon. Fili said in the old policy, MPs get TOP\$96 per day when they work overtime up to two hours and additional hours are charged further TOP\$96.

However he adds after considerable consideration the Finance and Public Accounts Standing Committee amended the policy and endorsed a meeting fee of TOP\$50 instead.

"The public needs to know that we have cut the overtime pay and making it TOP\$50 per meeting fee. So after taking the pay as you earn - PAYE, MPs get TOP\$40 in an hourly basis," explained Hon. Fili.

He said this is nothing compared to statutory board's meeting fees that starts from TOP\$60 up to TOP\$90

Tongatapu 8 MP told the House, if the media report is unfounded the House should do something about it.

MPs will not get overtime

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In response to this the Speaker of Parliament Lord Lasike said he had directed the Clerk of the House to write to the newspaper to retract their news report and to also make a public apology to the Legislative Assembly for the inaccurate information it carries.

Lord Lasike also informed the House that if no action taken by the Taimi 'o Tonga newspaper then Parliament will seek legal action.

"They should correct their news report because it is inaccurate and misleading information," explained the Hon. Speaker.

ENDS

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