



THE BOUGAINVILLE BULLETIN

Our voice, Our image, Our place

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Bougainville establishes Constitutional Planning Commission



Newly sworn in members of the Bougainville Constitutional Planning Commission pose for a group photo.

Bougainville created history when it officially swore in the Bougainville Constitutional Planning Commission at Arawa, Central Bougainville in February this year.

The Commission consists of 40 members who take on the task of drafting a home-grown constitution for an independent sovereign state of Bougainville in the near future.

President of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville Hon. Ishmael Toroama in delivering his key note address at the ceremony

stressed that independence was Bougainville's agenda and the Commission now has the important task of working together to create a constitution that reflects the dreams and aspirations of Bougainville.

"Independence is Bougainville's agenda, not the National Government and as such we must work on creating a brand new constitution that captures the views and reflects the dreams and aspirations of all Bougainvilleans across the region," Toroama said.

He added that the government and the Commission must set a benchmark so that the next generation of Bougainville will follow on what they create.

President Toroama heads the commission as the Chairman, Vice President Hon Patrick Nisira as Alternate Chairman whilst Attorney General and Minister for Law and Justice and Bougainville Independence Mission Hon. Ezekiel Masatt, is the deputy chairperson.

The commissioners were selected across all four regions

of Bougainville from the Atolls/ Nissan and North, Central and South Bougainville representing various stakeholders that include veterans, women, churches and youth.

Upon their swearing in today, the commissioners were challenged to represent the whole of Bougainville regardless of their stakeholder groups and regions.

Hon. Ezekiel Masatt called on the commissioners to put aside regionalism and stakeholder status and work together as a team to deliver this important task of drafting the constitution of an independent Bougainville.

"To be independent is a choice Bougainvilleans chose through the referendum and as a responsible government we have that responsibility to practicalise that decision and this Commission has a huge responsibility to ensure that we represent the whole of Bougainville regardless of what group we represent or what region we come from," Hon. Masatt stressed.

"We voted because we wanted change and I appeal to all of us to be humble and work together to create this constitution for Bougainville," he said.

The Commissioners were sworn in by the Senior Provincial Magistrate Bruce Tasikul and will be having their first meeting proper later this evening to discuss the work plan, terms of reference and timeline that will guide the commission.

It is anticipated that the commission should produce a draft constitution in the first quarter of 2025.



Our voice, Our image, Our place

Editor’s Desk

Hello Readers!

Welcome again to this year’s first Edition of the Bougainville Bulletin.

Much has been done across Bougainville in its implementation of the Bougainville Independence Mission, at the internal level including preparations on the ground and the domestic level which looks at preparations between the Governments of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea.

According to the Independence Timeline, a number of activities have been earmarked to happen this year to prepare Bougainville towards independence-readiness. A significant one is the establishment of the Bougainville Constitutional Planning Commission, which was launched in February this year.

This Constitutional Planning Commission is now mandated to draft Bougainville’s very own home-grown constitution for the soon-to-be independent and sovereign state of Bougainville.

This edition also brings to you key highlights of development stories and events that have happened in the first quarter of this year – all of which contributes to our independence-readiness mission.

In the Chief Secretary’s Update in this Edition, the year 2022 is being marked as the ‘year of implementation’ for Bougainville at all levels. This means, we work harder, we work better and we work collaboratively to ensure we prepare Bougainville for independence.

We also bring to you the President’s Column where our ABG President Hon. Ishmael Toroama provides his government’s update on progress in our political journey to independence, as well as updates on the economic front, highlighting the Bougainville Economic Development Strategy.

Read more also on our political progress in our centerspread to understand how far our government has progressed in the joint inter-government consultations on the Bougainville referendum result on Independence and what the much talked about Era Kone Covenant means for Bougainville.

Happy reading!

The Bulletin Team

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About the *Bougainville Bulletin*

The *Bougainville Bulletin* is a publication of the Autonomous Bougainville Government, produced by the Directorate of Media and Communication, Department of President and Bougainville Executive Council.

We encourage stories from the public, government and community organisations. To submit an article or letter for publication, please contact us:

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Condolence Message for the Late Hon. Xavier Kareku

We remember the Late Hon. Xavier Kareku, Member for Haku Constituency who sadly passed away on 07 March 2022.

President Hon Ishmael Toroama described the Late Xavier as a leader who was committed to Bougainville’s Independence Mission.

“The Late Hon. Xavier Kareku was vocal about issues on good governance and development. He was a young man who believed in serving his people of Haku and Bougainville as a whole.

I mourn with the people of Haku during this very difficult time.

On behalf of the Autonomous Bougainville Government and the people of Bougainville I offer our deepest sympathies to the family of the Late Hon. Xavier Kareku and the people of Haku.

Nevertheless, we must pay homage to the memory of our fallen leader by continuing to persevere as a people in ensuring that the sacrifices he made as a leader were not in vain. We shall overcome these challenges and remain committed to our cause.

May God Almighty give peace to the family of the Late Hon. Xavier Kareku during this time. May the soul of the Late Hon. Xavier Kareku rest in eternal peace.”

2022 Budget Stories

ABG outlines development priorities for 2022

The Autonomous Bougainville Government will be receiving K100million as part of the National Government’s commitment to retire the outstanding constitutionally guaranteed Restoration and Development Grant (RDG).

ABG Minister for Treasury and Finance Hon. Mathias Salas announced this during the budget session in parliament in December 2021.

“The K100M has already been allocated for projects at the Departmental headquarter level and district/regions,” Minister Salas said.

The identification of programs included in the 2022 ABG development budget was done through a bottom-up approach through consultations conducted with community governments and district officials earlier this year.

“I am confident that the programs and projects that have received allocations are based on fully vetted ABG priorities,” Salas said.

Under the 2022 ABG Development Budget, funds have been allocated as follows:

1. *Bougainville Development Program – Headquarters* K8,440,000.00
2. *Bougainville Development*

- Program – Nissan/Atolls Region* K3,000,000.00
3. *Bougainville Development Program – Northern Region* K4,100,00.00
 4. *Bougainville Development Program – Central Region* K4,050,000.00
 5. *Bougainville Development Program – South Region* K4,450,000.00

Key development programs at the headquarter level will include:

- *Buin Hospital upgrade*
- *Upgrading and sealing of Kokopau to Itaraka highway and the Buka Ring Road*
- *ABG school fee assistance program*
- *Rural electrification program from Hagogohe to Halia*
- *Bougainville DPI stations development*
- *ABG-Kokonas Indastri Program Partnership*
- *Aquaculture and Mariculture Development*
- *Bougainville SME Support Program*
- *Acquisition of Atolls Ship*
- *Improvement to radio infrastructure*

Key development programs under the Nissan/Atolls Region will include:

- *Atolls District Relief Supplies*
- *Wharf Maintenance – Nuguria*
- *Nuguria Airstrip maintenance*
- *Nissan District Jetty redevelopment*
- *Nissan Airstrip fencing*
- *4x health staff houses for Atolls*

Key development programs under the Northern Region will include:

- *Buka Urban Town Fire Station project*
- *Ramazon to Romsis access feeder road*
- *Airport to Skotolan road*
- *Kunua District Hospital (survey & landscaping)*
- *Selau Community Government Virgin Coconut Oil project*
- *Peit Community Government Cocoa Development*
- *Kunua District Cocoa and Copra Rehabilitation*

Key development programs under the Central Region will include:

- *Wakunai Health Facility (construction & upgrade)*
- *Wakunai District*

- Cocoa Rehabilitation*
- *Amiaming Peanut & Pineapple downstream processing*
 - *Tokaiaing Hatchery & Breeding Farm*
 - *Asikopan Reforestation*
 - *Jaba Delta Environmental Diversion Livelihood program*
 - *Redevelopment of industrial hubs (Kieta & Toniva)*
 - *Arawa Town Solid Waste Management*
 - *Arawa Secondary (Computer Lab)*
 - *Piruaana Social Development Project*

Key development programs under the Southern Region will include:

- *Buin District Governance and Administration capacity development*
- *Buin District Hatchery, Abattor & Packaging (pilot project)*
- *Siwai Inland Fish Farming*
- *3x Community Government Office complex (Buin District)*
- *Community Government office and staff houses (Torokina District)*
- *Tonu Secondary (dormitory and mess extension)*
- *Integrated Community Development program (Torokina District)*

Parliament passes ABG 2022 Budget

The Autonomous Bougainville Government has passed a budget of over K500million for the 2022 financial year.

