



# THE BOUGAINVILLE BULLETIN

*Our voice, Our image, Our place*

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us



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## ABG launches 'international prong'

The Autonomous Bougainville Government continues to make headway under its Independence Mission Strategy to practicalise the people's 97.7 percent vote for Independence.

The Bougainville Independence Mission which was launched by President Hon. Ishmael Toroama in April 2021 marked the beginning of the implementation of a trident strategy to prepare Bougainville for independence.

Under this Trident Strategy, the first prong covered independence-ready preparations within Bougainville by Bougainvilleans, the second prong covered independence-ready preparations within Papua New Guinea and the third prong will focus on independence-ready preparations with the international community.

The International Prong was launched in September this year under the theme "Promoting Bougainville's Global

Trade & Investment", and aims to establish support for Bougainville's independence through enhanced trade and investment relations.

Speaking at the launch, ABG Vice President and Minister for Commerce, Trade and Economic Development Hon. Patrick Nisira explained that under the Bougainville Peace Agreement, it outlines ABG's opportunities to bring forth this change in the global scene in concurrence with the national government's foreign affairs department.

"There are provisions in the Bougainville Peace Agreement that provide for ABG to have observer status on various trade and investment platforms at the international frontier. These avenues must now be utilized to expose and integrate Autonomous Bougainville Government and its potential into the international prong," he said.

"As we reach out to the international frontier our focus must be on growing



ABG delegation pose for a group photo outside the PNG High Commission in Honiara, Solomon Islands during the Trade & Investment Visit in November this year.

the Bougainville economy and attaining fiscal self-reliance through international trade and sound investment and support for Bougainville as it integrates into the global community and building foreign relationships."

Under the International Prong, a number of key tasks will be implemented to support its implementation. These include:

- 1) *Set-up of a Bougainville Desk under the National Department of Foreign Affairs*
- 2) *Set-up of a Bougainville Desk at the National Trade Office*
- 3) *Collaboration with the PNG Overseas Missions*
- 4) *A Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate Trade and Economic Integration*

- 5) *Requesting for observer status on various forums like the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Melanesian Spearhead Group, EU Economic Partnership Agreement with PNG and APEC plus others.*

Minister Nisira reiterated that Bougainvilleans must understand that Bougainville is part of a bigger global village and cannot exist on its own, however the Government through the international prong, will work towards building mutual relationships and trust through government-to-government relationships that will enhance trade and investment for Bougainville as an emerging island state in the Pacific.

Minister Nisira also appealed strongly to the

people of Bougainville as the resource owners to work closely with the government.

"I appeal to the people of Bougainville especially the resource owners to work closely with my Ministry, Department and the Toroama-Nisira government to prepare ourselves to release the resources for development to have maximum benefits and equitable distribution of wealth with the investors, the state and the resource owners," he said.

"Let me also inform Bougainvilleans that as we embark on the international prong through trade and investment, we must be responsible citizens. We must fix our law-and-order issues to provide a conducive environment for investment and trade to flourish," Nisira added.





Our voice, Our image, Our place

Editor’s Desk

Hello Readers!

Welcome to Edition 20 of the Bougainville Bulletin.

The Autonomous Bougainville Government continues to lead its people in a historical journey towards actualizing its aspirations for independence.

Under the leadership of President Hon Ishmael Toroama, much progress has been made to ensure that Bougainville builds a foundation that sets the groundwork to build a thriving economy, a safe, harmonious and respectful society and establishing policies and legislations that ensure our people receive the best services in all sectors.

This year, the Government has established the Bougainville Constitutional Planning Commission. This Commission has done massive work in its first year of consultations with the people of Bougainville, collecting and compiling people’s views on what shape and form they want the future Constitution of an independent Bougainville will take.

We have also seen a steady rise of our local SMEs who continue to build up their potential to become active participants in our local economy. Through its partners, the government has secured support for the establishment of innovation hubs in three of our regions where our aspiring entrepreneurs can access valuable business tools and knowledge.

The Government also launched the third prong under its Trident Strategy of the Bougainville Independence Mission – the International Prong. At the launch this year, Vice President Hon Patrick Nisira reminded the people that Bougainville is part of a larger global community and we will need the support of our international friends in our political journey and also to help us achieve fiscal self-reliance.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that building an independent and prosperous Bougainville cannot be done by the government alone. It is a task that needs collaborative efforts from all Bougainvilleans – we all have a part to play in our journey.

On behalf of the Bulletin Team, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas, take care during this Festive Season and we look forward to bringing you the next Edition in the New Year.

The Bulletin Team

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About the Bougainville Bulletin

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“May all that is beautiful, meaningful and brings you joy be yours this holiday season and throughout the coming year!”

On behalf of the Bulletin Team and the Directorate of Media and Communications, we wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year 2023.



ABG rejects national government call for nationwide consultation

The Autonomous Bougainville Government has rejected Prime Minister James Marape’s statement calling for a nationwide consultation on Bougainville’s 2019 Referendum for Independence results.

The ABG’s response is to Prime Minister James Marape’s inaugural statement delivered in the National Parliament following his election as Prime Minister on August 9, 2022.

The ABG maintains that ratification of the 2019 Bougainville Referendum on Independence will be done by the National



Ezekiel Masatt, Minister for Bougainville Independence Mission

Parliament and does not require the citizens of Papua New Guinea to be consulted on the matter.

ABG Minister for Bougainville Independence Mission and Attorney General, Hon. Ezekiel Masatt clarified that there is no legal basis for the proposed nationwide consultation that the Prime Minister

has alluded to.

“There is no legal basis for the proposed nationwide consultation that the Prime Minister and the National Technical Team are proposing. The provisions of the Organic Law on Peace Building and the 2001 Bougainville Peace Agreement required the people of Bougainville hold a constitutionally guaranteed referendum where in 2019, 97.7 percent of Bougainvilleans voted for independence,” Masatt stated.

“It is therefore the requirements of the same laws that the ABG and the National Government are the only two parties

that will consult on the overwhelming 97.7 percent outcome of the referendum, and there was no mention of a nationwide consultation on the matter. The nationwide consultations are unconstitutional and the ABG again rejects this position by the National Government’s technical team.”

Masatt said it has become clear that the National Government lacks the institutional memory to fully understand the intentions of the 2001 Bougainville Peace Agreement and urged the national government to stick to the agreements

reached by both Governments in the joint consultations.

The Joint Government Consultations on the Bougainville Referendum Result which started in May 2021, culminated in the Era Kone Covenant which was endorsed by the two governments at the meeting of the Joint Supervisory Body in May this year.

The Era Kone Covenant is the document that provides for the pathway in which the referendum results will be brought into the National Parliament for final ratification.

“It has been agreed that independence will be no earlier than 2025 and no later than 2027. Let me make it absolutely clear, that Bougainville will be independent,” Masatt stated.

Era Kone Covenant double entrenched

ABG Attorney General and Minister Bougainville Independence Mission Hon Ezekiel Masatt, has clarified that the Era Kone Covenant is a double-entrenched document that cannot be easily changed at will by either governments.

The Era Kone Covenant is an agreement reached by the Autonomous Bougainville Government and the National Government that 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.

Minister Masatt clarified that the Era Kone Covenant has been independently agreed to by the Governments of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville, and later jointly endorsed which means that the Era Kone Covenant cannot be easily disregarded if either of the

parties want to change any part of the agreement in the future.

