



THE BOUGAINVILLE BULLETIN

Our voice, Our image, Our place

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ABG and PNG sign historic Melanesian Agreement

The Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) signed the Melanesian Agreement with the Government of Papua New Guinea, marking the conclusion of the Joint Moderation Process between the two governments.

The Melanesian Agreement was discussed and agreed in principle between the leaders of both governments during the third Joint Moderation Consultation meeting in Burnham, New Zealand in June. These discussions were presided over by an independent Moderator, Sir Jerry Mataparae.

This Agreement reinforces the enduring partnership between Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, as both governments reaffirm their commitment to a peaceful, constitutional, and inclusive pathway toward Bougainville's political aspirations for independence.

In his address during the signing ceremony, ABG President His Excellency Ishmael Toroama, described the moment as a defining occasion in the history of Bougainville's political journey.

"Indeed, it is one of those pivotal moments of our time as we sit around this table," President Toroama stated. "The signing of this Melanesian Agreement today signals real progress on the Bougainville Peace Agreement and our process toward



President His Excellency Ishmael Toroama and Prime Minister James Marape holding the Melanesian Agreement.

Bougainville's independence."

The President emphasized the constitutional basis of Bougainville's independence aspirations, reaffirming that Part XIV of the National Constitution of Papua New Guinea provides the framework for Bougainville's right to determine its future.

"The National Constitution Part XIV provides the truth of my people's aspirations for independence through interpretation of provisions within. Today we stand tall here because we have been defending the national constitution which has given us our rights, the right to determine what type of government should be brought into the island of Bougainville."

The Melanesian Agreement formalises joint commitments by both governments, recognising the outcome of the 2019 Bougainville Referendum, in which 97.7% of Bougainvilleans voted for independence, and establishing an agreed process for bringing the Referendum results before the National Parliament through a sessional order.

The President also acknowledged the collaborative spirit that has guided the post-referendum process and acknowledged the leadership of Prime Minister Hon. James Marape for his government's efforts in progressing infrastructure development and dialogue since taking office.

In response, Prime Minister James Marape thanked the people of Bougainville for honouring the constitutional process, and made special mention of Bougainville's historical relationship with Papua New Guinea:

"I want to say thank you to President Toroama and the people of Bougainville for respecting the Constitution of our country. The Melanesian Agreement we signed today acknowledges our shared responsibility to walk this path together, with mutual respect and in the spirit of Melanesian brotherhood."

President Toroama concluded by expressing his confidence in the wisdom of Papua New Guinea's National Parliament and in the strength of Melanesian solidarity to guide this process responsibly.

"Because of our joint creativity, I believe Parliament will make a decision that suits the people of Bougainville," he affirmed. "There is wisdom in the Parliament, and I believe Prime Minister and your government, you have that wisdom to make that decision so that the people of Bougainville can see clearly that this is the right path we have followed."

Read more on the Bougainville Independence Mission progress on page 8 and 9.



Our voice, Our image, Our place

Editor's Desk

Bougainville is at a place where it has the unique opportunity to position itself rightly from the start. Our end goal is clear – we want political independence and ABG is establishing the foundations of this political vision.

On the political front, we have signed the Melanesian Agreement with the Government of Papua New Guinea, to craft and pursue a clear political pathway forward. ABG President His Excellency Ishmael Toroama, recognized the signing of the Melanesian Agreement as a signal of “*real progress on the Bougainville Peace Agreement and our own process towards Bougainville's independence.*”

What does this Melanesian Agreement mean for the all Bougainvilleans? It means that our independence is in sight – and we as a people must translate our political independence into reality. The Government is moving ahead with independence-readiness initiatives in legislation and policy development, the Constitution development and other key programs in the economic and infrastructure space.

We have passed our Land laws, unique to Bougainville, enabling us to better manage our most valuable resource – land - in a sustainable manner.

We have seen the establishment of the Bougainville Constituent Assembly - signaling the beginning of the next phase in Bougainville's transition from autonomy to independence.

In the first quarter we launched the Digital Democracy project – a digital system that allows our people to have direct access to their leaders in the Bougainville House of Representatives. This is a key pillar of democracy and a positive indication of independence-readiness where we ensure that our people can watch and participate in parliamentary sessions as they happen.

At this juncture, we call on all our people to continue to work with the government, continue to collaborate with your leaders at all levels – every day we give our best to build the Bougainville that we want for our future generations.

We hope you enjoy this edition and stay informed through our online platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn and WhatsApp for ABG).

The Bulletin Team

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About the *Bougainville Bulletin*

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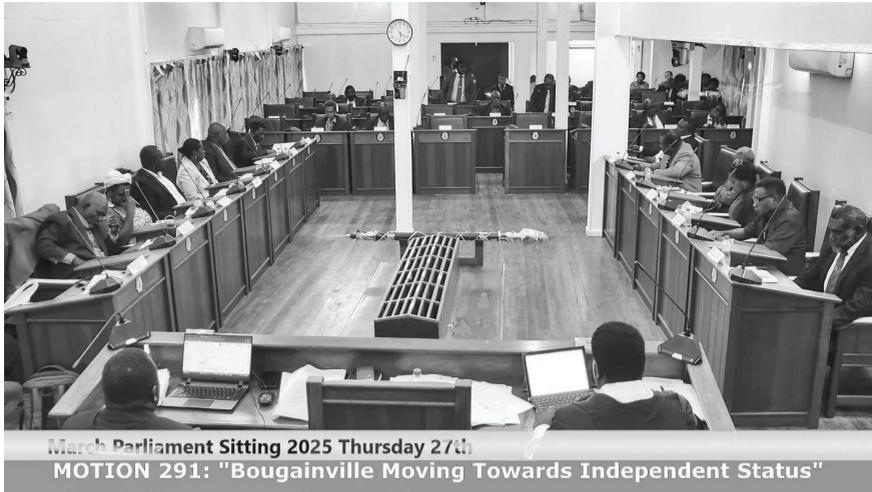
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Bougainville Women leaders mark International Women's Day



Bougainville Women in Public Service and Parliament gathered to commemorate the International Women's Day 2025. The program was held at the Hatokweesil Resource Center at Malasang, Buka.

BHOR converts to Bougainville Constituent Assembly



The Bougainville House of Representatives transitioned into the Bougainville Constituent Assembly on March 27, 2025.