The 2022 ABG Budget themed ‘One Post Referendum Budget’ was presented in parliament in December 2021, by ABG Minister for Treasury and Finance Hon. Mathias Salas.

“The budget directly addresses all priorities that the ABG has set towards our journey to independence,” Minister Salas said.

“The main focus of

the 2022 ABG Budget is the consolidation of the peace and political process through economic and infrastructure development to prepare and mobilize the people of the conduct of consultations and negotiations for Independence in Bougainville,” he said.

Minister Salas explained that about 91 percent of the total budget is from the National Government, which is an increase of about 29 percent from the 2021

total appropriation from the National Government to the ABG.

“Funds that are provided by the national government through the rebuilding and political process in Bougainville aimed at targeted projects or programs,” Minister Salas said.

“In 2022, the total appropriation is estimated at an amount of K549,324,600.00, with total National Government

Grants at K424,065,000.00, ABG internal revenue at K45,000,000.00 and re-appropriated funds estimated at K74,683,100.00,” Salas said.

Minister Salas further raised concerns for clarification to be provided by the National Government on a discrepancy in figures in the National Budget for funds allocated to Bougainville.

“Clarification will be sought from the National

Government on the amount of K430,065,000.00 allocated to the ABG (in the Appropriation Bill) when in fact the budget schedules show a figure of K424,065,000.00, a variance of K6,000,000.00,” Salas explained.

During the last joint government meetings in Port Moresby in early December last year, Minister Salas had lodged a formal request to the Prime Minister and National Minister for Finance to seek further explanation on this discrepancy.



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY

MR SHADRACH HIMATA2022 - The year of implementation
for Bougainville at all levels.

Greetings to all our readers, public servants and the people of Bougainville.

I am delighted to share with you all again on how far our administration and government has progressed in our journey. Firstly, I want to state that this year, 2022, is the year of implementation for Bougainville at all levels.

Over the past two years we spent time on designing and mapping our political roadmap. This was done through consecutive joint government meetings, and also meetings and consultations within Bougainville with our people and various stakeholder groups.

Through this, we launched the Bougainville Independence Mission in 2021 as our internal strategy to ensure that our people, our administration, our systems and structures are prepared for our final political aspiration.

As Chief Secretary, I call on all public servants to rise up for there is no greater calling than to be part of this historical process for our soon-to-be island nation.

For the Bougainville Public Service, we have set our target to be independence-ready by the year 2025. Our number one priority is to deliver a country for our people.

The issue now is that for the Bougainville Public Service, we are uniquely challenged than other provinces in Papua New Guinea. Most provinces only focus mainly on the delivery of goods and services.

For the Bougainville Public Service, we are challenged with mainly three things; deliver goods and services to our people, deliver a country for our people, build an economy for Bougainville. These three are equally our priorities at the same time.

I challenge all public servants

that these efforts will require sacrifices to be made, and our patriotism spirit to help manage this task before us. This also calls for the public service to step up and to start burning the midnight oil. We are expected to drive the work plans and programs with dedication and commitment and on time.

It also means that we need to start understanding what the cost of delivering goods and services in an independent state would look like. And to do that we need to have the revenue sources to support the cost of an independent state.

It calls for us to focus on the basics and the fundamental things in our lives and at the workplace. Today and going forward, we must be motivated by the fact that we are going to deliver a nation for our people. And we must get this small but fundamental things right in our daily lives and in our

workplaces.

Delivering a nation must be the motivation for you and me to come to work on a daily basis, if this cannot motivate you, then you are in the wrong place. This will signal that the ABG public service is not for you.

Our independence timeframe is set. From this year 2022 onwards, it is time for us all to implement all the activities that have been agreed to in the political timeline. From the northern tip of Buka to the most southern tip of Buin to our Atolls, it is time for us all to work together, support the government and ensure we reach our final destination together as a unified and independent Bougainville.

May God bless us all.

Shadrach Himata
Chief Secretary, Autonomous
Bougainville Government

The Bougainville Public Service Retiree Exit Induction

About 15 public servants are being prepared for Retirement after long years of service to the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

The ABG Department of Personnel Management and Administrative Services held a workshop in February for these retirees to induct them in preparation for transition into retirement.

The induction workshop covers:

- Non-financial and financial effects
- Lifestyle diseases – health talk
- Financial Literacy – budgeting and saving
- Investment strategies and outcomes
- Estate planning



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

HON. ISHMAEL TOROAMA*President and Minister responsible for
Inter-Government Affairs, Media and Communication*

Bougainville's journey to self-determination has reached a point of no return. It is a journey that does not allow us to regress or revert to any political arrangement that compromises the overwhelming 97.7 percent of our people who wished for Bougainville to become an independent nation in the 2019 Referendum.

In this light this the Fourth Bougainville House of Representatives has worked hard on our Independence Readiness initiative to ensure our people and our government are ready to embrace sovereignty as a new nation in the international community.

We have just signed the Era Kone Covenant with the National Government; a milestone agreement between the governments of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea.

The Era Kone Covenant empowers the 2019 Bougainville Referendum results to be recognized during the ratification process by the National Parliament despite the unbinding clause in the Organic Law on Peace Building and the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

This Era Kone Covenant will pave a way forward for the post referendum process through constitutionalized law and intergovernmental signed agreements for Bougainville's

final political settlement; in our case that is independence.

It is a process that we are still progressing but our government remains very optimistic on its turnout.

Another important milestone we have achieved on the political front in the last three months is the setting up of the Bougainville Constitutional Planning Commission.

The Commission will be responsible for crafting the new Constitution of the Independent State of Bougainville.

The constitution of any country is made up of laws that are the guiding principles of governance within a nation and how power is exercised and shared for the benefit of its people.

As Chairman of the Bougainville Constitutional Planning Committee I believe we must embrace certain values that will form the core foundations of the Constitution of the Independent State of Bougainville.

Our new Constitution must promote democracy, rule of law, social justice, equality and respect. It must also protect the rights of the people of Bougainville, our resources and our cultural heritage.

The BCPC is made up 44 members from the different stakeholders throughout Bougainville.

As part of my government's plan to revitalize the Bougainville Public Service we have made 13 new permanent appointments to departmental heads positions through the Bougainville Senior Appointments Committee.

The new appointees will soon assume their positions in the Bougainville Public Service. I ask that every public servant cooperate with the new departmental heads to ensure a smooth transition.

Mr Shadrach Himata has been confirmed as the new Chief Secretary to the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

In the last fifteen (15) months I have also come to appreciate the hard work and honesty of many of you who are here today.

I am very grateful to those of you who are willing to do more than your fair share because you have a strong sense of duty to Bougainville and our people's aspirations for political freedom.

You are the ones who give hope to the government and our people to see the Bougainville Public Service machinery as an entity that articulates the vision of the government to better serve our people. Your commitment gives credibility to the Bougainville Public Service.

During my speech at the 2022 Dedication Service for the

public service I made it clear that under Economic Control our priorities are as follows –

Firstly formulate an Overall Bougainville Economic Development Strategy.

Secondly, formulate and implement a Revenue Raising Strategy which includes fully functioning IPA & IRC.

Thirdly, implement Foreign Direct Investment. Fourthly, investigate, fix and activate the 20 failed Enterprises by previous governments because people invested money in them.

Take to court and recoup monies from those who have pocketed and who may still be pocketing from people's investments.

This government has already initiated a lot of significant economic development projects in the extractive industry, forestry and agriculture.

We have many great strides in our political journey but this has to complemented by progress in the socioeconomic sectors.

Real progress and prosperity for Bougainville can only happen if we have development that is equal in all sectors.

I urge you all to continue to support your government and contribute to the development and prosperity of Bougainville.

Hon. Ishmael Toroama
MHR
President

ABG welcomes Steamships back to Bougainville

The Steamships Trading Company has made the first step in reclaiming its former holdings in Bougainville by agreeing to abide by the terms of the Autonomous Bougainville Government on inward investment.