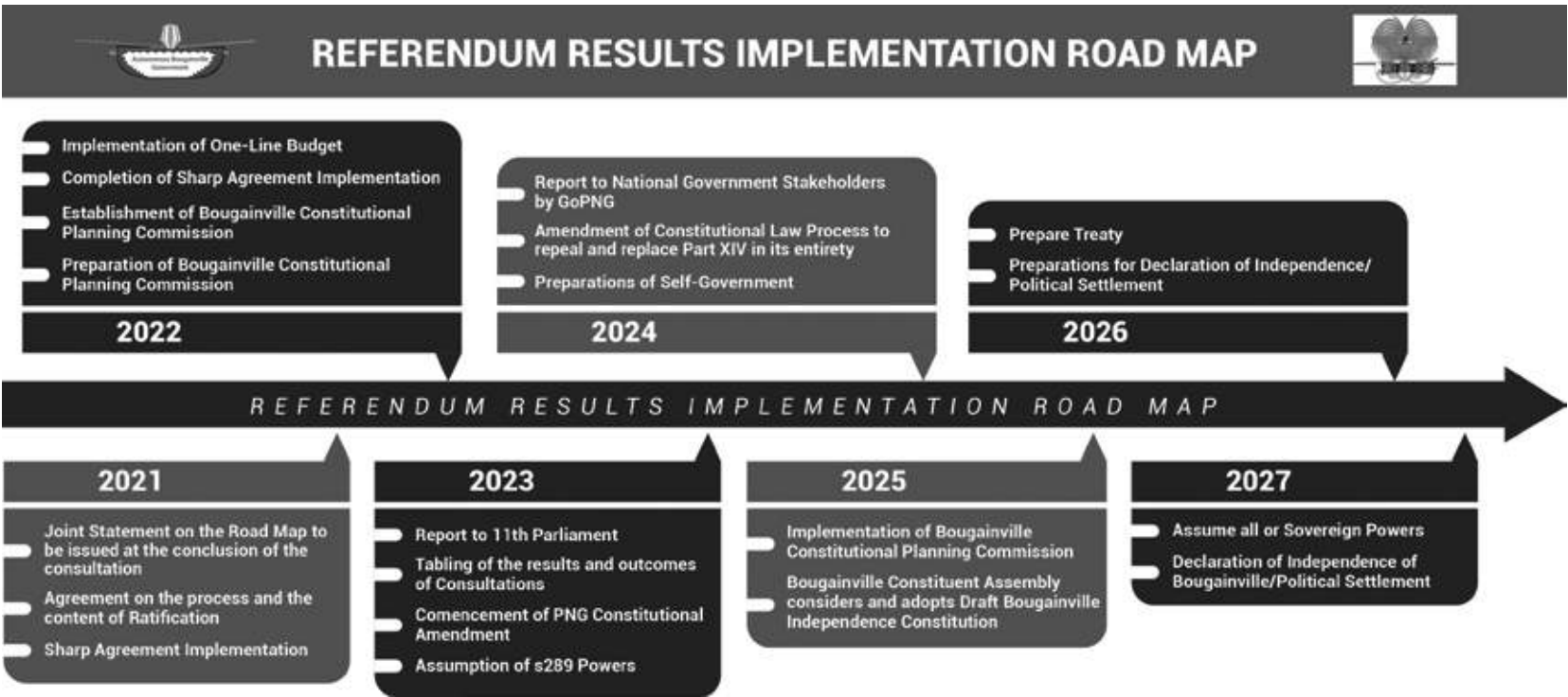
Minister Masatt explained that if one party decides to retract on the agreement, both Waigani and Kubu (parliaments) must be consulted first and an agreement must be reached on both sides before any changes are made.

He says because the Era Kone agreement is ‘double-entrenched’ it places Bougainville in a comfortable position as far as the independence agenda is

concerned.

Another significant aspect of the Era Kone Covenant is that it requires that the Bougainville Independence issue is brought into the National Parliament in 2023.

He further explained that the ratification by the National Parliament also means that it (national parliament) can only endorse the result of the Bougainville referendum, the outcomes of the Joint Inter-Government Consultations and the Joint Report by the two Governments, and that the final Ratification cannot be vetoed.







## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY

## MR SHADRACH HIMATA

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

I am again delighted to share with you all this progressive update from the Bougainville administration and government as a whole.

Over the last few months, the Autonomous Bougainville Government has progressed significant efforts across all fronts, and especially in our Independence Mission journey.

On the outset, I want to remind our people that your Government remains steadfast in its efforts to secure and implement independence for Bougainville.

Under our Independence Mission Trident Strategy, the President launched the 'international prong' which aims to establish support for Bougainville's independence through enhanced trade and investment relations.

This is an important task that will see the Government working more closely with our foreign missions and partners to establish partnerships that will help Bougainville to build a vibrant economy.

Under the International Prong, there are a number of activities that the Government has set to take place under this program including establishing a Bougainville Desk in the National Department of Foreign Affairs and the National Trade Office, and closer collaboration with PNG overseas missions to build beneficial relations for Bougainville.

The Government also hosted the first of its kind Bougainville Trade and Investment Conference in Arawa where top economic experts participated in discussions on how Bougainville can close the current fiscal gap it faces while also looking at attaining fiscal self-reliance through sound trade and investment for the region as we begin to venture into the global community.

I want to remind our people that the Government and Administration is working to implement the Six Point Strategy set out by the Toroama-Nisira Government during its inauguration in 2020. This strategy includes:

- **Political Control**

- **Economic Growth and Control**
- **Administrative Control**
- **Mobilizing Private Sector and Civil Society**
- **Long Term Vision and Planning**
- **International Relations.**

It is under these strategies that the government prioritizes and allocates resources and support accordingly. Under the Long Term Vision and Planning, we will be launching Bougainville's Vision 2052 – a long term vision or plan for Bougainville that maps out economic, social and political development over the next 30 years.

Our Independence Timeline is set: 'no earlier than 2025 and no later than 2027'. Your Government continues to work progressively according to this timeline to ensure that we establish a strong foundation required, especially in terms of policies and legislations under the 2021 Sharp Agreement.

Under the National Prong of our Trident Strategy, the two Governments are now in the process of developing and finalizing the Constitutional

Regulations. The Constitutional Regulations is the final agreement that will establish the procedure for guiding the National Parliament to implement the Referendum Result on Independence in accordance with the agreed timeline.

While the Government is driving the independence agenda at the political level, we too at the constituency level must continue to play our part by contributing and participating in the constituency independence-readiness efforts that is being implemented across our 33 constituencies.

I urge you all, especially to all our public servants in the districts and headquarter to continue to work in support of our government so that we deliver the best that our people deserve.

I wish all our public servants and your families a joyful Christmas and a Prosperous New Year 2023.

May God Bless us all.

**Shadrach Himata**  
Chief Secretary

## Senior ABG public servants undergo development planning training

A total of seventeen public servants in the Bougainville Public Service completed a two-weeks training on 'Formulating and Aligning Development Plans' delivered in Buka through the Pacific Institute of Leadership and Governance.

The participants underwent intense sessions to broaden their understanding on alignment of development plans with the content of the MTDP's Sector Development Plans, Provincial Integrated Development Plans and District Development Plans.

The training is under an existing arrangement between the ABG's Department of Personnel Management and the Pacific Institute of Leadership and Governance.



## OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

## HON. ISHMAEL TOROAMA

*President and Minister responsible for Inter-Government Affairs, Media and Communication*



Bougainville's independence continues to be the main priority of my government. We are now at a very crucial stage in our political journey and it is important that leadership at all levels is united under one goal and that is independence.

In view of this, unity at the leadership level includes our National Bougainville MPs who were recently elected into the 11th National Parliament. Following the election of our National Bougainville MPs, I met with all three of our National MPs who have pledged their support to our Independence Mission. It is time we put aside our differences and work together for the greater good of Bougainville and our people.

As your President, you have my unwavering commitment to deliver on an independent Bougainville for our people who voted 97.7 percent for Independence. I have created the Six Point Strategy as the pillars that guide our development priorities as well as our political aspirations.

The Six Point Strategy created the Bougainville Independence Mission, gives direction and clarity on our economic priorities and it strives to improve the quality of life for all Bougainvilleans.

A key milestone that we achieved in the last six months was the launching of the

International Prong under the Independence Mission Trident Strategy. The International Prong was launched under the theme "Promoting Bougainville's Global Trade & Investment"

As President, I believe that growing Bougainville through trade and investment will allow for integration into the regional and global systems. This will need development of the appropriate policies and strategies in trade and investment sectors, and to implement the Bougainville Inward Investment Act, (2018).