The transition happened following the unanimous passing of the motion, signaling the beginning of the next phase in Bougainville's transition from autonomy to independence.

ABG President His Excellency Ishmael Toroama, in presenting the motion in parliament, described it as a profound moment, paying tribute to past, present and future leaders who have contributed to Bougainville's independence aspirations.

"This is a historical day in the history of our political journey to independence. This day marks the departure from being autonomous to independence status. This is the day our people have been waiting for - the Bougainville House of Representatives as the legitimate representative institution to materialize 97.7% vote for independence chosen through the constitutionally guaranteed referendum," President Toroama stated.

"Let us be clear today that this motion signals the political journey for Bougainville moving to independence status."

The conversion of the House into the Bougainville Constituent Assembly sets the stage for the deliberation and adoption of Bougainville's Independence Constitution, a critical step towards self-governance.

ABG Attorney General and Minister for Bougainville Independence Mission

Implementation, Hon Ezekiel Masatt, explained that this conversion was necessary to ensure the Assembly could effectively deal with matters relating to the new Independence Constitution for Bougainville.

The Independence Constitution is expected to be tabled later this year, but, today's passing of the motion marks the official beginning of this process.

Members of the Bougainville Constituent Assembly will be sworn in this morning before convening for their first meeting at 11am Bougainville Standard Time today. The session will include an induction on the rules and procedures of the Assembly and a briefing on their roles.

Membership of the Constituent Assembly will include:

- **All members of the HOR**
- **All four national MPs of Parliament**
- **Three regional head commissioners of the Bougainville Constitutional Planning Commission (BCPC)**
- **Three female commissioners of the BCPC**

President Toroama tables Annual Report: Progress, priorities and path to independence

President of the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG), His Excellency Hon. Ishmael Toroama, tabled the 2024 Annual Report of the Department of the President and Bougainville Executive Council (DPBEC) in Parliament earlier this year, highlighting key achievements, ongoing reforms, and the government's vision moving forward.

"This Report reflects our achievements and challenges as captured in the 2024 Annual Report of the Department of the President and the Bougainville Executive Council (DPBEC)," President Toroama said. "We have made significant progress in strengthening governance, improving service delivery, and laying the foundation for economic self-reliance. However, while we celebrate our achievements, we are not blind to our challenges."

Under his government's Six-Point Strategy, reforms in governance, infrastructure, and economic

development were among the standout achievements.

"My government has taken bold steps to transform governance and ensure efficiency across all departments. We have strengthened interdepartmental coordination, improved policy alignment with the Bougainville Integrated Strategic Development Plan, and implemented critical reforms," he stated.

On economic matters, the President emphasized the need to boost internal revenue and reduce dependency on national funding.

"We cannot continue to rely on the National Government for funding. That is why we are strengthening our taxation system, enhancing business opportunities, and ensuring that our resources benefit the people of Bougainville," he said.

He added that drafting of Bougainville-specific tax laws is underway, covering GST, personal income tax, and small business tax.

"I urge the newly appointed Chief Tax Collector to complete drafting of priority laws to be passed this year," he added.

President Toroama also reported progress on infrastructure and digital transformation initiatives.

"In 2024, we made strategic advancements in infrastructure projects and digital transformation to support economic growth and service delivery. Key projects include: Increasing Presence in Arawa program, Aropa Airport Upgrade, and the ABG Digitalization Program," he said.

He confirmed that in 2025, the government will focus on accelerating infrastructure development across key economic corridors in North, Central, and South Bougainville.

The President reiterated that political independence remains the government's highest priority and provided updates on the post-referendum process.

"I have just returned from the first Joint Consultation Moderation

meeting. I made it clear in that first joint meeting with the Moderator that political independence is my Government's priority and as President, I will uphold the decision of my people throughout these moderation consultations."

The Bougainville Independence Leaders Consultation Forum has set 1 September 2027 as the recommended date for independence, in line with the Wabag Roadmap.

"I made it clear to the National Government and the Moderator, that the ABG's position and intended outcome of the moderation process is to define the new relationship through an agreement on the independence package for Bougainville," he said.

The President also acknowledged progress on Bougainville's Independence Constitution and enhanced diplomatic engagement as major milestones, while noting the need to address challenges in public service capacity and economic diversification in 2025.



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY

MR KEARNNETH NANEI

Hello readers

I want to share with you some of the key political and governance milestones we have achieved together in recent months.

Let me first of all say that this year, 2025, is an election year for us in Bougainville. It is important that we the people recognize the power that we have to vote right leaders to lead and represent us in the next five years. This is a time to choose leaders who will stay true to the vision of independence and nation-building. Let us vote wisely, with the future of our children and grandchildren in mind.

The Melanesian Agreement:

One of the most significant achievements has been the signing of the Melanesian Agreement between the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) and the Government of Papua New Guinea. This historic agreement recognizes the central role of the National Parliament in ratifying

the independence result of our 2019 Referendum. Just as importantly, it commits both governments to the Melanesia Framework, which is the agreed pathway to Bougainville's independence.

This is more than just a legal or political document. It is recognition of the will of our people, who voted overwhelmingly for independence. Our government will continue to engage with the Government of Papua New Guinea, to progress key focus areas of the Melanesian Agreement.

The ABG through the Administration, continues to work closely with the Government of PNG to advance the drawdown of powers and functions. This is a central part of Bougainville's autonomy arrangements and a necessary step in preparing our institutions to take on the responsibilities of nationhood. While this process takes time, progress is being made across multiple sectors to ensure that powers are transferred in a way

that strengthens Bougainville's capacity to govern.

Several important Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed recently:

- **With the National Department of Agriculture and Livestock, the PNG Cocoa Board, and the PNG Forest Authority, giving Bougainville greater powers in agriculture, cocoa exports, and forestry. These agreements will empower Bougainville farmers and producers to grow, trade, and export with more independence.**
- **With the PNG Fire Service, leading to a fire truck being stationed in Buka and fire personnel trained to serve our communities.**

At this stage, we are also in discussions with PNG Immigration, to enter into an agreement or understanding to give us (ABG) greater

control over who comes into Bougainville and for what purpose. This is especially important for protecting our communities and ensuring that investment benefits our people.

A key priority for the ABG is urban planning. Too often, our towns have grown without clear planning, making it difficult for businesses to invest and thrive. Proper urban development will not only make our towns more livable but also attract private sector investment that creates jobs and opportunities for our young people.