Managing Director Rupert Bray was in Toniva, Central Bougainville in February, to break ground and fulfill customary obligations with the landowners before the company moves back to Bougainville.

Mr Bray expressed the company's gratitude to the Autonomous Bougainville Government and the people of Bougainville.

"Steamships is grateful for the confidence the ABG has in us by allowing the company to reclaim the lands we leased before the Bougainville Crisis," Mr Bray said.

He said the company has had a long history

with Bougainville and they hope to continue this relationship.

President Ishmael Toroama who was also present at the ceremony expressed his gratitude to the Steamships Trading Company.

"Your confidence in my government gives confidence to other would be investors and companies who are interested in conducting business on Bougainville," President Toroama said.

"It signifies that Bougainville has returned to normalcy and we have a conducive business environment that is ready to exploit the various investment opportunities on our resource rich islands," President Toroama added.

Prior to the Bougainville Crisis there were a lot of reputable companies who were based on Bougainville. Many of these companies have titles to leased land on Bougainville

as exemplified by this move by the Steamships Trading Company.

President Toroama said the ABG will be making an announcement to these companies to return to Bougainville to reclaim their lease holdings should they choose to.

He said this invitation will be open for only a six-month period and under a new terms of agreement with the ABG the leases will be for only 25 years with the option for an extension.

"I wish to thank the Managing Director of the Steamships Trading Company Mr. Rupert Bray for your confidence in Bougainville," President Toroama said.

"I believe you will be an important partner to Bougainville as we draw to a close our journey to self-determination and begin the new one as an independent nation," President Toroama added.



President Toroama at launching of water bottling project at Toniva.

President launches Bougainville Water Limited

Harnessing Bougainville's low hanging fruits in the economic sector to raise revenue is a priority of the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

The launching of Bougainville Water Bottling Limited at Toniva in the North Nasioi Constituency in Central Bougainville is an indication of the progress by the government in the low hanging fruits sector.

Under the ABG's business arm; the Bougainville Public Investment Corporation Limited, Bougainville Water Bottling Limited will be producing bottled water for identified domestic and international markets.

The ABG has made available K1.5 million for the project which will commence production in April of this year and will provide revenue and employment opportunities for Bougainville.

The ABG also made available a 10 percent free carry equity for the local landowners and this project would be the first

to be insured to encourage more investment while promoting Bougainville as being open for business.

The project was officially launched by the President Hon. Ishmael Toroama who was accompanied by Vice President Hon. Patrick Nisira and the Minister for Finance and Member for North Nasioi, Hon. Mathias Salas in January at Toniva, Central Bougainville.

President Toroama was firm in his message for more economic activity to take place on Bougainville through innovative means that would generate revenue for the region.

President Toroama said that Bougainville's political progress encourages other development sectors especially the economic sector to be on par with it.

He assured those present at the launching that his government will continue to make headway in all sectors of development with its primary focus on generating more internal revenue for Bougainville.

Panguna Landowners and ABG agree to reopen Panguna Mine

Landowners from the Panguna Mine area and the Autonomous Bougainville Government have agreed to reopen the multibillion kina defunct mine.

This follows an agreement reached between the ABG and Panguna Mine Landowner Chiefs where both parties signed the Post Summit Resolution agreeing to reopen the mine.

A series of activities had taken place that led to the official signing in Tunuru on Wednesday 4 May 2022. These set of activities were guided under the theme of "Local Problem, Local Knowledge, Local Solution".

In October 2021, the first workshop was held with the landowner groups and the ABG, where a number of resolutions were reached, the key one being that all landowner groups had given their principle consent for the mine to be reopened and that the welfare, benefit sharing, environmental destruction and social inconvenience issues must be adequately addressed by the ABG through relevant laws and policies.

It was also in this first dialogue that the Panguna Landowners agreed to convene again at the Panguna Mine Dialogue Chief Summit to put forward the best strategy to open Panguna Mine

without repeating the grievances that led to the Bougainville crisis.

Going forward under the new agreement, the ABG and the landowners will jointly establish a completely new local Bougainville entity to develop the mine, and not an existing entity that has had history with the Panguna Mine.

The completely new local Bougainville entity once established, will be jointly owned by the Panguna Mine Landowners and ABG on behalf of the people of Bougainville.

The five major clans; Mantaá, Basikang, Barapang, Bakoringku and Kurabang and their 22 sub clans have unanimously agreed to the undertaking in partnership with the Autonomous Bougainville

Government.

Bougainville President Ishmael Toroama who signed on behalf of the ABG has congratulated the landowners on their courage to finally put aside their differences and work with the government.

"The Panguna Mine was the economic guarantee for Papua New Guinea's independence in 1975, in the same manner the Panguna will be the economic guarantor for Bougainville's Independence," declared President Toroama.

"In 1988 when the Bougainville Revolutionary Army High Command decided to shut down the Panguna Mine, the Late Francis Ona incentivized the mine as the key to Bougainville's independence," President Toroama revealed.

"Today as we stand on the threshold of creating a new future for Bougainville where we are finally on the path to independence I stand here to thank the landowners of Panguna in making a strong decision on the fate of the mine," President Toroama said.

President Toroama assured the landowners that the Autonomous Bougainville Government will work in partnership with the landowners in creating the locally owned entity to redevelop the mine.

He said the government will not compromise the rights of the landowners but will work towards ensuring a benefit sharing agreement that benefits all of Bougainville.



President Toroama with Panguna Landowners at Tunuru Catholic Mission in Kieta.

Department of Community Government to develop key legislations

The Department of Community Government has announced that it will be developing a number of key legislations under the Sharp Agreement.

Former acting Secretary for the Department Puara Kamariki said that beginning this year; the department will be working on developing relevant laws that will contribute towards Bougainville's independence readiness mission.

These legislations include:

- **Regional Development Authority Act**
- **Disaster Management Act**
- **Small crafts Act**
- **Fire Service Act**
- **Gambling and Lottery Act**
- **Municipal Authority Act**
- **Entertainment Act**
- **Cemetery Act**

Mr Kamariki says this work

will begin this year 2022 until 2024. Meantime, the Department will also carry out a number of audit programs to look at the human resource capacities throughout the 13 districts of Bougainville.

He says it is critical that all districts must each have a District Coordinator, Community Government Inspector, Community Government Manager and relevant sector

heads representing health, education, primary industries, community development, police, law and justice and commerce.

He also called on Departments in the Bougainville Administration to carry out similar audits on human resource capacity to ensure that they have officers placed at the district level to ensure work efficiency in the delivery of services to the people.



A high-level COVID-19 awareness forum, convened by the PNG Council of Churches (PNGCC) and Bougainville Church Council Association in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, has encouraged church leaders to support the COVID-19 vaccination rollout.

Headed by General Secretary of the PNG Council of Churches, Reverend Roger Joseph and Cardinal Sir John Ribat, the forum “I am my Brother’s/Sister’s Keeper”, provided a safe space for church leaders to hear about the current status of COVID in Bougainville, the vaccination program and how the COVID-19 response fits within a theological framework.

Over 130 clergy representing Bougainville Catholic, United, Seventh Day Adventist and Pentecostal Churches attended, together with health experts from the

Bougainville clergy receive COVID-19 awareness



Cardinal Sir John Ribat and Bougainville Church leaders pose for a group photo after the COVID-19 workshop at the Hahela Youth Center, Buka.

Autonomous Bougainville Government’s Department of Health.

ABG Minister for Community Development and Member for Taonita-Teop Constituency Hon. Thompson Gitovea

officially launched the forum on Tuesday 18 January at the Hahela Catholic Diocese Youth Hall Center.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in two periods of shut down

for us in Bougainville and has resulted in a lot of fear, because of the death toll it has caused worldwide and at home...It is common knowledge that generally vaccination rates for other vaccines have been

affected because of the fear of the the COVID-19 vaccine. I am anticipating that accurate information will be disseminated so as to enable accurate transmitting of information to our church congerations regarding the vaccine,” Minister Gitovea said.

During the workshop medical frontliners, Health Extension Officer Launo Mulandato and Dr. Mathias Tovilu from the Bougainville Department of Health, provided an update on the COVID-19 situation in Bougainville and answered questions from the clergy regarding the vaccine and coronavirus.