Our Minister for Commerce, Trade & Economic Development is leading this work to ensure that the policies and strategies we develop must be geared towards attracting domestic and international investments and promoting trade, but at the same time, protect our SMEs, Cooperative Societies, business men and women. As your President, I will ensure that our indigenous businesses receive maximum benefit in order to be fiscally self-reliant.

Under the Bougainville Peace Agreement there are provisions that provide for ABG to have observer status on various trade and investment platforms at the international frontier. These avenues will now be utilized under the International

Prong to expose and integrate Bougainville and its potential into the international arena.

We have continued to see the financial constraints that pose major impediments to developing our public service sector and providing services to our people. However, as President, I choose to see these challenges as an opportunity to motivate us to foster economic growth that can be developed and sustained through innovative means. The Toroama-Nisira government already has several of our homegrown business and economic concepts in place with many of them close to production.

The Bougainville Water Bottling Company will be producing and selling our own brand of spring water to international and domestic markets. Our new refinery will also be operational before the year ends. It is my government's intention that we have a monopoly over the alluvial gold trade on Bougainville.

In the agriculture sector, my government has made a decision to build a cocoa processing factory on Bougainville. I believe that local downstream processing of cocoa powder and chocolate direct from Bougainville produced cocoa will improve the value chain of the industry on Bougainville.

There are also several more economic development projects that are currently in the pre-production stage such as the Manetai Limestone Project and the Bana Free Trade Zone.

I want to remind our people again that as your President, it is not the intention of my government to force any form of development onto our people. Development must be willingly accepted by our people so they can actively participate in it to become meaningful so that it meets their felt needs and aspirations.

This year has seen its share of challenges but there have also been significant milestones. On the political front negotiations with the National Government are becoming more critical, economically we are starting to develop our fiscal capacity and socially we still have some problems that need to be addressed, but these are challenges that we can manage if we unite and work together.

On behalf of my family, I also want to wish you all the people of Bougainville, a very Merry Christmas and let us welcome the New Year together as one united and resilient people.

May God bless us all.

**Hon. Ishmael Toroama, MHR President**



## Bougainville Water Bottling project set for 2023



well as employment opportunities for the people.

Bougainville's first in 2023, providing much needed revenue is set to begin production for the government as

The Bougainville Water Bottling project was launched in January this year as

one of the government's low-hanging fruits under Bougainville's Economic Quick Win Plan, and will be focused on producing bottled water for identified domestic and international markets.

Bougainville Water Bottling Managing Director Camilus Kabui says despite a number of setbacks in procurement, they have progressed significantly with the project.

"We have completed the construction for the water catchment and the factory building at

Toniva. We have also received seven of the 9500liters storage tanks and it has already been installed," Kabui stated.

"We are now waiting for the delivery of the water bottling plant from China. This is an automated water bottling plant that will do bottle blowing, filling, labeling and packaging," he explained.

The plant will have the capacity to produce about 48,000 bottles per day for local consumption and export.

## Trade Conference identifies pathway for greater economic growth



Bougainville hosted its first Trade and Investment Conference in Arawa, providing the space to critically discuss Bougainville's trade and investment opportunities.

The Conference was held over two days and was officially opened on Tuesday 11th October 2022 by ABG President Hon Ishmael Toroama.

In his address to the Conference, President

Toroama stated that while his government's primary objective is Bougainville's political independence, his government is also progressing significant efforts to achieve fiscal self-reliance for Bougainville.

"Our desire for political independence is only feasible if we have a robust economy that generates revenue for Bougainville through trade, industry and investments. This

will in turn enable Bougainville to become fiscally self-reliant and ensure there is growth in all sectors of development," Toroama said.

President Toroama emphasized that the current inter-governmental funding arrangement from the National Government is focused primarily on Bougainville's capital expenditures, infrastructure development, health and

education projects – as opposed to economic development programs.

"It is structured in a manner in which our expenditures outweigh our revenue earnings causing a considerable fiscal gap," he said.

President Toroama said that Bougainville has to 'close' this fiscal gap through stringent policy measures and by taking an innovative approach to improving growth in Bougainville's economy.

"My government has introduced several reforms to improve our economic policies such as the 2014 Bougainville Inward Investment Act and encouraging more public investment in local industries."

"Emphasis has been placed on the development of our low hanging fruits and direct foreign investments in large scale industrial investments on Bougainville. My government is also deliberately investing in essential infrastructure such as energy, telecommunication, water and sanitation and transportation. These infrastructures will provide a conducive environment to encourage investor confidence and the growth of businesses."

## Govt plans to conduct cost of services exercise for Bougainville

Understanding the cost of services of running an independent Bougainville is critical information for the government.

ABG Vice President and Minister for Commerce, Trade and Economic Development Patrick Nisira highlighted this among other actions to take following the conclusion of the 2022 Trade and Investment Conference in October this year.

"As a responsible government we see the critical importance of understanding the real cost of running a soon-to-be independent sovereign country. We must understand and know in very clear terms and figures, of how much we need on an annual basis to run Bougainville and deliver the services that our people deserve," he said.

Minister Nisira said the government needed this



ABG Vice President Hon. Patrick Nisira at the recent Trade & Investment Conference in Arawa.

data to guide government decision-making especially in the allocation of funds to sectors, while also assisting the government to work towards a sustainable fiscal arrangement for Bougainville and called on relevant government agencies in the Bougainville administration to immediately facilitate this exercise for Bougainville with the National Economic Fiscal Commission (NEFC).

Discussions were also shared on the different models of fiscal self-

sufficiency, which Minister Nisira noted that understanding the different scenarios to operate as a self-sufficient administration is crucial saying that it would set the focus for Bougainville's future planning and development agenda.

"I am confident that this term of government has started out on the right path to securing Bougainville's future, through the investments undertaken for instance, the Bougainville Water Bottling, the Manetai Limestone project and others. Within the next



two to three years we will be reaping the benefits of these investments or these 'gardens' as has been our 'tok piksa' in this two-day conference," he said.

Discussions also covered environment and climate change, noting areas for policy development relating to resource development and mitigating environmental effects.

Minister Nisira said that all discussions in the Conference will be considered in the development of Bougainville's economic roadmap.

"Roadmaps must be clear as this will

give certainty to the investors and the people of Bougainville, it will make all stakeholders responsible and accountable for their actions. Furthermore, these roadmaps will support the legislative and policy framework in the Region."

"The Bougainville Trade and Investment Conference has provided an important forum to help us as a government and you as our stakeholders to understand our strengths, the gaps that exist and how we can collectively work together to make Bougainville become prosperous," Nisira said.

## Understanding a Cost of Services exercise

### What is a "Cost of Services" exercise?

A Cost of Services exercise describes the total amount that needs to be spent year-on-year to sustain government services

### Why cost service delivery?

- Costing of Services is a critical exercise that helps governments to understand how much it needs to deliver goods and services to its people.

- This exercise ensures that sufficient funds are allocated to the right areas to deliver services effectively.

- It sets the benchmark to estimate the fiscal capacity and fiscal need for subnational levels.

- It informs and influences better decision making in terms of planning and budgeting.

- It is an essential means of analyzing expenditure and spending patterns of the government.

For Bougainville, this exercise will help the government understand its current revenue mark and ensure that the government works towards bringing its revenue up to meet the costs.

It also helps:

- Public servants to carry out their duties effectively

- Smooth operation of social services (schools, hospitals etc.)

- Development and maintenance of infrastructure

- Support village level law and order efforts, agriculture, fisheries, SMEs and other sectors receive required support





## Siwai Cultural Show opens doors to opportunities for growth

The annual Siwai Cultural Show has been applauded for uniting people as Bougainville continues its journey towards Independence.