Fellow citizens, Bougainville's journey is one of resilience, unity, and determination. The achievements I have shared are not the work of government alone—they are the collective effort of every Bougainvillean who believes in our dream of independence. Together, we are building the path to a new Bougainville, step by step.

**Kearnneth Nanei, LLB
Chief Secretary**



ABG team at the second joint moderation consultation meeting in Port Moresby in April.

ABG team at the second joint moderation consultation meeting in Port Moresby in April. (L-R) Hon. Amanda Masono - Minister for Public Service, Grand Chief Dr John Momis, Stephanie Elizah - Secretary for Department of Bougainville Independence Mission Implementation. (Back L-R) Hon. Willie Masiu - Member for Konnou Constituency, Hon. Thomas Pataaku - Minister for Education, James Tanis and Albert Punghau from the Bougainville Independence Mission Advisory Team.



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

HON. ISHMAEL TOROAMA*President and Minister responsible for Inter-Government Affairs,
Mining & Petroleum and Media & Communications*

Hello once again to all readers of the Bougainville Bulletin.

It is a privilege for me to share with you important reflections and updates on my Government's work as we press ahead on our journey toward political independence and sustainable development for our people.

Earlier this year, I addressed our Parliament and reaffirmed my Government's unwavering commitment to delivering on the core priorities of our Six Point Strategy. This strategy remains the foundation upon which we continue to build Bougainville's future — a future that belongs to us all.

One of the significant highlights I want to emphasize is the resolution passed by the Bougainville Independence Leaders Consultation Forum on the 11th of March this year. In that meeting, our leaders resolved to recommend 1st September 2027 as the date for Bougainville to take its rightful place as an independent, sovereign nation. This is consistent

with the Referendum Results Implementation Roadmap — commonly known as the Wabag Roadmap — which provides for the declaration of independence to take effect between 2025 and 2027.

As your President, I made it absolutely clear during the Joint Consultation Moderation meetings with the National Government and the Moderator, Sir Jerry Mateparae, that political independence remains the top priority for my Government. I will uphold the decision of our people and pursue it through peaceful and lawful means, staying true to the spirit of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and our Melanesian Way.

At the same time, I am pleased to report on the progress of my Government's development priorities. Under the Six Point Strategy, we have taken bold steps to strengthen governance, drive economic growth, and prepare Bougainville for self-reliance. The Department of the President and Bougainville Executive Council's 2024 Annual Report — which I recently tabled in Parliament

— outlines several key achievements that speak to this.

In the economic sector, we made significant strides through the Anchoring Bougainville Economy Program, strengthening our tax collection systems, signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Investment Promotion Authority, and boosting agricultural initiatives for cocoa and copra. Infrastructure development has also gained momentum, with ongoing projects such as the Aropa Airport Upgrade, with more projects expected to continue following the completion of the twenty-year Bougainville Transport Master Plan

Equally important is the work we are doing to ensure our governance structures and legal frameworks are in order for independence. The completion of the second draft of Bougainville's Independence Constitution, the passage of critical land and court legislations, and the engagement of an independent moderator to facilitate the ratification process are notable achievements that

reflect the political will of this Government.

Fellow Bougainvilleans, while we celebrate these milestones, we remain mindful of the challenges ahead. The strengthening of our public service, enhancing financial transparency, diversifying our economy, and maintaining unity of purpose must remain at the forefront of our collective efforts.

I want to remind us all that Bougainville's destiny is within reach. Let us remain resilient, work in partnership, and focus on the end goal. There is no room for complacency, and we must not be swayed by critics who doubt our resolve.

As your President, I assure you that my Government will not falter. Together, let us embrace bold leadership, decisive action, and a shared commitment to achieving Bougainville's long-awaited independence.

May God bless Bougainville.

**His Excellency
Ishmael Toroama, MHR
President**



ABG launches Civil Works Plant

The ABG has officially launched its own civil works plant for infrastructure development in Bougainville. ABG President His Excellency Ishmael Toroama emphasized that this equipment is for the people, ensuring transparent and accountable governance. ABG Minister for Technical Services, Hon. Joseph Mona, highlighted the Bougainville Infrastructure Masterplan, paving the way for road maintenance and new developments.

LACA signed between Taonita-Teop Landowners and Bougainville Minerals Investment

A Land Access and Compensation Agreement (LACA) was signed in March, between traditional landowners from Taonita-Teop areas covered by exploration licence EL08 and company Bougainville Minerals Investment Pty Ltd (BMI).

More than 250 landowners from 8 major landowning Clans were signatories to the LACA, following ABG's grant of EL08 to BMI in November 2024.

The Land Access and Compensation Agreement is a licence condition for EL08 and a requirement under the Bougainville Mining Act 2015; which requires the licence holder to sign the LACA with landowners before entering the land the subject of the exploration licence. It is essentially an agreement between customary landowners and the licence holder whereby customary landowners give consent to the licence holder to access their lands to carry out exploration activities within the term of the licence.

Present to officiate the EL08 LACA signing was the Chairwoman for Taonita Teop Community Government, Mrs Anna Satoriri who stated that it

was the Community Government who initially endorsed BMI back in 2021 and have since been working closely with the company to foster acceptance and support from the landowners and resources owners of the area.

She also mentioned that it has been a long time coming and is very excited at the development thus far. She urged the local landowners and the resource owners to take responsibility of their decisions in committing to sign and give consent for BMI Pty Ltd to access their land and carry out its work program in their areas.

Speaking on behalf of BMI, Mr Paul Ryan, company owner and Managing Director, congratulated the landowners on their decision to partner with BMI and progress work entailed under the the EL08 licence. Mr Ryan indicated that ground works were now underway for construction of office and accommodation for employees who will be based at the Yokomori Camp Site. He assured the landowners that BMI Limited is committed to provide as much spin off benefit as possible during their tenure by localising all of their activities in Taonita-Teop.



Mr. Joe Pais, former member of the House of Representative and Paramount Chief, spoke on the importance of the resource owners freeing up their lands to the ABG to progress important projects. He stated that it was high time that the resource owners and landowners work together with the ABG in freeing up our lands for important developmental projects to foster the economy of Bougainville. He further stated that the timeline for Independence is not far off and we have to be serious in helping our government.