Following the forum, the Bougainville Church Leaders were equipped with additional resouces and information to assist them have informed discussions with their congregation and the broader Bougainville Christian community about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

New program for economic development in constituencies

The Autonomous Bougainville Government has introduced a new program for its 33 constituencies in the 2022 ABG Budget.

The program titled Constituency Economic Investment Program will be aimed at developing one economic project per constituency in Bougainville in 2022.

ABG Minister for Treasury and Finance revealed this when delivering his budget speech in parliament in December last year.

“It is envisaged that there



ABG Minister for Treasury and Finance, Hon. Mathias Salas.

will be massive impact in all constituencies if each had one economic project successfully operational and generating revenue,” Minister Salas

projected.

“K8 million will be allocated to all ABG Constituency Members who will receive K200,000.00 each as a one-off payment to fund at least one economic project in their constituencies in 2022. K800,000.00 of this allocation will be used for training and technical support towards projects selected by Members for their constituencies,” Salas said.

Meantime, the community governments in Bougainville, which is the second-tier of government at the ward level, has

also attracted significant funding for 2022 under three key impact programs namely:

1) ABG Community Grants K1.7M

2) ABG Community Government Capacity Building Support K1.550M

3) Community Government Ex-gratia for Community Government Executive Officers K500,000.00.

Bougainville to establish own gold refinery

Plans are underway to have a gold refinery established in Bougainville.

ABG Minister for Commerce, Trade and Economic Development announced this recently in parliament.

Minister Nisira confirmed that a partnership company called Bougainville Refineries Limited has been considered by the Bougainville Inward Investment Board to conduct the gold refinery in Bougainville.

“The gold refinery will refine all the gold produced in Bougainville and importantly it will stop all the gold from leaving the shores of Bougainville as all the gold operators in Bougainville will sell all their gold to this gold refinery,” Nisira said.

“It will also attract gold

produced in other provinces and in the Pacific to be brought to Bougainville as currently there is no gold refinery in PNG and the Pacific.”

Nisira says a Memorandum of Understanding has already been signed between the parties and the next step is for the Bougainville Executive Council to officially endorse the project.

Following this endorsement the Bougainville Refineries Limited will apply for a gold export license from the Bougainville Mining Board and the Central Bank of Papua New Guinea.

In preparation towards Bougainville’s independence readiness, the Bougainville Refinery project will also provide

specific financial services to the government, including keeping gold reserves as a backup for the future currency of Bougainville.

“Let me highlight here that there is a plan in place with the establishment of the refinery where a 6 tonne pure gold will be stamped as ABG gold and will be used as seed to generate finds that can be used in the nation-building of Bougainville,” Nisira explained.

The financial projections from this project indicate an estimate of about \$300million AUD will be injected into the local economy from 2022 to 2025.

He said that this is one of the many impact projects currently underway and will have impact on the economy of the region

as more employment opportunities are created and will contribute to the government’s internal revenue.

Minister Nisira also informed the House that Bougainville has seen an increased number of international investors following his public announcement in 2021 that Bougainville is ‘open for business’.

“More than 180 applicants have shown their interest to invest in different sectors in Bougainville,” he announced.

“Out of the total applications received, 64% have shown their interest in the extractive industry sector, 4% in downstream processing, 28% in the services sector and 4% have expressed interest in providing knowledge-

based services.”

Minister Nisira says that all these applications have gone through the Bougainville Inward Investment Board and its screening process and compliance checks, and 13 have been approved as high impact projects for Bougainville. These applications have also been reviewed by the Bougainville Executive Council to ensure it has the required government support.

Some of these key high impact projects that have been approved for implementation include the Tonolei Forestry and Sawmill project, Hydro Power development project, Manetai Limestone project, Eivo Joint Venture and the Bougainville Refinery project.

Bougainville Arts, Culture and Tourism Authority to be established this year



The ABG Department of Commerce, Trade and Economic Development will soon establish the Bougainville Arts, Culture and Tourism Authority.

ABG Minister for Commerce, Trade and Economic Development, Hon Patrick Nisira announced this recently in parliament.

“The Bougainville Arts, Culture and Tourism Bill is currently in its drafting state. It will be presented to Cabinet for endorsement and will be shared with Bougainvilleans for their input, through public consultations,” he said.

These public consultations are set to happen in the month of May before a final draft

of the Bill is presented to the Bougainville Executive Council for endorsement to go into parliament as a Bill.

“This piece of legislation will provide for the establishment of the Bougainville Arts Culture and Tourism Authority that will promote, protect and regulate the commercial aspect of this sector in the Region.”

Meantime, the Ministry is also working on developing tourism products for potential tourism sites across Bougainville including the Numa Numa Trail and the Benua Cave located in West Coast Bougainville.

These products will be used to market Bougainville as a tourist attraction region.



THIRD INTER-GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS ON BOUGAINVILLE REFERENDUM RESULTS

PORT MORESBY JOINT STATEMENT

The Government of Papua New Guinea (National Government) and the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG)



PREAMBLE

- (i) Recognizing that this third joint consultation is consistent with the requirements of Section 342 of the National Constitution for both the National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government to consult on the results of the Referendum;
- (ii) Acknowledging that both Governments, consistent with agreed decisions of the Joint Supervisory Body meeting of March 12th, 2020, have so far, held two other joint consultations on the Bougainville Referendum results, the first being at Kokopo, East New Britain Province on 18th May, 2021 and the second consultation was held in Wabag on 6th July, 2021;
- (iii) Honoring our joint commitments to Kokopo and Wabag Joint Consultation statements and agreements;
- (iv) Recognizing the role of the Post Referendum Consultation Moderator, His Excellency, the Hon. Bertie Ahern;
- (v) Reaffirming our agreement to determining political settlement or Independence no earlier than 2025 and no later than 2027 and that the Joint Post Referendum Roadmap is the indicative guide to moving forward;
- (vi) Recognizing the constitutional issues involved in that process;
- (vii) Noting the Autonomous Bougainville Government proposal for a Treaty and the National Government's proposal to enact Constitutional Regulations.

WE AGREE TO:

1. Direct officials of both Governments to immediately engage further to determine an appropriate framework consistent with the Wabag Joint Statement, that;
 - a. gives effect to the requirements of Section 342 of the National Constitution, taking into account the Bougainville context;
 - b. expounds on the mechanism to table the referendum results in the National Parliament, including the manner in which the National Parliament may ratify the results;
 - c. will be known as the 'Era Kone Covenant' on the finalization of the Bougainville Referendum on Independence;
 - d. that this work may be undertaken under the guidance of the Post Referendum Consultation Moderator, Mr Ahern, consistent with his Terms of Reference, which includes advice and support as and when required;
2. Leaders direct the proposed framework agreement be presented for their consideration, and the consideration of their respective Executive Councils, by no later than 31st January, 2022;
3. Subject to that agreement being accepted, leaders direct to implement and give legal effect by no later than 31st March, 2022.

Signed this 9th day of December, 2021 at APEC Haus, Port Moresby.

HON. JAMES MARAPE, MP
PRIME MINISTER
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

HON. ISHMAEL TOROAMA, MHR
PRESIDENT
AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BOUGAINVILLE

Special JSB meeting endorses Era Kone Covenant

The Governments of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea have endorsed the Era Kone Covenant at a special meeting of the Joint Supervisory Body in Port Moresby in April.

The Era Kone Covenant captures the outcomes of the three joint inter-government consultations that happened in 2021 in Kokopo, Wabag and Port Moresby respectively.

The Era Kone Covenant now marks the conclusion of the joint inter-government consultations on the referendum results, and outlines the mechanism to table the Bougainville Referendum Result in the National Parliament, including the manner in which the National Parliament may ratify the results.

Speaking at the special JSB meeting, ABG President Hon Ishmael Toroama commended the National Government for their unwavering support to the Bougainville Peace Process.

"The successful outcome of the 2019 Bougainville Referendum is a testament to the mutual cooperation between the National



Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government," President Toroama said.

"Through the three Joint Bougainville Post Referendum Consultations we have jointly developed a decisive path on the future political status of Bougainville. We have jointly agreed on a timeline (not before

2025 and no later than 2027) and a roadmap for the ratification of the referendum results in the National Parliament."