The Siwai Cultural Show was held over two days from August 12 to 13, 2022 at the Panakei showground in Kopii Constituency, South Bougainville.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, ABG President Hon Ishmael Toroama stressed that culture is one way of uniting people and the display of various cultural performances showed how much they valued their identity as Bougainvilleans and must be protected, adding that it also showed people's willingness to change in preparation towards independence.

"Culture is one way of uniting people – we have fought to protect our identity and cultural values for the past decade and our values and identities are very important that we must protect it," he said.

The Siwai Cultural Show began in 2021 when Peter Siunai, a local

businessman in Siwaii had a vision to showcase and promote the culture and tourism of the people of Siwaii.

The vision was shared with leaders of the community, especially Kopii constituency and eventually a committee was set up and the National Member for South Bougainville Hon. Timothy Masiu was appointed the patron of the cultural show.

President Toroama also acknowledged the vision one man had to unite the people and their involvement has not been ignored but supported by the patron Hon Timothy Masiu through his leadership.

"Hon Timothy Masiu is not just listening to you, he sees that these are important values that will make you able to see your independence," he said. "So in this long journey when we want to bring back the values of peace and unity, I believe it is time now to look back and reflect on this."

Meanwhile, the patron and National MP for South Bougainville Hon



Timothy Masiu announced that the Siwai Cultural Show is an international event when eight tourists from Australia, USA and German flew in to witness the cultural show.

"We are being promoted worldwide as we speak as these tourists have posted live this event, and so we need to stand together and work together," Mr. Masiu said. "It is a big challenge to the people of Siwaii to stand together and

preserve and protect such cultural activities."

Mr. Masiu explained that cultural show was not a small thing and paid tribute to the organizers and the people of Siwaii, urging them to stand together as a uniting force without divisions amongst themselves because that is the only way that Bougainville will move forward.

He also revealed that the owner of Oceania

Cultural Festival in Cairns has invited Siwaii to be part of a cultural activity to be held in Cairns later this month.

"Doors are opening for Siwaii from humble beginnings through Mr. Peter Siunai and I also like to thank the National Cultural Commission and Tourism Promotion Authority for making this an annual event."

He called on the people to look at embracing such events as the cultural show and everyday activities and let the politicians, Community Government and ABG leaders to deal with major issues.

Mr. Masiu further challenged the tour operators, vehicle owners, guest house owners and service providers in South Bougainville to offer affordable rates to welcome tourists from outside as South Bougainville was going into a massive tourism drive.

"As patron I will continue to support and help to make sure that we move forward and we are looking at a bigger crowd next year," he said.



## Laguai Youths undergo self-management clinic

issues, most of which were identified as personal issues that gradually lead to negative behavior that affects their families and communities, and self-discovery techniques that allowed them to recognize and accept that they can also be the solution to these issues.

ABG Member for Baba Constituency Hon. Emmanuel Carlos Kaetavara is spearheading this program.

"When the government is

talking about cohesion within the communities, it is very important for us to look at the root issues," Kaetavara said.

"The future of Bougainville is on the shoulders of the younger generation. We are building a Bougainville that is going to move forward in the future. We are not going to stay stagnant," he said.

The Community Cohesion and Security program is supported by the United Nations Population Fund.

Youths from Laguai area in the Baubake Constituency in South Bougainville have committed to bettering themselves following their participation in a self-management clinic under the Community Cohesion and Security Program.

Youths who participated in the program were identified as leaders of their own groups who often times find themselves involved in lawlessness and other negative behavior displays in their communities.

During the clinic, the youths focused on exploring core



## DPI launches Agriculture Commodities facility

The ABG's Department of Primary Industries launched its Bougainville Agriculture Commodity Regulatory Authority (BACRA) facility in Kubu, Buka.

The BACRA facility will play host as a data center for all commodity data and

related information for all commodities in Bougainville, with cocoa being the first through an ongoing partnership with the PNG Cocoa Board.

BACRA is the body that was established under the BACRA Act 2020, and will be responsible for managing and regulating all commodities in

Bougainville, and is expected to be one of the biggest revenue contributors for the region.

Part of the facility is also a mini chocolate laboratory which is also the second one for the Department. The lab will be used for quality testing of cocoa as well for the production of various by-products of

cocoa in Bougainville. A similar lab was launched in Toniva, Central Bougainville in February this year.

The BACRA facility was built with support from the Government of Australia, Papua New Guinea and Bougainville.

## Bougainville Food Policy paves way for greater food security

Bougainville has achieved a significant milestone when the ABG Department of Primary Industries, Livestock and Marine Resources officially launched the Bougainville Food Security Policy 2022 – 2035.

ABG Minister for Primary Industries Hon Geraldine Paul when officiating at the launching congratulated the Department for formulating the policy as it is an important development tool as Bougainville continues on its journey to independence.

"Policies like the Bougainville Food Security

Policy 2022 are important development tools; they lay out a pathway and roadmap for tangible development. Such policies help the government to attain globally and locally international sustainable development goals in so far as food security goes," she said.

The food security policy in alignment with the National Food Security Policy has two main goals which is firstly to contribute to economic development of the country by generating revenue from agricultural commodities, exports, increasing income and generating employment

and secondly to make sure that the country is food secure in having sufficient good quality nutritious and healthy food available at all times for consumption.

This policy was created by the ABG Department of Primary Industries, Livestock and Marine Resources with the technical assistance from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) after widespread consultations with the people of Bougainville.

According to the Secretary of the Department Mr. Kenneth Dovaro, the policy is homegrown and in alignment with the

National Food Security Policy.

"Food security is everyone's business as it is fundamental for human beings on earth and this policy is not a standalone policy as it aligns to the National Food Security Policy," he said.

"People of Bougainville own the policy and it is homegrown because the people in the region were consulted to gauge views to produce this policy to meet the needs of Bougainvilleans."

Mr. Dovaro further thanked the stakeholders and partners that assisted in putting this policy

together, acknowledging the UN FAO for coming at a crucial time to formulate the policy.

Acting Deputy Secretary to the National Department of Agriculture and Livestock Mr. Brown Konabe, speaking on behalf of the National Secretary shared similar sentiments stressing that food security is very important for any country to have to protect the rights of its citizens and congratulated ABG for creating such a policy, making Bougainville the first province in Papua New Guinea to have launched a food security policy at the provincial level.



# A coat of thousand colored dreams

Julie Moroko's tailoring shop tucked away at the corner of Buka Town is a happy, bustling place where she sits behind her sewing machine surrounded by fabric of vivid colors.

Here in this well-equipped studio, is where all the magic happens. In this haven, she and her small band of workers, turn fabrics and paints into beautiful dresses, shirts and accessories.

The talent and artistry are remarkable but what makes this shop special is the sheer joy shown from the faces of staff who are usually family members, saying that the ship keeps them motivated as they turn their passion into a business. Their fine artistry and skill are fruits of a family working together with Julie at the helm.

Julie is the eldest of four and when their father passed, she was forced to provide for her family, thus turning her hobby into a business venture. She is supported by her brothers who do the screen printings and stencils' cutting while her sisters and other members of her family sew, cut, iron, fold, and sort.

"I taught all of them. It's more like crash and burn most of the time," she laughs.

She has been sewing for more than 20 years and only recently registered as a business.

Julie took up tailoring, art and design at TAFE College while



attending secondary school in Australia.

"I made K1000 a fortnight, usually through customer orders mostly on tailored clothes. The orders come in various quantities. We focus on different styles and not just Meri Blouses. We do shirts, dresses, sulus, pants and uniforms as well."

The orders come from all over

Bougainville, Port Moresby, Lae as well as Australia.

Julie is a small-town designer and tailor who dreams of bringing her brand to the fashion runway one day and is adamant that the soon to be built Bougainville Innovation Hub will pave the way for her and other designers and tailors in Bougainville.

She recently took part in an Open Day for the Innovation Hub Show in Buka, organized by the United Nations Development Program.

"For me it was an opener because it showed me that, I can get help elsewhere as a business. On the business side of things, I don't really know about running a business but to do the technical stuff, I am very good at sewing. UNDP is helping me take my business to a wider customer base. I am now able to get more customers coming in to see what we have on offer," said Julie.