Representing the ABG

Department of Mining and Petroleum Director for Regulatory Operations Ms. Lesley Gagesin, acknowledged the collaboration of all key stakeholders which has resulted in the successful signing of the EL08 LACA between the Taonita teop Landowners and BMI today. She urged the landowners to take ownership of the project and continue to collaborate and pledge their support to BMI Pty Ltd in order to see a positive outcome. She further clarifies to the landowners that, the EL08 licence is an exploration licence and not a mining licence.

NBC Bougainville launches new infrastructure

NBC Bougainville has officially launched its new infrastructure at Hutjena in March this year, marking a milestone in the station's development since its re-establishment after the Bougainville crisis. The upgrade includes a 50-meter transmission tower, a 2-kilowatt shortwave transmitter, a 2KVA generator, and a new vehicle, and was officially launched by National Minister for ICT Hon. Timothy Masiu. "The need to improve communication services is vital. These upgraded facilities will ensure we can reach our people with accurate and timely information," Minister Masiu said.



Bougainville Land Laws passed

The Bougainville House of Representatives has passed the Bougainville Land Bills into law, marking the most significant reform of land laws in Bougainville since the end of the crisis.

The new laws include; the Customary Land Act 2024, Bougainville Government Land Act 2024, Bougainville Land Registers Act 2024 and Bougainville Planning and Development Act 2024.

ABG Minister for Lands & Physical Planning, Hon. Junior Tumare, described the legislation as a transformative moment for Bougainville.

“Under the new laws, control of decision making over all land issues in Bougainville will be put into the hands of the Bougainville Government and the Bougainville people,” he announced.

Minister Tumare said the new laws are grounded in the ABG Land Policy, finalized in 2020, which outlined a comprehensive vision for land management in Bougainville safeguarding customary ownership and promoting sustainable development for current and future generations. He added that the bills are truly homegrown having gone through a lengthy process of consultation over 10 years, ensuring that it reflects Bougainville’s aspirations for land management and governance.

He emphasized that the land reforms aim to

empower Bougainville communities, restore customary indigenous rights and ensure that land governance reflects Bougainville’s unique context and aspirations.

“Together the four Bills will introduce a wholly new, bespoke system of land administration and land law, one that has been specifically designed for Bougainville known through the establishment of the land policy as home grown and done the Bougainville way.”

Key features of the new Bougainville Land Bills include the following:

- All land in Bougainville will be designated as customary land other than registered or acquired Government land.
- Land will not be able to be sold but may be leased under Government leases or registered leases over customary land.
- Land registered under national law in the name of Bougainville government – or the national government – will become registered Bougainville government land, including land currently subject to state leases.
- Estates in fee simple (known as free hold land) will cease to exist under the new laws. Former holders of freehold interests under national legislation will become holders of a historical

government lease under the new law.

- A Customary Land Board and Government Land Board will be established to protect interests and prevent corruption, and the Office of the Registrar of Land will be established to maintain Bougainville land registers.
- A new framework for planning control will also be introduced to regulate planning and development, with new provisions for enforcement and compliance.

“Together, the Bills realize the long-held dream of a Bougainville controlled legal framework for land in Bougainville, formalizing land governance, empowering communities, driving development and strengthen legal certainty,” Minister Tumare said.

Minister Tumare also highlighted the cultural and spiritual significance of land in Bougainville saying, “Land in Bougainville is not just a resource; it is the essence of our identity, culture and social structure, connecting us to our ancestors and fostering community cohesion.”

The Bougainville Land laws will now serve as the legal foundation for land management and governance in Bougainville, marking the cessation of PNG Land Laws in Bougainville going forward.

The Bougainville Land Laws can be viewed also on the ABG website.



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

ABG Lands Department roll out awareness on new Land Laws

The Department of Lands & Physical Planning, Environment, Conservation & Climate Change has commenced awareness on Bougainville’s newly passed land laws, aiming to inform communities of their rights and responsibilities under the new legal framework.

Secretary for Lands & Physical Planning, Lynette Baratai Pokas, confirmed that face-to-face community awareness began earlier this year, following the passing of four key land-related laws by the Bougainville House of Representatives in December 2024.

“On the 18th December 2024 the Bougainville House of Representatives (BHOR)

passed four laws as new laws and given rights protection to the people and government and how to create development in planning control areas in Bougainville,” Secretary Pokas said.

The awareness program, spearheaded by the department, aims to educate the public on how the new laws will impact their daily lives and community development.

“When all these laws work in collaboration with each other, they can create protection in issues concerning land in the region,” she added.

The department kicked off its outreach in South Bougainville, beginning in Buin. The initial sessions targeted ward members

and public servants, followed by visits to secondary schools in Buin, Tonu, and Bana.

“The first awareness was conducted in South Bougainville beginning in Buin, focusing on the targeted audience mainly reaching out to ward members and public servants in the area,” she said.

“We also conducted public awareness within Central Bougainville; Ioro ward, Arawa market, and in Buin, targeting mostly community government representatives in Central Bougainville; North Nasioi, South Nasioi, Arawa Secondary school, Tinputz Day high school, and Asitavi Girls high school,” said Pokas.

Secretary Pokas emphasized

that it is the Government’s responsibility to ensure communities are well-informed and fully understand how the new land laws will shape local planning, land protection, and development.

“We are committed to ensuring that communities across the region understand the laws and how these might affect their daily lives,” she said.

The department will continue rolling out awareness sessions in other parts of Bougainville in the coming months. Community members, schools, and local-level government officials are encouraged to take part in these sessions to better understand the changes in land governance.

Feature: Bougainville Stands Firm: Four Joint Consultations, One Clear Goal – Independence



Since March this year, the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) and the National Government of Papua New Guinea have engaged in a series of four Joint Moderation Consultations as part of the ongoing Bougainville Peace Agreement implementation process.

The moderation process was initiated to address ongoing disagreements between the two governments concerning sessional orders and related matters required to bring the results of the 2019 Bougainville Referendum to the National Parliament.

To mediate these sensitive and complex discussions, former New Zealand Governor-General Sir Jerry Mateparae was appointed as independent Moderator.

The consultations, held in both Port Moresby and Burnham, New Zealand, have delivered consistent progress. The fourth and final consultation, held at the end of June in Port Moresby, marked a significant turning point with the signing of the Melanesian Relationship Agreement, a political framework that will guide future relations between Bougainville and Papua New Guinea.