Prime Minister James Marape reaffirmed his government's commitment to the outcomes that were reached in the past three joint consultations and gave his assurance to the people of Bougainville

that his government will continue to work within the spirit of peace agreement.

"We've established a pathway that we should work towards and we on the national government side, I just want to assure Bougainville that it doesn't matter who sits in this chair in 3 months' time, the work for Bougainville has been set and the work

we have set will continue on," he said.

The Era Kone Covenant was signed by the two leaders in early April and further required the endorsement of both governments' respective executive councils in order to be effected.

The Bougainville Executive Council and the National Executive Council have respectively endorsed the Era Kone Covenant which now signals implementation of the next steps.

This will include the immediate commencement on drafting the Constitutional Regulation – which will be the mechanism that outlines how the referendum results will be brought into parliament.

The Era Kone Covenant further binds both governments to ensure that the outcomes of the three joint inter-government consultations are tabled in the 11th parliament in 2023.

This will also include a report prepared jointly by both parties to brief the 11th parliament on its role in giving effect to s342 of the National Constitution on Referendum Results and Implementation.



Baseline report critical for economic progress

The Bougainville Socio-Economic Baseline Survey Report is the most fundamental set of raw data and information needed for Bougainville to progress its political and economic agenda.

Under the Department of Commerce, Trade and Industry, this report was carried out in December 2020 and captures credible statistical data and provides information needed now for Bougainville to take

the next step.

It provides Bougainville's current socio-economic situation and serves as the baseline for any policy decisions, economic management, investment promotion, and resource allocation going forward.

The Survey covered all 441 districts of Bougainville capturing both qualitative and quantitative information.

While the Baseline



Acting Secretary Stan Komena

Survey Report provides raw statistical data, it also highlights the need for policy interventions for the government to implement, including:

- **Improve infrastructures for basic government services delivery;**

- **Prioritize services delivery on Health, Education and Law and Order;**
- **Create a conducive environment for empowering M/SME;**
- **Focus on downstream processing of primary products;**
- **Diversify agricultural products and improve market access;**
- **Improve thematic areas such as governance, technical skills, climate change, and**
- **Inclusive participation**

Acting Secretary for the Department of Commerce, Trade and Industry in Bougainville

Stanford Komena called on all stakeholders in government and the private sector to utilize the report for the benefit of Bougainville to progress and improve their livelihood.

As Bougainville progresses its political journey, the findings of the Socio-Economic Baseline Survey will enable the government to better plan for development that reflects the needs of the people's aspirations, and confidently talk details with the national government, potential investors and development partners.

Baba Constituency supports Bana special economic zone initiative



Baba Constituency in South Bougainville has pledged support to the Bana Special Economic Zone (SEZ) with an initial donation of K5,000 made possible by the Constituency Member and ABG Minister for Police and Correctional Services, Hon. Emmanuel-Carlos Kaetavara.

Minister Kaetavara is also the gazetted portfolio Minister responsible for the Bana Special Economic Zone. He said that this project is among the Top 5 High Impacts projects of the

Toroama-Nisira Government.

He further reiterated that the political, administrative and community leadership of Bana District is behind the project, supported by the people of Bana, and shall continue to provide leadership to establish this project as a model for Bougainville and Papua New Guinea.

The Bana Special Economic Zone, formerly known as the Bana Free Trade Zone, is an initiative by the people of Bana support to Bougainville's

economic development by creating an economic hub of trade & growth centres in Bana, as part of independence readiness.

"If we are successful in this endeavour, this project has the potential of positively transforming the economic, political and social landscape of Bana and Bougainville as we prepare for independence. I must also thank Minister Timothy Masiu for his continued support for the Bana SEZ pilot project."

The ABG Department of Lands & Physical Planning and the Bana SEZ Project team is set to continue conducting ongoing awareness, social mapping exercises and land surveys in the district to with the Bana resource owners in 2022.

The donation was received by Chairman of the Bana SEZ Technical team, Mr. Thaddeus Kaile, who welcomed the contribution from the people of Baba. The funding also represents Baba Constituency's contribution to BASINA INVESTMENT LTD., on behalf of the Baba Community Government and Baba shareholders.

The constituency members of Lato and Bolave in Bana are also expected to fulfill their commitment to invest in BASINA INVESTMENT LTD., on behalf of their Community Governments and constituent shareholders.

BASINA INVESTMENT LTD., has been established as the *Landowner Operating Company* within the pilot Bana SEZ project, with shares held in trust by representatives of the Community Governments in the Bana District.

Celebrating 100 years of the dawn of the gospel on Petats Island (1922-2022)



Remembering the two missionaries, Rev. Allan Cropp and Rev Uzziah Sotutu who brought the gospel to Petats Island

On Monday 21st of March, Christians around the three regions- South, Central and North Bougainville, began their journey to the United Church, Zollar Circuit on Petats Island in the Tonsu Constituency. They traveled the highway and sea to attend the centenary for the 100 years gospel of the United Church in the region.

More than 300 people journeyed to Petats Island to witness and celebrate this significant event.

Petats Island is located on the North Western part of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. It is closer to the Pororan Island. They are the two last islands in the north western part of the North region while Nissan Island and the Carterets Islands lie further on the eastern side.

The 100 years centenary of the gospel was important for many United Church followers who originated from Petats Island because, the first missionaries that brought the gospel into Bougainville had also visited the island and they remember the story very well.



On Wednesday 23 March 2022, at the break of dawn, the villagers gathered at the sea where the missionaries were received and released flowers and floaters full of decorations into the sea to mark the starting of the celebrations.

Following that morning activity, a drama was performed by a group of chiefs, men and children. The drama told the story of how the first missionaries came to Petats Island.

Boas Lahis, a chief in the Kobkobul clan explained the drama.

"Long bik morning, taim kakaruk ibin karai, ol chief ibin kirap long slip, na go lukluk long solwara, na ol ibin lukim dispela missionary em ibin kam long boat na em ibin kam na toktok wantem ol chief blong ples long kisim gut nius ikam long Petats."

"Ibin gat koros tu ibin kamap namel long lo pipol na dispela missionary na ol chief ibin traim belief bilong em tu. Ol chief ibin kisim dispela missionary igo namel long solwara na tokim em long jump go insait long solwara na sapos God blo em i savim em, bai ol chief bilivim em na God blo

em na larim lotu igo long island."

"Taim missionary ikalap igo insait long solwara, nogat shark ikaikai em. God blo em ibin savim em. Dispela emi opim eye blo ol chief man na oli larim dispela missionary i bringim gut nius I go long Petats."

The unveiling of a banner having the names of the two missionaries Rev Allan Cropp and Rev Uzziah Sotutu also took place and Bishop Abraham Toroi was present to unveil the banner.

Bishop Abraham Toroi led a service and paid tribute to the ancestors who were alive at that time to receive the missionaries.

"I am very thankful for our ancestors. If it wasn't for them, the good news would have not come to Bougainville. They are not with us physically, but spiritually, they are here with us," he said.

"The history that we see today is not just a history. God allowed it to happen so that the good news can reach us and we can gather today and celebrate 100 years of the gospel in Bougainville."

100 years have gone, and the United Church still remains a big church with many followers on Petats Island.



DPI launches mini chocolate lab in Toniva

Cocoa farmers in Bougainville can look forward to better and improved quality of cocoa following the launching of ABG's Mini Chocolate Lab at Toniva in the Kieta District.

Under the Department of Primary Industries, the lab will be used as a facility to test the quality of cocoa from local farmers in the region, and will also be involved in the production of end-products from cocoa.

ABG Acting Secretary for the Department of Primary Industries Hon. Kenneth Dovaro

described the launching as a significant event.

He says a similar but bigger set up is also under construction in Kubu at the DPI Station and will soon be ready for launching.

Mr Dovaro says the labs will not only be used for quality testing and assessment but also for production of by-products, monitoring, exports and scientific research and development.

Speaking also at the launch was ABG Minister for Primary Industries Hon. Geraldine Paul. Minister Paul encouraged

farmers to use the lab as a way of improving their skills and knowledge about cocoa management and production.

She also urged local mothers to change their mindset and start seeing cocoa as a kitchen product so that through the relevant trainings, they can maximize the gains they receive from cocoa.

Minister Paul explained that in the long term, the department will work towards having increased quality, increased volume and maintain a consistency of supply through the establishment

of cooperative groups at the community levels.