Julie is also thankful that the soon to be built innovation hubs will allow her to improve her business management and marketing skills through more sophisticated digital technology that the hub may offer.

## An Educationist's final wish

Thirty-six years ago, a man who had a vision for education left the comfort of his country in Germany and came with his family to Bougainville to teach technical and vocational skills training.

Peter Braun, a German Volunteer and Educationist lived and taught in Bougainville before and after the crisis.

When he first came to Bougainville in 1986, he taught at the Tinputz Specialized Training Center, today known as the Tinputz Technical

School.

At the time of the crisis he returned to Germany with his family in 1990, but was later called back after the crisis to assist in rebuilding technical vocational education on Bougainville.

When he returned with his family, he lived on Sohano and that was when he fell in love with the island.

Sadly, he passed on last year in 2021, leaving his dying wish to have his ashes scattered around Sohano Island, the place

he called his second home.

In October this year, Late Peter's family returned to Bougainville, this time with his ashes and on October 5th 2022, on the day that many around the globe gathered to celebrate World Teacher's Day, a small ceremony was held on Sohano Island to fulfill the dying wishes of an educationist who contributed immensely to rebuilding vocational education in Bougainville. "It was my late

husband's wishes to have his remains scattered around the island he loved so much as his second home and I am glad my family and I have made it to fulfill his will," Mrs Braun said.

The small ceremony was witnessed by Late Peter's close family, friends and former colleagues in the education sector including Daniel Kukup, Anthony Tsora and Dorothy Kenneth who represented the ABG Department of Education. They all described Late

Peter as a great man who loved Bougainville and contributed so much to rebuilding the education sector in Bougainville after the crisis.

Chiefs and leaders of Tinputz were also present to farewell Late Peter and thanked his family for honoring his wishes and bringing him to rest in Bougainville.

Late Peter's contribution and legacy will continue to live on through the TVET schools throughout the region.



It's been twenty-five years since Ishmael Toroama – current President of the Autonomous Bougainville Government, set foot in Guava Village.

On Sunday 24 July 2022, Ishmael Toroama, as President of the Autonomous Bougainville Government led a delegation back into Guava Village in the Panguna District – home to Bougainville's secessionist leader, Francis Ona.

The day was significant as it also marked 17 years since the passing of the Bougainville Revolutionary Leader.

President Toroama's visit into Guava Village signified his government's recognition of the Late

Francis Ona as the supreme leader of the Bougainville Revolution.

His visit was also tied into cultural rituals of reconciliation and the removal of the stigma of the Bougainville Conflict from Ona's family.

At the time of the conflict, Toroama was Ona's frontline fighting commander, however, tensions arose in 1997 between BRA Commander Ona and Bougainville's first President Joseph Kabui, who at the time was personal secretary to Ona – these bold men had one end goal of self-determination for Bougainville, but shared different opinions on how to achieve it.

These Bougainville hardliners spent three days in intense discussions, however, an agreed decision could not be reached. This had resulted in the Roreinang Coup of 1997, and President Toroama had not gone back to Guava since then until twenty-five years later.

Men, women and children came in truck loads from as far as South Nasioi and Kongara to witness this historic event.

President Toroama's visit follows a major reconciliation ceremony between the Kurabang and Bakoringku clans of Guava in early July which saw these two clans healing wounds of the past and further strengthening

their commitment to work with the Toroama Government for lasting peace on an independent Bougainville.

President Toroama explained that his government's intention is to ensure that the people of Guava are recognized, reconciled and united into Bougainville's journey to independence.

"This is part of my government's initiative to ensure that we continue this fight that the Late Ona started, not with guns, but through the agreed processes that we have engaged in through the joint inter-government consultations where we have secured Bougainville's independence through the

signing of the Era Kone Covenant," he said.

Following his address to the people, President Toroama visited the resting place of the Late Francis Ona where he paid his respects to the late leader and presented the obligatory customary 'kaikai' to Ona's family and to the Kurabang Clan of which Ona belonged to.

President Toroama's visit into Guava Village is part of the two-pronged approach currently being taken by the Government and known as the Panguna Mine Dialogue Strategy – a homegrown initiative developed as the way forward to discussing the future of the multi-billion kina defunct Panguna Mine.



# Government appeals for increased access to customary land for development

• Land plays a critical role in socio-economic development

• 97% of land on Bougainville is customary land

• Bougainville’s political

and socioeconomic aspirations have increased the government’s demand for land

• Access to available customary land for

sustainable development by the government is a major challenge

• Government needs enough land to progress tangible development

Having access to sufficient land is an important factor to progress socioeconomic development in Bougainville.

ABG President Hon Ishmael Toroama made this call when speaking on land and development related issues on Bougainville.

President Toroama said that while the government understands that land is an important commodity in Bougainville societies, people have to learn to trust the government and its decisions for land development and introducing new concepts to improve Bougainville’s socioeconomic capacity.

“The issue of land is a key factor in all sectors of development on Bougainville today. The socioeconomic and

political changes on Bougainville have increased the demand for land,” Toroama said.

“My encouragement to our people is that for tangible development to manifest, people have to adopt a progressive mindset. We cannot complain about the lack of services and financial capacity when we become the impediments to development,” he said.

President Toroama says his government is keen on developing Bougainville’s social and economic capacities and can only do so if the government has access to enough land to develop these priorities.

“My government is keen on developing our social and economic capacities through

the exploitation of our natural resources and providing necessary infrastructure development. We can only do so if the government has access to enough land to develop these priorities.”

The majority of land on Bougainville is largely customary land – however, most of this land cannot be accessed easily by the current government. This resistance has been attributed to the conflict on Bougainville which has conditioned Bougainvilleans to be suspicious of development in all forms that require the use of land.

However, in response to this the Autonomous Bougainville Government will soon legislate on its own Land Bill that essentially

recognizes Bougainvilleans as the rightful owners of land and ensures its sustainable use.

The draft Bougainville Land Bill is significantly unique to the current PNG land laws. For example, all land in Bougainville is customary land unless otherwise designated, which is very different from the PNG system where all land is State Land unless otherwise registered.

Under the draft Bougainville Land Bill, registration of customary land will also allow land owners to negotiate directly with developers, including the government, rather than being restricted by a lease/leaseback arrangement as under the PNG system.

## Minister Masono: Compliance of Lands processes critical

The Bougainville Land Board held its Inaugural meeting from the 12th to the 23rd of September in Buka.

The Board deliberated on a total of 94 allotments across North, Central and South Bougainville regions which saw more than 300 interested people applying for these allotments.

ABG Minister for Lands Hon Amanda Masono provided this update in the recent sitting of the Bougainville House of Representatives.

The Bougainville Land Board was established following the transfer

of Land Administration powers from the National Department of Lands to the ABG Department of Lands in June 2021.

Minister Masono explained that the Bougainville Land Board is a statutory body under the Department and plays a critical role in all land related matters including state land zoning, rezonings, subdivisions, consolidation, allocation and granting, forfeiture and transfers of leases.

“Any state land allocation outside the Department of Lands’ processes whether by so-called landowners

or former traditional landowners is illegal,” she stated.

Minister Masono also called on all ABG Members to help the government by educating their constituents about the lands processes that are in place.

“There are challenges and issues on illegal occupation of state land by Bougainvilleans who are our constituency citizens and I appeal to each Constituency Member to educate our people about the processes we have in place and start to respect and comply with these processes.”

Speaking on the draft Bougainville Land Bill, Minister Masono updated the House that the bill is at its second draft stage and announced that the Bill is undergoing a change that will see a split in the Land Policy into two separate legislations; one addressing alienated land and the other addressing customary land in Bougainville.

“Policy and legislation is just one part of it; the technical aspect of land we have to get right because there is only one universal measurement when it comes to surveying land and making it available for

development purposes,” Minister Masono explained.