From the outset, President His Excellency Ishmael Toroama, made Bougainville's position clear. At the first joint moderation consultation in Port Moresby on 17 March 2025, President Toroama firmly stated, "Bougainville has done its part in this process. It is now your turn."

President Toroama reaffirmed that independence is a non-negotiable position for Bougainville, "My people have set 1st of September 2027 as the date for independence. As their President, I will uphold the decision of my people throughout these moderation consultation."

This sentiment continued into the second moderation



meeting held from 7–10 April 2025 in Port Moresby, where President Toroama once again articulated Bougainville's two non-negotiables:

- Independence as defined in the referendum ballot paper.
- Independence to commence on 1st September 2027.

"The referendum result is the record of a fact that 97.7 percent of the people voted for Independence. No parliament can disclaim the accuracy of a record," the President reminded the meeting.

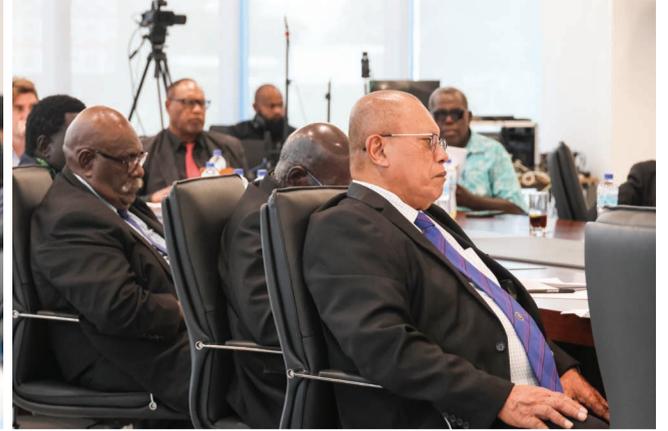
The third joint moderation consultation meeting held at Burnham Military Camp in

Christchurch from 6–15 June 2025, was a special milestone in the peace process. Burnham in New Zealand, is considered historic as it is the birthplace of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. It was in this meeting in the 1997 peace talks that the leaders of Bougainville invited the Government of PNG to join the peace process.

The consultations were conducted in a spirit of cultural respect, beginning with the exchange of betel nut — a customary Melanesian practice symbolizing peace and mutual understanding.

In this session, both governments engaged in open and candid discussions around the referendum result's implementation. ABG Attorney General Hon. Ezekiel Masatt emphasized the integrity of the existing peace process, while also acknowledging other potential pathways to independence.

"There is another pathway to gain independence, through the drafting of the constitution of the independent state of Bougainville and the other pathway is for international lobbying. Despite all these options, it is our preferred option to gain independence through how we



had agreed in the Bougainville Peace Agreement — the process we are in now. We must get independence by consensus of the national government,” Masatt stated.

From the Burnham consultations, the most notable outcome was the agreement reached in principle on a draft “Melanesian Partnership” framework — a political and relational arrangement that will guide the future relationship between an independent Bougainville and Papua New Guinea.

The Melanesian Relationship was officially signed off by the ABG President and PNG Prime Minister on June 26, 2025 in Port Moresby.

“The signing of this Melanesian Agreement today signals real progress on the Bougainville Peace Agreement and our process toward Bougainville’s independence,” President Toroama said at the signing ceremony.

The President emphasized the constitutional basis of Bougainville’s independence aspirations, reaffirming that Part XIV of the National Constitution of Papua New Guinea provides the framework for Bougainville’s right to determine its future.

The Melanesian Agreement formalises joint commitments by both governments, recognising the outcome of the 2019 Bougainville Referendum, in which 97.7% of Bougainvilleans voted for independence, and establishing an agreed process for bringing the Referendum results before the National Parliament through a sessional order.

The President also acknowledged the collaborative spirit that has guided the post-referendum process and



acknowledged the leadership of Prime Minister Hon. James Marape for his government’s efforts in progressing infrastructure development and dialogue since taking office.

President Toroama expressed confidence in the wisdom of Papua New Guinea’s National Parliament and in the strength of Melanesian solidarity to guide this process responsibly.

“Because of our joint creativity, I believe Parliament will make a decision that suits the people of Bougainville,” he affirmed. “There is wisdom in the Parliament, and I believe Prime Minister and your government, you have that wisdom to make that decision so that the people of Bougainville can see clearly that this is the right path we have followed.”

Bougainville stands firm on the foundation laid by the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the historic referendum result. In the words of President Toroama, “The people of Bougainville have spoken through a peaceful, credible, and internationally endorsed process. Our responsibility as leaders is to honour that decision, uphold their trust, and complete this journey.”

Tupela seismic stesen nau istap long Mt Bagana

Dipatmen blong Mining na Petroleum (DMP) long Autonomous Bougainville Gavman (ABG) wantaim Rabaul Volcanological Observatory (RVO) i pinis wok long putim wanpela nambatu seismic monitoring station long Maunten Bagana long Torokina District, South Bougainville.

Dispela wok i makim pinis bilong tupela monitoring station long Maunten Bagana — wanpela bikpela achievement long Bougainville long redim ol pipol long taim bilong ol volcanic bagarap o disasta.

Nupela station we ol i installim long Tsuriketo Hill bai wok wantaim pastaim station we ol i putim long Nukutsu Hill long Disemba 2024. Tupela station i kamap olsem wanpela network bilong monitoring system na bai givim real-time data long ol scientist long skelim ol muvmen bilong

maunten na givim kwik toksave taim nogut i gat bikpela samting inap kamap. Dispela bai helpim ol decision makim lo samting bilong emergency na disasta redines.

Secretary Peter Kolotein bilong Dipatmen bilong Mining na Petroleum, long givim dispela update, i tokaut olsem dispela monitoring system i bikpela samting tru long lukautim laip bilong ol pipol i stap klostu long Maunten Bagana. Em tu i tok tenkyu long olgeta lain na ol partner i helpim dispela wok, moa yet long RVO na Vuakovi

community, long wok bung na wok hat long dispela bikpela achievement, maski ol hevi long rot istap.

Dispela program i soim ABG i stap strong long lukautim gut sindaun na sefti bilong ol pipol i stap klostu long Maunten Bagana.

Ol i stap planim nau long expandim dispela seismic monitoring network long olgeta hap long Bougainville, long strongim moa lain bilong lukautim ol pipol long ol kain bagarap bilong volcano.