ABG President Hon Ishmael Toroama when delivering his address at the launch congratulated the department for their efforts in establishing the mini-chocolate lab.

He said this initiative will now mobilize all local cocoa farmers to improve the quality of their cocoa, and he called on farmers to make use of the lab to gain knowledge and add value to their capacity as local cocoa farmers.

President Toroama called on the people to take ownership and

use this initiative as a way to raise standards for Bougainville's independence-readiness.

The construction of the Mini Lab was made possible through the support of the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

The Department also launched a Cocoa Farmer Mobile Application that farmers can use to access a wide range of information using their mobile phones.

Minister for Primary Industries updates House on progress

ABG Minister for Primary Industries Hon. Geraldine Paul presented her Department's progressive updates during the recent parliament session in April.

Minister Paul said that all their activities are being guided by their Corporate Plan 2018-2022, as well as the Sharp Agreement signed in 2021 on the transfer of powers and functions.

Speaking on the Bougainville Agricultural Commodities Regulatory Act 2020 (BACRA), Minister Paul says her department is working closely with the Department of Law and Justice to provide guidance on the legislation and policy process towards establishing the commodity entities in Bougainville.

Once established, these entities will be responsible for managing and regulating various commodities in Bougainville and contribute to revenue generation for the region.

Earlier this year, the Bougainville Executive Council endorsed the Bougainville Cocoa Regulations for immediate implementation and Minister Paul says her department is working on this as a matter



ABG Minister for Primary Industries, Hon. Geraldine Paul

of priority to ensure that this becomes a subsidiary law to the Bougainville Commodities Regulatory Act 2020.

Minister Paul says the implementation of the Cocoa Regulations will ensure that all cocoa levy fees are retained in Bougainville and will form part of the government's revenue, and her department has this task as a priority for 2022.

In terms of infrastructure, Minister Paul informed the House that the BACRA research facility is currently under construction and will be completed by June this year. She also acknowledged the Australian Government for funding the BACRA facility.

"Within the BACRA office there is a data centre for all commodity data and information including other DPI functions," she said.

This data centre will host all information that will be transferred from the PNG Cocoa Board on Bougainville cocoa production and other related information.

Minister Paul further acknowledged the ongoing support through the Australia Centre for International Research (ACIAR) specifically through the cocoa value chain conducting Research and Development focused on improving production, profitability and sustainability of cocoa farming, understanding and raise awareness on improved nutrition and health, foster innovation and business enterprises development at community level and strengthen value chains for cocoa and associated horticultural products.

Other infrastructure developments under the Department this year includes the refurbishment of the DPI stations in Buin, Konga and Kubu (Buka) respectively.

In terms of the coconut

industry, Minister Paul said that there is currently a Memorandum of Agreement between her department and the Kokonas Industri Koperesen (KIK) where significant work has commenced under this agreement since 2021.

"The two focused areas namely Selau and Haku Community Governments including Halia, have received training, and supplied 50 dryers including to Tinputz and Wakunai towards end of 2021," she said.

"The farmers are enjoying a good price of K3/kg and this is accompanied by the incentive to directly access MiBank services on spot while receiving their income. The incomes are accessed through ATMs and cuts out the middleman. The shed at Kokopau now holds about 15 tonnes of white copra to be shipped out of the Buka port," she said.

Minister Paul said that her department is aware of the growing demand for white copra training and support facilities, especially from women groups who have shown great interest in virgin coconut oil production and other coconut bi-products training.

Turiboiru Airstrip opened



South Bougainville will start enjoying air services following the opening of the refurbished Turiboiru airstrip in Buin in February.

The official opening ceremony was attended by a National Government delegation of Ministers led by National Member for South Bougainville and Minister for Information and Communication Technology

Timothy Masiu, Minister for National Planning and Monitoring, Reinbo Paita, Minister for Forestry, Solan Mirisim, Minister for Public Service, Joe Sungi, Vice Minister for Bougainville Affairs, Peter Tsiamalili Junior and Vice Minister for Agriculture, Gate Pongio, while the ABG was represented by the Minister for Lands and Physical Planning, Robert Hamal Sawa.

Official launching and opening of the Leo J. Hannett Airstrip at Kalil in Nissan Island

Initiated by late Member for Nissan Constituency, Hon. Charry Napto in partnership ABG, the Office of the Regional Member for Bougainville, Hon. Peter Tsiamalili (Jnr) and Office of the Member for North Bougainville, Hon. William Nakin.



Friday 14th January 2022

In pictures



Minister Mona and team on district visit to Torokina.

ABG Minister for Public Service and Member for Lule Constituency, Hon. Joseph Mona, recently completed his district visit in South Bougainville.

The Minister's visit covered Torokina, Bana, Siwai and Buin Districts where he spoke to both public servants and selected schools in the region.

Minister Mona explained that the reason behind his visit to the district was to look at

the challenges faced by public servants in the districts, to assess the effects of the public servants in the current ABG structure and to see firsthand the performance level of public servants in the districts.

"The information we gather will be utilized in the decision making process that will contribute towards improving public service delivery in our districts," he said.

In implementing the President's instructions, Minister Mona

Minister Mona completes South Regional District visit

informed public servants during his visit that he has adopted a strategy similar to the Toroama-Nisira Government's Six Point Strategy which includes:

- **Putting our house in order and this is simply to improve on our timing, attendance and other small matters**
- **Long term vision**
- **Capacity building**
- **Aligning policy and systems**
- **Implementation of policies**
- **Reviewing our strategy**

"My good public servants as we prepare for independence we must uphold good governance, accountability and self-discipline

and we must abide by the best practices that promotes unity, fairness and honesty in order that communities have trust in us. Only then we can be able to see communities cooperating with us in the delivery of services to our people," he said.

Minister Mona also had the opportunity to visit and speak to students of Bana High School, Tonu and Buin Secondary Schools. He encouraged students to study and work hard to be future servants for an independent Bougainville. Minister Mona was accompanied by ABG Minister for Community Government and Member for Ramu, Hon. Thomas Pataaku.

Cocoa Curriculum launched in AROB

Bougainville has created history in becoming the first region in Papua New Guinea to introduce Cocoa Lessons in Primary Schools through the launching of the Cocoa Curriculum at Sorom Primary School yesterday.

ABG Department of Education welcomed this project of including the curriculum in the schools as a way forward to empower and educate students to be equipped with life skills and prepare for Bougainville's political journey.

Cocoa curriculum was produced by the PNG Cocoa Board to be included in schools in Papua New Guinea, however, it was never implemented and the Education Department through the collaboration with the ABG Department of Primary Industries has agreed to pilot this curriculum in Bougainville.

Minister for Education and Member for Ioro

Constituency Hon. Theonila Matbob whilst launching the project said that it was a great achievement for the department and ministry as it was defining the ownership of economy as Bougainville prepares for independence.

She said Bougainville was privileged through such developments and the wisdom of the Bougainville Government made it possible for Bougainvilleans to own cocoa whilst Papua New Guinea was yet to own mining companies or large cocoa companies.

"In this development here, through the wisdom of our government, through our department we own cocoa from the roots to its leaves and fruit and it is a great achievement for me as the Minister for Education with the support from the department and I can say that truly this is defining the ownership of economy as we journey towards independence,"



she said.

She added that the growth of economy through this curriculum would trickle down into the communities and benefit the clans, and such life skills imparted to the students will help them in their future.

"As we are preparing for our political journey in Bougainville, all the departments are working at focusing towards that goal and we here at the Department of Education are calling on you parents and students to support us in making cocoa our dream," Minister Matbob added.

Minister Matbob further thanked the PNG Cocoa Board, and the Department of Education and DPI for the collaboration in making the launching possible.

ABG Minister for Primary Industries Hon

Geraldine Paul when presenting the curriculum to Minister Matbob, stressed that the curriculum was a very important life skill that will be adapted into the education curriculum and called on the students, teachers, parents and the community to embrace the project.

"I as the Minister for DPI and my counterpart Minister for Education want to see that our Education program includes agriculture and this curriculum will provide the life skills that will help you for the rest of your life," she said.

She urged the schools, parents and community to work together to ensure that this project is implemented and to support the government in this political journey.