“Making land available for development requires that we deal with eight other national legislations dealing with land including the Land Tenure Conversion Act, Valuers Act, Surveyors Act, ILG Act and other related Acts,” Masono said.

The Bougainville Alienated Land Bill is expected to be passed in the November 2022 parliament sitting while the Bougainville Customary Land Bill will be passed thereafter.

## New Innovation Hubs to accelerate business opportunities for Bougainville



Bougainville women and youth will soon have direct access to foster employment and entrepreneurial development through the establishment of innovation hubs in Buka, Arawa and Buin.

This follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Autonomous

Bougainville Government and the United Nations.

The Innovation Hubs will be funded by the Government of Japan, and will be a one-stop-hub where women and youth from Bougainville use as a resource to begin their entrepreneurial journey, improve their financial literacy, and look to resource themselves with

the necessary knowledge and skills towards participating in a digital and technologically focused future.

ABG President Ishmael Toroama in his address stated that Bougainville has enormous potential for economic development.

“The second point of my six point strategy is Economic Growth

and Control. Through this strategy, my government recognizes the need to develop Bougainville’s economy through a more practical approach. It encourages developing industries and economic sectors that Bougainvilleans are already involved in,” he said.

“The concept of having innovation hubs situated in each of our three regions will provide our people with the necessary skills and knowledge through the use of technology. This will enable them to keep track of their supply chains as well as improving their financial capacity as entrepreneurs.”

President Toroama acknowledged the United Nations and the Government of Japan for their continued support to peace building on

Bougainville, and further encouraged development partners to consider Bougainville’s own economic priority areas in foreign direct investment, improved technology and equipment in primary industries and providing technical assistance in developing Bougainville’s economic capacity.

The innovation hubs will also have an education and training component that will deliver entrepreneurship and innovation related programs.

This will be supplemented by an intensive industry focused business program in five industries identified under in the ABG’s Socioeconomic Baseline Survey Report including copra, cocoa, fisheries, tourism and hospitality and mining equipment and technical services.

## First 46 aspiring entrepreneurs undergo training

Following the launch of the Innovation Hubs in July this year, women, men and youth have undergone the first lot of training sessions on building their entrepreneurship skills using simple innovative ideas and resources in their communities.

Former ABG Deputy

Speaker and Member of Parliament Francesca Semoso together with well-known Bougainvillean woman leader Roselyn Kenneth, a longtime advocate for gender equality, form the dynamic-duo leading this entrepreneurship training for aspiring SME locals on Bougainville.

From the 24th to 28th October 2022, the pair brought together the first 46 aspiring entrepreneurs from across Buka and Arawa to connect and accelerate innovative business idea’s at the first Entrepreneurship and Innovation Course supported by the United Nations Development

Programme.

The participants who attended the training include teachers, women leaders, and mostly young women and men from the of Hanahan, Malasang and Lonahan villages in North Bougainville and also from the Arawa area in Central Bougainville.



Stella Larin

“I hope that I will be able to take away tips from this training to share with the women who come to me for help. I have been able to do this in the past where I have helped women start a savings account.”



James Mamak

“Teaching young people to raise money and create small business opportunities is so important right now given limited job opportunities amongst other social impediments especially the young people.”



Anne Aru

“I came here so I can learn to be a better businesswoman. I have had better days where I have sold more trays of scones but have been inconsistent with my sales. I hope at this training I can connect and learn from the trainers and other participants on how to improve my business.”





## Kotu Village Authority - a model for Bougainville

Having the character to do good for your community to become agents of change is your wealth.

This was the challenge issued by President Hon. Ishmael Toroama when congratulating the Kotu Village Authority (VA) in Kopii Constituency during the 'siwosiworo ceremony' or traditional launching ceremony of key projects within the VA in November this year.

This launching was the first of its kind in the district and Bougainville as a whole and he and other members of the ABG acknowledged and commended such an initiative as their preparations towards independence-readiness.

"I acknowledge your initiative to strengthen good governance and

customary initiations and obligations within the village level and I believe it is time for us to do so," President Toroama said.

"In strengthening good governance we continue to look at strengthening wisdom for the next generational leadership and I believe inside Kotu you have the drive to strengthen the next generational leadership to move these initiatives," he said.

This ceremony was witnessed by a high delegation of leaders from the current ABG cabinet led by President Hon. Ishmael Toroama, leaders from the Me'ekamui factions and former ABG leaders in the likes of former President Chief Dr. John Momis, former ABG member for Kopii Mr. Philip Kuhena and chiefs from Siwai District.

President Toroama further iterated that it



ABG President Hon. Ishmael Toroama

doesn't need many people to have one dream but it needed one person to come up with that drive to bring that vision to the people to witness.

"My delegation and others have come to witness this drive which in your belief will capture the attention of fellow Bougainvilleans and I want to congratulate you and acknowledge the person who had this vision, in fact it is in this generational leadership which has been birthed now and we are witnessing today," he said.

According to the VA chairman Mr. Willie

Hicks, the VA has a dream and vision on how to look after its people and what services it can provide for them if it is recognized as an authority.

"The main aim is to provide basic social services for our people to live in unity and a vision to create opportunity for our people by providing employment opportunities, mobilize civilized individuals to be self-reliant, build human resource as its own priority and strengthen religious and social services," he said.

The ceremony witnessed the launching of six projects within the VA to assist its people, which included:

- 1) Village Authority set up
- 2) Housing Scheme
- 3) WiFi Communication



### Network

- 4) Access Roads to Kotu
- 5) Establishment of MiBank
- 6) Power Supply

Mr. Hicks also stressed that this launching was also a way to recognize traditional leadership through the chieftaincy system.

He said traditional leadership is not voted for by the people but it is inherited and recognition must be given.

He further challenged that there will be questions and doubts when witnessing such occasion because through this generational leadership we breathe out both the good and the bad characters to strengthen work within our communities.



## ABG & UNOPS sign MoU

A memorandum of understanding between the Autonomous Bougainville Government's Department of Lands, Physical Planning, Environment and Conservation and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) represents both parties' commitment to forging stronger working relationship to further international development.

The MoU signed on 25 November in Port Moresby, will pave the way for more efficient and effective collaborations between the ABG Department of Lands and UNOPS, with expansion into provision of project management, procurement and infrastructure development services in Bougainville.

ABG Minister for Lands, Physical Planning, Environment and Conservation, Hon. Amanda Masono says this arrangement will provide a valuable boost to her Ministry and Department, particularly in progressing towards transitioning into a green economy for Bougainville

## Tax Talk with the Chief Bougainville Collector of Tax - Dr Alois Daton

### Sales Tax on Beer and Cigarettes

The Autonomous Region of Bougainville has only one piece of taxation legislation which is the Sales Tax (Beer & Cigarettes) Act 2011 (Sales Tax). The sales tax is imposed on the first sale of beer and cigarettes as they are imported into Bougainville and on-sold to retailers and customers.

The rates are K0.75 per bottle or can of beer and K0.20 per stick of cigarette which includes spear and mutrus. Soft drinks, wine and spirits are exempted from sales tax.

We have thirty three registered businesses in the industry but only about ten of them are consistently importing and distributing to clients and customers. Of these ten, a number of them are compliant with their obligations to lodge and pay while some of the bigger players are non-

compliant. Where non-compliance is rampant, the Bougainville Tax Office has taken steps to ensure the offenders comply.

The Bougainville Tax Office has referred three of the large beer and cigarettes distributors in Bougainville to the Department of Justice and Legal Services for legal action to be taken for non-compliance. The referrals are a way to get the sales tax payers to comply with their obligations to lodge their monthly sales tax returns and pay the appropriate sales tax based on sales of that particular month.

All distributors of beer and cigarettes which import the goods from outside Bougainville have a duty to withhold sales tax at the current rates as they make sales to clients and consumers, and remit the tax to the BRO as provided for in the Sales

Tax (Beer and Cigarettes) Act 2011.