ABG imposes moratorium on foreign investment in reserved business sectors



The Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) has imposed a moratorium on new foreign investments in business sectors reserved exclusively for indigenous Bougainvilleans.

This directive, issued under the authority of the Minister for Commerce, Trade, Industry and Economic Development, Hon. Patrick Nisira, is in line with Bougainville Executive Council (BEC) Decision No. 18 of 2024 on the Bougainville Indigenous Business Protection List.

The moratorium includes the following key directives:

- **Implementation of BEC Decision No. 18 of 2024 on the Bougainville Indigenous Business Protection List;**

- **A moratorium on new foreign investment business activities reserved for local Bougainvilleans;**
- **A total ban on new foreign investment in sectors reserved for Bougainvilleans, including retailing and wholesaling, whether through joint ventures or standalone businesses; and**
- **A restriction on joint ventures and proposed investments through marriage, specifically involving Bougainvillean men and women with foreign spouses.**

Minister Nisira in announcing the moratorium, emphasized the need to protect the growth of indigenous Bougainville businesses, particularly in the

small and medium enterprise (SME) sector.

“This is an interim regulatory measure to safeguard the interests of indigenous Bougainvilleans and ensure they take ownership of their economic destiny,” Nisira said. “We have seen in other parts of the country how foreign businesses have taken over reserved sectors, pushing locals into informal markets such as betelnut and alcohol sales. This approach will allow Bougainvilleans to fully participate in and benefit from these business opportunities.”

He reiterated that his Ministry and Department remains committed to enforcing policies that support economic sector growth while protecting the rights of indigenous Bougainvilleans in business.

The Minister however reassured that the moratorium does not hinder Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in unrestricted sectors and welcomed investors to explore opportunities in other industries within Bougainville.

“We welcome foreign businesses to invest in areas not included in the reserved list. This means the moratorium does not impede Foreign Direct Investment in unrestricted sectors. Therefore, on behalf of the Toroama-Nisira government, I welcome investors to invest in Bougainville.”

For further information or clarification on the Bougainville Indigenous Business Protection List, investors and stakeholders are advised to contact the Department of Commerce & Trade in Buka.

OBEC clarifies confusion on Bougainville Constituent Assembly and the conduct of the 2025 ABG General Elections

Bougainville Electoral Commissioner, Desmond Tsianai has announced to the public that the creation of the Bougainville Constituent Assembly by the ABG in March this year will not affect the 2025 Bougainville General Elections.

“I understand that many Bougainvilleans have been questioning the formation of the Constituent Assembly in regards to the 5th ABG Elections but I want to assure all Bougainvilleans again that the move made by our Government to form the Constituent Assembly will not have an effect or impact on the conduct of the Elections,” said Commissioner Tsianai.

Commissioner Tsianai said the 2025 ABG Elections will be conducted under current laws, the current Constitution and the current Elections Act as stipulated under Section 107 of the Bougainville Constitution.

Commissioner Tsianai also added that the allocation of election funds through the 2025 ABG Budget also indicates the Government’s commitment in having the elections conducted

as per the legislative framework.

“If funding has been allocated by the ABG to conduct the elections, this clearly portrays that our Government is committed in having the elections conducted as per the election schedule and by the set laws.”

“Let me once again remind the people of Bougainville that the formation of the Bougainville Constituent Assembly will not affect the conduct of the elections,” said Commissioner Tsianai.

Meanwhile, Commissioner Tsianai also clarified the reasons behind moving the election dates from March and June in 2010, 2015 and in 2020 to September in 2025.

“As you all might be well aware of, the 2010 and the 2015 ABG Elections were conducted between March to June. And

this year, the elections will be delivered between July and September which is indeed not consistent with past ABG Election cycles.”

“And for those of you who may be wondering as to why the dates are fixed between July and September, I’d like to take you back to the 2020 ABG Elections where we had the Covid-19 pandemic which stirred the National Government to issue a nationwide travel ban which then forced delays in the election schedule,” said Commissioner Tsianai.

Commissioner Tsianai added that on the 22nd of April in 2020, the Bougainville House of Representatives (BHOR) passed a new section in the Bougainville Emergency Act (Section 15-a) that allowed for extension in the terms in office for the ABG President, the BHOR Speaker

and the members of the BHOR.

He said the initial election schedule for the 2020 ABG Elections was consistent to past elections however, the Covid-19 pandemic and the extensions for the BHOR forced the elections to be delayed till the Writs were returned in September 24, 2020.

“As stipulated in Section 107, 1 (b) - (i) of the Bougainville Constitution, the 2025 ABG Elections will be conducted within a period of three months before the fifth anniversary of the day fixed for the return of the Writs for the previous General Elections.”

“Therefore, if the 2020 ABG Election Writs were returned to the BHOR Speaker on September 24, 2020, by law we shall have the 2025 ABG Elections delivered before the 24th of September 2025,” said Commissioner Tsianai.



ABG Secretary for Treasury & Finance Mr Joshua Tauko and Vice President of FreeBalance, Mr Aldo Sagastume at the contract signing.

ABG signs major ICT contract with FreeBalance to modernize Public Financial Management

Global Sales Director for Asia and Pacific of FreeBalance Inc.

The signing was witnessed by Mr. Joshua Tauko, Secretary for Treasury and Finance, Ms. Fiona Levi, Acting Secretary for Technical Services, and Mr. Aldo Sagastume, Vice President for Public Finance Management of FreeBalance.

The procurement of the FreeBalance Accountability Suite was endorsed by the Bougainville Executive Council (BEC) in March 2025 and later granted a Certificate of Compliance (COC) by the National Department of Information and Communication Technology in June this year, confirming that the system meets national digital government standards.

The total value of the contract is USD4.19million, spread across a three-year period, and includes:

- System installation and implementation;
- Capacity building through the

FreeBalance Academy;

- One year of Hypercare support; and
- Participation in the FreeBalance Lead, Assist, and Guide (FLAG) Program.

The project will officially commence in August 2025, and is a key deliverable under the ABG’s financial reform agenda to decentralize services and improve financial controls at all levels of government.

“This marks the beginning of a transformational journey in Bougainville’s financial management architecture,” said Chief Secretary Mr. Keanearth Nanei. “It is not a destination but a gateway to more transparent, efficient, and accountable government.”