Minister Geraldine thanked the Australian government through the

DFAT and Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research (ACIAR), PNG Cocoa Board and the team at DPI for ensuring that the program was launched.

Meanwhile, the curriculum covers all the basic knowledge from the history of cocoa, to the farming techniques of cocoa and will be trialled in eighteen schools across the region – six schools each from North, Central and South Bougainville.

Of the eighteen schools, Sorom Primary School, Tekokni Primary School, Kekesu Primary School, Hapan Primary School, and Brunotui Vocational. The curriculum will be taught to grades six to eight within the primary schools and eventually to grades 11 to 12 in secondary schools and technical schools as well.

Department of Lands, Physical Planning, Environment and Conservation

BOUGAINVILLE LAND BILL

The Bougainville Land Policy was developed over several years by the Department of Lands, through District-level consultations with a broad cross-section of Bougainvilleans providing their thoughts. The Department of Lands have now worked with the Department of Justice & Legal Services to develop a Draft Land Bill.

Key elements of the Bill proposed are outlined in this brochure. The passage of the Bill will make many PNG Acts of parliament in relation to land not applicable. While the system of land regulation being proposed for Bougainville is similar to PNG in some ways, it is very different in others.

ABG now seeks Bougainvilleans feedback on the content of the draft Bill, in order to finalise it for passage through the Bougainville House of Representatives.

Feedback can be provided in writing to the Department of Lands or online – details provided at the back. The opportunity to provide feedback closes on 31 January 2022.

What's the same as PNG

- Torrens title system
- Regulation of alienated land.

What's different from PNG

- Customary Land registration
- Customary land dispute settlement
- Modes of acquisition.

CUSTOMARY LAND

Governing Principle:

All land in Bougainville is Customary Land unless otherwise designated. Customary Land is a communal asset which is intended to be held by the Clan into perpetuity. An estimated 97% of land in Bougainville is Customary Land.

Customary Land Recorded

- Bougainville Land Bill will mean the PNG *Land Act 1996* no longer applies
- The system will therefore be different from PNG's
- Will register customary land on a land register
- Will register clan name, land boundary, land features, customary land practices of clan:
- To record the boundary of the land, it is not necessary for a Clan to use a Cadastral Survey Plan
- In the first instance Clan can use GPS plot points provided by Dept Lands
- Register will be built up over time – to form a more and more complete record of all land in Bougainville
- Customary land can be registered voluntarily

• Customary land will also be registered after a land dispute has been settled by the Customary Land Court

Record of interests in customary land

• Once the customary land has been recorded on the Land Register (by the Land Registrar) the Clan can then also record interests in the land

• If there is a registered interest in land to be recorded, a professional survey plan will be required

• The types of interests in land which may be recorded are:

- Easements
- Leases – must be longer than 3 years to be registered on the Land Record
- Mortgages

• In order to register an interest in Customary Land, the clan will need to take a vote which will require majority (51%) agreement to proceed

• Where a clan wishes to use their customary land as security for a bank mortgage, the threshold for a successful clan vote will be higher – e.g. 80%

- This is because there is a high



risk in mortgaging land, that land which was intended to be held into perpetuity by the clan could be forfeited to the Bank and sold where a clan defaults on their mortgage payments

Land Management Committees

• Where a clan registers an interest in the land, generally for a commercial purpose, the Clan must establish a Land Management Committee

• Members of the Committee will be legally bound to act in the best interests of the Clan

- Members may: execute documents, file documents with Dept Lands/Courts, collect rents, deposit rents, invest money etc

• Where a member of the Committee is found to act in a manner which is not in the best interests of the clan,



they can be fined and / or imprisoned

- Strong penalty clauses to ensure compliance with law

How will disputes over Customary Land be settled?

• Passage of the Bougainville Land Bill will mean the PNG Land Disputes Settlement Act no longer applies

• There will be a Customary Land Court in every Community Government area

• Customary authority will be strengthened by requiring Chiefs to have been consulted before applying to court

• Land Mediators will preside over the Customary Land Court (existing Land Mediators to be retained)

• Rules of court will continue to be informal – no lawyers and no cost orders

• Court can make following types of orders:

- Stop order – in interim
- Compensation order – to remedy damage done by a party
- Order about the boundary of land – which will be registered in the Land Record

• A party who is not satisfied with the outcome of the Customary Land Court decision can appeal to the District Court

• Any dispute over a matter which involves formal legal principles or is about a registered interest in land cannot be heard by the Customary Land Court. It will need to be referred to the District Court.

ALIENATED LAND

Governing principle: All land is customary land unless alienated. That is, the concept of terra nullius is done away with. Therefore the PNG idea that all land is State Land unless otherwise designated no longer applies.

Freehold Land

• Any freehold land currently held will continue to be held as freehold land with the same conditions

• There is provision in the Bill for holders of Freehold Land to gift back land or portions of land to the State for Public Purpose use.

ABG Land

• Any State land currently held by State of PNG is intended to be transitioned



to ABG Land

• This is referred to in the Bill as "ABG Land" to save confusion with PNG State Land

• No land can be alienated to be State Land without the full consent of the Customary land owners - Just compensation must be paid.

ABG Leases

• Any current State Lease will continue on the same terms until its expiration

• These are referred to in the Bill as "ABG Leases" to save confusion with PNG State Leases

• Any new lease will be on new terms:

- No longer 99 yr terms – now only 25 yr terms
- Rent payable annually in arrears – penalties for late payment of rent
- Can be renewed at expiration – provided all rents paid
- Can sublease

- Can transfer lease – with consent of Minister

• There will be no lease back arrangements, such as Special Agricultural Business Leases (SABL) in PNG

Licences for specific use

• The State may grant licences for use of small portions of ABG land for various purposes e.g. research, commercial use

• Grant is made by the Minister

• Fees and terms of licence also to be determined by Minister

LAND RECORD

• There will be the following land registers:

- Customary Register
- Freehold Register
- ABG Register – ABG Land and ABG Leases

• A Land Registrar will be accountable for the records

• The records will be searchable by interested persons – for a fee



PLANNING

• The Physical Planning Act 2013 will be repealed

• The new Bill will streamline planning processes to better link with Urban Development plans

• The Bill will establish a Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) to make decisions around planning applications

• An appeal of a decision of the PAC may be made to the District Court

POWERS

• There are some powers which are mandatory "shall" powers, and other powers

which are discretionary "may" powers

• The Minister will have powers to do a number of things under the Act - but some of those powers will require the endorsement of the BEC to be exercised, such as:

- Grant, alteration or termination of ABG Lease
- Grant of easement over ABG Land

• The Minister will be granted powers to make Subordinate legislation such as Rules, and the power to make submission to the BEC to make Regulations under the Act

Feedback

PDF of Bill available on ABG website:

<https://www.abg.gov.pg/government/departments/lands-planning-environment>

Provide written feedback to: ABGLANDBILL@gmail.com

Feedback closes at 5pm BST on 31 January 2022.

The content of this brochure and the associated Land Bill Consultations are authorised by the Department of Land, Physical Planning, Environment & Conservation and Department of Justice & Legal Services.



Women active players in the Independence mission

The Member representing the Women for North Hon. Amanda Masono Getsi's message on the International Women's Day celebrated on March 08, 2022, under the global theme: "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow."



HONOURING THE WOMEN IN THIS JOURNEY TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Bougainville's journey to self-determination is a process where women have become active players. In the peace and restoration phase we congratulate and celebrate the brave at heart who fought for peace to prevail in our region.

Some have passed on, some still continue to advocate for human rights and equal participation for women in all aspects of life. We commend them for paving the path for the women of today and hold them with high respect. Also for this year, I wish to extend my gratitude and celebrate our women of today! When I say women of today, I'm referring to the Bougainville women who rose up during the restoration to the referendum phase and now are actively involved in the nation-building phase of our political journey.

While I acknowledge all women involved in this phase, I want to make a special mention of the PNG and Bougainvillean women who lead international, local NGOs and CBOs that support the government delivery of goods and services to the rural communities in Bougainville. This category also includes the women who spearhead the process of nation building and state building working within the Autonomous Bougainville Government departments and in the community governments.

Women who stand in the gap and say to themselves, "if I don't do it, who else will". That is the kind of passion and loyalty to serve with a vision to see a better future for our children of Bougainville. These are the women who contribute to policy development right down to delivery of the implementation of such policies.