Non-compliance with their obligations to lodge and pay stemmed from a popular concern among the distributors that the rate of tax is too high. A Review based on this concern, among others, was conducted and concluded in 2018, however the recommendations of the Review Report have not been tabled in the House of Representatives to date.

There are however, sales taxpayers who are lodging and paying sales tax on current rates and it is unfair to them if the other refuse to pay because they say the rates are too high. High rates or not, the beer drinking and cigarette smoking population continue indulge in this habit. It would be good to view some statistics in the drop in consumption and use

of the two products as a result of price increases because of sales tax addition.

One of the recommendations of the Review is to reduce the current rate of sales tax. As the Review Report and its Recommendations have not been tabled in the House of Representatives, the current rates of sales tax still apply. Let me make it clear that the BTO has no authority to amend the rates, let alone the Sales Tax Law, only the House of Representatives can amend the law to change the rates.

Another recommendation is for the BTO to increase enforcement activity to ensure sales tax payers are honest and making full and true disclosure when lodging their monthly sales tax returns on time and paying sales tax on time. We have established working

relationships with the airlines which transports cigarettes and also with PNG Ports to provide us information on volumes of cigarettes and beer being brought in. Our issue with shipped cargo is there is no specific label indicating if pallets and containers are beer or cigarettes. The labels only say 'General Goods' which make it difficult for us to identify what is beer and what is cigarettes. So we depend on the honesty of sales tax payers to make full and disclosure when lodging sales tax returns.

Audits now appear to be the best enforcement tool for the BTO as we will continue to visit our sales tax payers and assist them to assist the government in paying their fair share of sales tax in contributing towards Bougainville's march to Independence.

Dr Alois Daton

The consumer watchdog of the country was in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville in July to conduct routine checks on prices of certain basic goods currently under price control.

Investigation Officer of ICCC Chris Gabesua explained that the order simply means that businesses wanting to increase prices of certain goods under price control should not increase their prices by more than 10%.

This exercise follows the orders of Measure #11 released by the Office of the Pandemic Controller in which prices of certain basic goods under price control should not be increased more than 10% of its original price.

These basic goods include rice, flour, sugar, soap and tissues amongst others and the general public as consumers are also asked to speak to the Business Development Officers (BDOs) at the Commerce Department who act as the ICCC agents should they have any issues with prices of goods and services in Bougainville.



### ICCC routine checks underway in AROB

Officers of the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission are pictured here carrying out these checks in local shops in Buka Town.





## BOUGAINVILLE INDEPENDENCE MISSION TOKSAVE

*Sixpela samting bilong wokim long strongim wokabout bilong indipendens*

### 1) SENISIM PASIN NA SEKHANIM BIRUA

Yumi redi long senisim pasin or nogat insait long taim yumi wokabout igo long kisim indipendens? Ol pasin nogut olsem steal, toktok beksait, daunim narapela manmeri na ol kain pasin bai nonap kamapim gutpla sindaun insait long ol ples bilong yumi.

### 2) LUKAUTIM LO NA ODA

Yumi mas lukautim lo na oda. Halivim polis, halivim ol chief, ol mama, ol pikinini, lo yut na olgeta pipol bilong yumi. Imas gat luksave na pasin rispek long wanpla narapela manmeri. Tete insait long Bogenvil emi kamap olsem wanpla kalsa wea taim igat hevi, yumi kirap na kisim lo ikam long han bilong yumi yet. So insait long wokabout bilong yumi long redi long indipendens, yumi mas luksave tu long wok bilong ol kainkain kot na tu imas gat bikpela luksave long ol rot bilong kamapim gutpela sindaun insait long ol komuniti bilong yumi hia long Bogenvil.

### 3) KIRAPIM NA STRONGIM WOK BILONG EKONOMI

President Ishmael Toroama emi tok aut pinis long sixpela het tok bilong gavman. Wanpela long dispela ol het tok em long kirapim na strongim ekonomi na kamapim moni bilong ronim gavman na ol sevis bilong ol pipol. Gavman na pipol bai mas wok bung wantaim long inapim tru dispela het tok. Yumi noken kamap ol les manmeri.

### 4) LUKAUTIM NA RONIM GUT OL SAMTING (GOOD GOVERNANCE)

Insait tu long indipendens misin yumi mas strongim wok bilong gud gavanens. Ronim na lukautim gut ol samting bilong gavman, sios, skul, klan or pisin na tu yumi yet wanwan manmeri insait long komuniti. Yumi mas lukautim pablik propati wantaim tu ol private propati na ol institusen wea emi stap long halivim yumi.

### 5) HUMAN RISOS DEVELOPMEN

Pasin bilong strongim ol pipol long go long skul na kisim save imas go het. Taim bilong skul, ol pikinini imas go long skul. Noken salim ol long go wok kopra o wok kakau o wok gaden o pasim ol wantaim ol pasin tumbuna tasol. Taim bilong holidei orait oli ken halivim long ol kain wok long peles. Yumi mas strong long kamapim ol manmeri bai gat gutpela save long ronim peles bilong yumi.

### 6) SOSAL SEVIS NA GUTPELA SINDAUN

Yumi mas kamapim na strongim helti na educated populesen insait long Bogenvil. Mipela imas sindaun long ples wea emi helti na imas pasim rot wea ol kainkain sik na birua inap long kam na bagarapim yumi. Yumi yet tu imas strong long kamapim ol gutpela haus na tu gutpela sindaun insait long peles bilong yumi wanwan.

*Ridim, harim na serim toktok wantaim narapela. Bogenvil em ples bilong yu na mi.  
Yumi mas lukautim ples bilong yumi Bogenvil.  
ABG Dipatmen bilong Indipendens Misin iwok bung wantaim ABG Media  
long kamapim dispela toktok klia | July 2022.*

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## Bougainville Education Department empowered to manage tuition fee funds program

The National Government's Tuition Fee Subsidy program will now be managed under the ABG Department of Education on Bougainville.

This follows the transfer of the relevant powers and functions of the Government Tuition Fee Subsidy (GTFS) Policy from the National Department of Education to the ABG Department of Education.

This milestone event was marked with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement and launching of the GTFS policy in Buka.



A team from the National Department of Education led by their Minister Hon. Jimmy Uguro, Secretary Dr Uke Kombra and other senior members were in Buka to officiate at this event.

ABG Minister for Education and Member for Ioro, Hon Theonila Roka Matbob, explained

that the transfer of the GTFS functions now means that the ABG through its Department of Education will be managing the disbursement of tuition fees to government schools in the region.

"One of the advantages for the transfer is that it brings policy closer to

home. This means that ABG as the government of the day in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville will be able to effectively and closely monitor the schools and comply with ABG Public Finance Management Act in acquitting the funds.

"It will also ensure that school principals that do not comply with the Act, as well as the Teaching Service Act, are dealt with under those laws," she said.

Minister Matbob gave her assurance to the National Team that the disbursement of the

tuition fee funds to schools in Bougainville will be done under the principles of good governance, transparency and accountability, and that a separate Trust Account will be created to manage the disbursement of these funds going forward.

Minister Matbob acknowledged other powers under the Education sector that have already been transferred, however she also highlighted powers that are yet to be transferred to Bougainville such as curriculum development, teachers training and registration and national examinations.

## Education Sector focused on key policy reforms

Reforms in the Bougainville Education System towards independence-readiness will see more focus from the government investing in a need-based human resource development approach.

ABG Minister for Education and Member for Ioro Constituency Hon Theonila Roka Matbob, announced this during the September session of Parliament, stating it as the vision for the Education sector in Bougainville.

Minister Matbob said that this Vision will be guided through four key strategies including:

*1) The design and roll-out of the ABG School Fee Assistance Scheme (SFAS) program from 2022 to 2025 through a project management approach*

*2) The establishment of stronger ties with key partners in education through strategic stakeholder engagements*

*3) Effectively communicating and disseminating relevant information on the status of education in Bougainville for mass*

*mobilization of the people through public awareness and policy education*

*4) Encouraging better cooperation between the Ministry and Department of Education as a check and balance between politics and public administration for clear political direction and effective policy implementation*

Minister Matbob explained that under the strategy of the ABG SFAS program, her Ministry has developed a Handbook capturing key guidelines, operating procedures and governance mechanisms to effectively manage the implementation of the SFAS program, and that it will be further protected through relevant legislation to ensure its continuity.