FreeBalance reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Bougainville’s digital transformation, with the implementation to be undertaken through both onsite and remote support, ensuring uninterrupted progress regardless of travel or operational constraints.

The Autonomous Bougainville Government, through the Department of Treasury and Finance, is modernizing its public finance systems, with a new contract signed with FreeBalance Inc. to implement a financial management platform aimed at improving transparency, accountability, and service delivery.

The contract was formally signed in July by Mr. Keanearth Nanei, Chief Secretary of the Bougainville Public Service and Chairman of the Bougainville Supply and Tenders Board, and Mr. Ferdinand Gamboa,

ABG launches Digital Democracy project

The Autonomous Bougainville Government has taken a significant step toward greater transparency and public engagement with the launch of the Digital Democracy Project in March this year - an initiative aimed at strengthening the connection between the government and its people.

Speaking at the launch, President H.E. Ishmael Toroama emphasized that the project is more than just a technological advancement—it is a commitment to open governance and accountability.

“The launch of the Bougainville Digital Democracy Project is not just about embracing technology; it is about empowering our citizens, strengthening accountability, and reinforcing the foundations of an independent Bougainville,” said President Toroama.

A key feature of the project is the live streaming of all parliamentary sessions of the Bougainville House of Representatives, ensuring that citizens have direct access to legislative discussions and decisions.

“The Bougainville House of Representatives is the People’s House, and now every citizen will have the opportunity to see and hear firsthand the discussions that shape our future. There will be no hidden agendas—our governance will be open for all to see. This is democracy in action,” the President added.

The Speaker of the Bougainville House of Representatives, Hon. Simon Pentanu, welcomed the initiative, recognizing the joint efforts of the Department of the President & BEC and the Parliamentary Services in bringing the project to fruition.

“As Speaker, I serve as the head of the Bougainville House of Representatives, which is the legislative body representing our

people. It is my duty to ensure that parliamentary proceedings are conducted fairly, transparently, and in accordance with the will of the people of Bougainville,” he stated.

“By live-streaming parliamentary sessions, we are ensuring that every Bougainvillean—whether in urban centers or remote communities—can witness the discussions and decisions that affect their lives. This builds trust between the government and the people, making governance more inclusive and participatory,” he said.

The Digital Democracy Project aligns with Bougainville’s broader aspirations for independence by demonstrating readiness

in governance, economic management, and social development.

President Toroama, who is also Minister responsible for Media and Communications, commended the Department of the President & BEC, the Media and Communications Directorate, and the Parliamentary Services ICT Unit for their dedication in making the project a reality.

“This is your platform, your voice, your democracy,” he said, calling on the people of Bougainville to actively engage with the new initiative.

The Parliament Sessions can be accessed through the Bougainville Parliament YouTube channel.

Peter Topura sworn in as new Clerk of the Bougainville Parliament



Mr. Peter Topura has been officially sworn in as the new Clerk of the Bougainville House of Representatives, following his appointment by the Bougainville Senior Appointments Committee. After 16 years as Deputy Clerk, Mr. Topura steps into the role during a pivotal time in Bougainville’s political journey, vowing to uphold the institution’s vital role in the region’s path towards independence.

Department of Community Development achieves major milestones in 2024

The Department of Community Development successfully launched three key policies in 2024, marking significant progress in governance and social development. These include the Bougainville Gender Equality, Women Empowerment, and Peace & Security Policy, the ABG Civil Society Partnership Policy, and the Bougainville Youth Policy.

In addition, the department advanced work on four critical pieces of legislation: the Bougainville Family Law, the Bougainville Civil Registry Law, the Bougainville Censorship Law, and the Bougainville Integrated Community Development Law.

ABG Minister for Community Development, Morris Opeti, stated, "Of these 4 proposed laws, the Bougainville Family Law is currently in the drafting process, with work progressing through required legal procedures." The Family Law has been prioritized due to the recent establishment of the Family and Welfare Services unit under the department, which will oversee its implementation.

In 2024, the Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with national agencies, including the National Ministry and Department of Community Development, the Office of Censorship, the National Youth Development Authority, and others.

"The MoU provides legislative and policy directives under specific mandates of each participating agency to ensure their roles identified in the joint work plan are fully implemented," Minister Opeti explained. A key focus for 2025 will be capacity building and institutional strengthening to achieve the MoU's objectives.

Under its gender equality mandate, the department, with support from the ABG Department of Law and Justice, compiled a draft report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

"ABG's draft CEDAW report notes the current processes it is taking in its journey towards self-determination and the extent to which women and girls have been involved

in the overall process," Minister Opeti added.

In sports development, the department facilitated a friendly soccer match in the Solomon Islands, featuring a team from Central Bougainville. "This event provided a significant opportunity for Bougainville athletes to display their talents and build relationships with athletes from Solomon Islands and Vanuatu," the Minister reported.

Youth development initiatives, such as the Bougainville Voice X-Plosion program, also saw success. "The event focuses on harnessing the creative talents of young Bougainvilleans through music to advocate for social cohesion, peace, and unity within independence-ready frameworks." The songs produced will be released under Wantok Musik in Australia, promoting Bougainvillean artists across the Pacific.

With policy launches, legislative progress, and strengthened partnerships, the Department of Community Development remains committed to enhancing inclusive growth and strengthening empowerment across Bougainville in 2025.

Health Infrastructure and Services progress despite challenges

The Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) is making significant progress in upgrading health infrastructure across the region, despite facing staffing and resource challenges. ABG Minister for Health Hon. Dennis Lokonai, provided a comprehensive update to parliament in March this year, giving an overview of the department's performance in 2024.

New Health Facilities Underway

Construction of the Level 3 Kunua District Health Center, which began in July 2024, is advancing well. As of March, the outpatient building, surgical ward, and maternity ward are nearing completion, along with eight of the 18 staff houses. The facility is expected to be fully operational by the end of this year.

Meanwhile, Phase 1 of the Level 4 Buin District Hospital has commenced following its groundbreaking in February. Additionally, the Bougainville Specialist Referral Hospital in Arawa is in the design phase, with construction set to begin in June.

Improvements at Buka Hospital are also ongoing, focusing on equipment procurement and infrastructure refurbishment to meet urgent needs.

Government Committed to Health Access

ABG Minister for Health Hon. Dennis Lokonai, emphasized the government's dedication to expanding healthcare access.