These are the strong women their sacrifices are often forgotten and go unnoticed by leadership. These are the women worth congratulating and celebrating this International Women's Day.

I take my hat off and salute them for their loyalty and commitment to Bougainville past, present and future. Their lives are testimonies of service to the people of Bougainville. Each has different stories to tell yet they all paint one picture of Bougainville becoming a prosperous and peaceful place in the Pacific.

EMPOWERING EACH OTHER

How can women empower each other? Generally, people say that women do not get along. This is in some sense true. Because we are too busy hating on and gossiping about the other women rather than working on ourselves. But if we learn to understand that just because the other woman got the position instead of you, just because the other woman got the promotion instead of you, just because your partner chose the other woman instead of you, does not mean that you are less worthy or valuable. It means that God has anointed her for that season instead of you and that God has something else reserved for you with your name on it.

When we understand this, we begin to accept, embrace and empower each other. I believe that God is not a man that he should lie about what he has in store for each one of us. We must learn to accept the other woman's success and all work toward supporting her to be the best version of herself. Just like when it is your season, the other woman should support you to be the best version of yourself.

We should not envy or be jealous of the other woman. We should be celebrating her understanding that if it's meant for you it will come.

Wait for what God has reserved for you because it has your name tag on it and will come to pass when it is your time. When we understand that there is enough for everyone in God's Kingdom, we build each other and empower each other by mentoring or mentioning the other woman's name in board meetings or to that recruitment firm or to your Boss for her opportunity to shine!

HOW WE CAN REACH OUT TO OTHER WOMEN IN THE NORTH REGION

Funding has been a major challenge for the government to reach out to other women in North Bougainville because of its geographical and cultural diversity. The ABG needs to develop policies that enhance mobilization and empowerment of women in all aspects of life for example, Women in health, Women in education, Women in Business, Women in Industries etc. It is only through mobilizing and empowering women that we are able to reach out to all women.

WHAT WE CAN DO TO STAY MOTIVATED AS A WOMEN HAVING A VOICE IN THE COMMUNITY

One of my best quotes is: Serve your way up! This is one way but quite powerful for women to be motivated as being a voice in the community. Being a voice does not necessarily mean that you have to be a strong advocate of something that you believe in but also it has to do with your random acts of kindness to the people that look up to you. One does not become a leader overnight! Just like the quote: Rome was not built overnight. You must obviously be involved in building your people and community. It does not matter how little your contribution to the community may be, if you do it as a service to the people and for the common good, blessings will

follow you!

WOMEN IN CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT AREAS

Finally in this year's celebration of IWD, we remember Bougainville women, particularly in the Atolls and the small island nation states of the Pacific and around the world who are fighting against the impacts of climate change. They are the most vulnerable group of women who have to rise and fight against natural disasters like tsunami, tidal waves, volcanic eruptions and king tides.

In Bougainville, they use local knowledge to adapt to the changing conditions of the environment and mitigate the impacts on their families with minimal assistance from the governments. Food insecurity is at the heart of being a woman's number one rival because it affects the wellbeing of the whole family. It silently slows down a child's development/growth and contributes to a decrease in the family's output. The women suffer a silent war fighting against food insecurity because they are the ones who have to prepare food for families.

In a subsistence setting, food productions begins with planting, nurturing and finally harvesting. This is part of most rural women's responsibility in ensuring that families are sustained and have enough food to eat. When the small farmlands are flooded by king tides, it affects food crops contributing to poor yield that is unable to sustain families. It is the women who suffer the full brunt of climate change.

Today we celebrate them for their bravery and hope the government's around the world realize the struggle they have to go through and develop climate change policies that are inclusive and gender sensitive for women in climate change.

Happy International Women's Day!

Hon. Amanda Masono Getsi, MHR North Bougainville Women

Notice Board

Following the recent launch of the Turiboiru Airstrip in Buin, South Bougainville, the business arm of South Bougainville BUSIBA has been appointed as the agent for TROPICAIR in Buin. Their office is located near the Buin District Office in Buin Town.

Contact them on 7887 3599 or 7332 7088 for all your flight, charter, freight needs.

From our front page story, we share with you here the full listing of the members of the Bougainville Constitutional Planning Commission:

1. **Anita Salas** (Central Bougainville)
2. **Agnes Titus** (North Bougainville)
3. **Senior Linus Dake** (Central Bougainville)
4. **Genevieve Somo** (South Bougainville)
5. **Lawrence Belleh** (North Bougainville)
6. **Thomas Koiro** (South Bougainville)
7. **Joseph Kangku** (South Bougainville)
8. **Michael Komoiki** (South Bougainville)
9. **Vandelinus Bitanuma** (Central Bougainville)
10. **Sam Kaona** (Central Bougainville)
11. **Julie Tanasi** (Central Bougainville)
12. **Romeo Tohiana** (North Bougainville)
13. **Daniel Kukup**
14. **Rev. Abraham Toroi** (North Bougainville)
15. **Ps. Jonathan Kenneth Glynn Tovirika**
16. **Ps. Albert Magoi** (North Bougainville)
18. **Robert Kekevio**
19. **David Braun**
20. **Robert Semoso**
21. **Ps. Terry Mose**
22. **Steven Topesi**
23. **James Ornatoo**
24. **Sylvester Hatsere**
25. **David Kongkori**
26. **Eddy Mohin**
27. **Rev. Dudley Matuan**
28. **Benard Hanga**
29. **Isabel Peta**
30. **Francesca Semoso**
31. **Albert Nkuitu**
32. **Hon Ismael Toroama** (Chairman – BCPC)
33. **Hon Patrick Nisira** (Alternate chairman – BCPC)
34. **Hon Ezekiel Massat** (Deputy chairman – BCPC)
35. **David Maliku**
36. **Telavika Faite**



The Siwai Tourism Cultural Show is a gazetted national annual event endorsed by the National Cultural Commission. This year's show will be held in the month of August at the Panakei Show Ground.

Call 79762521 to make your arrangement to attend this year's show!

Mahari Constituency has new member



The people of Mahari Constituency in North Bougainville have a new member following the conclusion of the by-election in early May.

The seat for the Mahari Constituency became vacant following the passing of the Late John Tabinaman in late 2021.

The new Member Hon. Carol Poli was sworn into the Bougainville House of Representatives on 4 May 2022, and now brings the total of female members in parliament to five.



Jomik Cup Tournament

2022 sports calendar for Bougainville



Bougainville's locally owned Jomik Group of Companies this year hosted the Jomik Cup Tournament in Arawa.

Teams from North, Central and

South Bougainville gathered in Arawa from February 14th to 20th to take part in the football competition.

The Panguna Metals team from Central Bougainville took out the

first prize money of K10,000.00

The competition is a way of the company giving back to its customers and the people of Bougainville through sports.

Bougainville Sports Federation / Foundation General Secretary and Director, Robert Semoso has announced the 2022 sporting events calendar of planned events for Bougainville.

The main sporting events began in February with the establishment of the Bougainville Sports Codes Federation, including establishment at the district level across Bougainville.

A key sporting event this year is the NGI District Games that will see four teams, one from each region (North, Central, South and Atolls/Islands) prepare to participate in.

On the international level, the Bougainville Sports Federation / Foundation will also be working towards preparing a team to participate in the 2023 Pacific Games.

Apart from these, there will be other sporting events across Bougainville throughout the year including the Bougainville Relay Marathon that is planned to take place in September this year.



Bougainville has sent a total of four young girls to join the Hekari United Soccer

club in Port Moresby this season.

They are Calister Maneo, Michaelyn Butubu, Vanessa Kauba and Christopilla Nawa.

The girls will continue their education in Port Moresby while also playing for a top soccer club in the country.

President of the Bougainville

Football Federation Justin Helele said that Bougainville has the potential to produce top players in football and thanked the management of Hekari United Club for the opportunity they have provided for the four young Bougainvilleans.

PC: New Dawn FM

STAY SAFE ON AND OFF THE FIELD



Stay home if you are sick



Bring your own equipment and gear (if possible)



Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow.



Wash your hands or use sanitizer before and after events and sharing equipments.



Tell a coach or staff member if you don't feel well.