This year, the ABG appropriated K2million in its 2022 Budget for the SFAS program. Minister Matbob confirmed that of this K2million funding, K1.5million has been used to assist students at the tertiary level of education, while the remaining K500,000 will be

allocated to FODE and TVET assistance within Bougainville.

Other key activities being progressed in the Education sector include several policy reforms in the education structure and curriculum space.

Minister Matbob explained that the Department of Education will facilitate structural reforms that will see changes in the current structure of nine years of basic education, to 13 years in the full cycle of education.

This means the new structure will be 1-6-6; one year of pre-school, six years of primary education and six years of secondary education.

To complement the structural reform, the Department of Education is also progressing curriculum reforms that will see the transition from Outcome-Based Curriculum to Standard-Based Curriculum (SBC).

Minister Matbob said that the Department has trained teachers at all levels over the recent years, and the Department will be taking an incremental approach to implement the SBC beginning with Elementary schools in the

region.

Under the Curriculum reform, the Department will also be introducing a new subject of Christian, Citizenship and Values Education that aims to instill Christian and Citizenship values in young Bougainville children who can be able to live meaningful lives as they grow, while also minimizing social issues faced in society.

Under the 2021 Sharp Agreement, the Department of Education has drawn down several key powers and functions from the National Department of Education, including the most recent drawdown of the Government Tuition Fee Subsidy Policy.

Minister Matbob clarified that there are other remaining powers yet to be drawn down to Bougainville, adding that once these powers are transferred to Bougainville, it will trigger the review of the Bougainville Education Act 2013 and the enactment of the Bougainville Teaching Service Bill in parliament before December 2023.





Bougainville’s potential for tourism hails from the peak of Mt Balbi to the golden shores of the many serene beaches that are wrapped around the island region. Over the last decade, Bougainville Experience Tours, a locally owned business has done notably well to market Bougainville’s endless tourist hotspots to the world. Bougainville Experience Tours owner Zhon Bosco Miriori is a name well associated to the tourism sector in Bougainville and PNG. He began his business in 2010 offering tailored tours on Bougainville

as well as other parts of PNG. “We run tours like bird watching tours, trekking tours, cultural tours, WW2 relic tours, fishing tours, filming and photography tours, research tours and also day tours,” explained Zhon. Zhon says he manages to bring in just under a thousand tourists to Bougainville in a year – which is a remarkable achievement for a relatively young business. The global pandemic COVID19 also had its fair share of contributing to the slow pace in the tourism business in the last two years. “We (tourism industry)

were badly affected by COVID more than other businesses when borders were closed because our business is with human beings travelling,” he recalled. There are also the other obvious challenges faced in the tourism business, and Zhon mad a call out to the government of the day to address these issues with a greater sense of urgency, saying that Bougainville has a bigger potential for tourism becoming a huge revenue earner for Bougainville. “Our big issue is most of the areas where tourism products are, have land issues and road networks are bad. ABG should put more money for tourism development especially trainings and awareness in the communities and we should have a Bougainville Tourism master plan,” he said. Apart from running his tourism business, Zhon is also the Vice Chairperson of the Central Bougainville Tourism Association, and this year the Association managed to successfully stage the first Tamatama Festival in Arawa Town, and looks forward to hosting a bigger one in 2023. “It is very important for Bougainville to have regional cultural festivals as these festivals will enable more tourists to

come visit and experience these Festivals and also our young generation can participate and learn too,” he said. With the rest of the world relaxing the restrictions on international travel, this has brought welcoming news for the tourism sector. Zhon excitedly shared that they have organized super yachts to come into Bougainville this year. “We have a bigger one coming up in October into Pokpok and Taiof in Buka. Also next year we will have other cruise ships coming to visit Nissan Island, Tasman, Mortlock and Carterets,” he said.

# New Ministers in ABG Executive Government



**Hon. Morris Opeti**  
**Minister for Community Development**

Member for Taonita Tinputz Hon. Morris Opeti is the newly appointed Minister for Community Development in the Autonomous Bougainville Government. He replaced former Minister and Member for Taonita Teop Constituency Hon Thompson Gitovea.



**Hon. Mazono, Minister for Lands, Physical Planning, Environment and Conservation**

ABG Member representing North Bougainville Women Hon Amanda Mazono is the newly appointed Minister for Lands, Physical Planning, Environment and Conservation in the Autonomous Bougainville Government. Minister Mazono replaced former Minister and Member for Hagogohe Constituency Hon Robert Hamal Sawa.



**Hon. Bosco Ragu**  
**Minister for Police and Correctional Services**

ABG Member for Tsitalato Hon. John Bosco Ragu is the newly appointed Minister for Police and Correctional Services in the Autonomous Bougainville Government. Minister Ragu replaced former Minister and Member for Baba Constituency Hon Emmanuel Carlos Kaetavara.

## Bougainville Charity Foundation fundraiser for CT Scanner



Bougainville Charity Foundation is leading a fundraising drive to raise much-needed funds to revive the CT SCANNER at the Buka General Hospital.

The CT Scanner needs to be re-programmed and in order for that to happen, an expert must be flown in to Bougainville from overseas. The funds raised will be used to facilitate this and also to purchase a stand-alone generator.

If you wish to support this worthy cause, you can make your deposit directly into the following account:

**BSP Account Name: Bougainville Charity Foundation Incorporated**  
**BSP Account Number: 7028866965**

This message is authorized by the Chairman of the Bougainville Charity Foundation Inc. Mr Romulus Masiu.

For more information, contact +675 7261 5030.



## ABG Farewells Retirees

More than 30 retirees were farewelled from the ABG public service this year. ABG Minister for Public Service Joseph Mona thanked them for their years of service and to the people of Bougainville, and encouraged the retirees to enjoy the fruits of their labor. The ABG Department of Personnel Management and Administrative Services facilitated a number of induction and training programs for the retirees to assist them in their transitional exit from the public service, and Minister Mona encouraged the retirees to use these entrepreneur skills and training acquired to manage their entitlements well. These retirees served in various departments including the Departments of Health, Finance, Primary Industries and Technical Services to name a few.





## Bougainville players potential recognized by top PNG coaches

The Bougainville Football Federation has sent off six young players to join the PNG Under-19 train-on squad in Port Moresby.

President of the Bougainville Football Federation Justin Helele says the six boys were selected during an U19 trial match held in Buka in July.

Teams from Arawa and Buka Atolls came together for the friendly trial match that was witnessed by two head coaches from the PNG U19 Team and the Senior Men's Team.

From these matches, six players were selected. They are Bradley Magara, Wayne Hamli, Channel Sudi, Nick Naru and Vianney Noneng.

Mr Helele exclaimed it was a proud moment for him as the President of the Bougainville Football Federation to send off six players to Port Moresby.

"Bougainville used to dominate in national soccer before the crisis, and now after 40 years in football administration this is another huge achievement to start seeing Bougainville players selected again for a potential spot in the National Team," he said.

Mr Helele says he is confident in the boys' potential because they were selected by the top coaches for the PNG team. He says this new development is also part of the sports sector's contribution towards Bougainville's independence readiness.



## Agmark 9s ends successfully

Ietsila Waves of Malasang 1 in North Bougainville came out as champions in the annual NGIP Agmark Bougainville Rugby 9s Tournament scooping a massive K10,000 cash prize.

The annual games were hosted in Arawa this year in November with twenty Men's teams and Six Women's teams participating in

the 2-day tournament.

In the Women's division, the New Town Knights defeated Kuskus Cutters to take out the winner's trophy and a cash prize of K3,000.

The NGIP Agmark Bougainville Rugby 9s Perpetual Cup Tournament is held every November.

### 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.