"We are rehabilitating and rebuilding our health facilities so that the population can have access to health services. This rebuild focuses on rural health facilities, supporting health training schools and hospital facilities in the three regions."

"We are doing our very best to bring health services closer to our people by initiating these infrastructure projects," he added.

Staffing and Pay Challenges

Despite progress, staffing shortages remain a critical issue. Over the past three years, 60 health workers have retired, with another 37 set to retire this year.

"We have a duty to ensure that we have health workers employed and deployed to the health facilities. We are not able to recruit as there are health workers working without pay, and we must address their pay issues first," the Minister stated.

In February, the Health Department submitted a list of unpaid workers to the Department of Personnel Management and Administrative Services (DPMAS) for short-term contracts. Most have now received salaries, and deployment verification is underway.

Expanding Health Programs

The department is prioritizing immunization, maternal care, family planning, and medical supplies. A new Health Promotion Initiative launched in April 2024 is tackling non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including the 10,000 Toes screening program, supported by ABG and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Efforts are also underway to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) under a 2024-2028 strategy, developed with EU

support. A feasibility assessment for Arawa's water supply has been completed, while consultations for a potential Suir-to-Buka water project are ongoing.

Reducing Maternal Mortality

The Emergency Management of Obstetric Care (EMOC) program is training health workers to handle birth complications. A pilot antenatal program at Kekesu Health Center aims to ensure safe deliveries.

"Our aim is to reduce maternal deaths to zero in the next two years," Minister Lokonai said.

Improved Health Ranking

Bougainville has risen to 6th place in national health performance rankings, up from 13th in 2023. Despite challenges, the Health Department remains committed to strengthening services and workforce capacity.

"It is challenging to maintain quality health services with limited resources, but we are progressing efforts to build a formidable health workforce," the Minister affirmed.

Public Service transformation progress

The Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) is making significant progress in its Public Service transformation, with a focus on efficiency, accountability, and independence readiness, according to ABG Minister for Public Service, Hon. Amanda Masono.

The reforms are anchored on four key pillars: structural reviews aligned with the Bougainville Integrated Strategic Development Plan (BISDP), a value-based public service framework, digital government initiatives under *Smart ABG*, and a capacity-building strategy to prepare for an independent Bougainville.

2024 Achievements and 2025 Priorities

In 2024, the Public Service Retirement Program saw 37 public servants retire, with final entitlements fully paid. This year, the Department aims to retire an additional 62 personnel who have reached retirement age.

“The department continues to revitalize the Public Service by ensuring that the aging public servants are retired and replaced as we move towards independence,” Minister

Masono stated.

Progress has also been made on the long-awaited *Public Service Bill*, with drafting instructions now with the legal team. “This will provide a strong legal foundation for an efficient and accountable public service,” she added.

A five-year Learning and Development Plan (2024-2029) has been introduced to enhance workforce skills, alongside a new *Public Service Induction Program* designed to instill governance principles and accountability.

“An effective Public Service Induction Program is essential to instilling good governance principles, work ethics, and accountability in new and existing public servants,” Minister Masono emphasized. “This program is homegrown, developed in alignment with Bougainville’s unique governance structure, cultural context, and strategic aspirations for independence-readiness.”

Once the *Public Service Bill* is passed and *General Orders* are established, the induction program will be formally certified under the *Bougainville Public Service Learning and*

Development Framework.

Strategic Priorities for 2025

This year’s key priorities include:

- Passing the *Public Service Bill*
- Implementing the *Induction Training Program*
- Workforce planning and capacity building
- Rolling out a *biometric system* for improved HR management
- Strengthening governance and accountability measures

“Bougainville’s future rests on a professional and effective public service that is ready for independence,” Minister Masono affirmed. “The reforms we are undertaking are not merely administrative changes; they are a fundamental reorganization to position Bougainville for success.”

The ABG remains committed to building a transparent, capable, and independent-ready public service as Bougainville progresses toward its future.

Bougainville Law and Justice sector outreach in Atolls



The Bougainville Law and Justice Sector has successfully delivered vital services to remote communities in the Atolls through a Justice Outreach Program and coronial court circuit in May this year.

Senior Provincial Magistrate, Mr. Bruce Tasikul, led the court circuit, which included a coronial inquest in Caterets Island and the handling of outstanding court matters at Fead Island.

The program is part of the Bougainville Law and Justice Sector’s ongoing commitment to improving access to justice services for all Bougainvilleans, particularly in remote and isolated communities.

The outreach team consisted of 26 representatives drawn from the Department of Justice and Legal Services, including Village Court and Local Level Court Magistrates, the Department of Education, a Mental Health Nurse from the Department of Health, a Church representative, Police, a Police Prosecutor assisting the Coroner, New Zealand Police, the Department of Community Development and a serving Magistrate.

The program was delivered over five days, with two days scheduled for Fead (Nuguria Island and Bussuria) and three days at Caterets (Han, Yolosa and Yesila Islands). Arrangements

have been made for participants from Hauma, Fuel, and Iagain to travel to Caterets to take part in awareness and consultation sessions.

Recognizing the limited access to law and justice services in Bougainville’s atoll communities compared to those on the main island, this outreach program provided awareness on available services and offer direct service delivery. Agencies in the sector brought relevant forms and documents to assist with civil filings, legal support, and to engage with community members.

The outreach also featured consultation sessions on a range of community by-laws, including legislation relating to Sorcery Accusation-Related Violence (SARV), Community Government by-laws, the Whistleblowers Act, and the Bougainville Family (Protection and Welfare) Law.

An additional awareness session was conducted on the recently enacted Bougainville Community Courts Act and

the Bougainville Courts Act to update communities on their implementation and implications for local governance.

Previously known as Mobile Clinics, the Justice Outreach Program continues to serve as an important platform for bringing government services and information directly to isolated populations.

By combining awareness sessions, consultations, service delivery, and court proceedings within a single program, the initiative ensures that communities are informed and empowered to access legal and social services.

The program is supported by the Australia-Pacific Partnerships for Law and Justice (APLJ), which is providing logistical support, technical assistance.

The Bougainville Law and Justice Sector remains committed to upholding equitable access to justice for all Bougainvilleans and strengthening governance and law enforcement in even the most remote parts of the region.

ABG welcomes Aropa Airport redevelopment



The Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) has officially welcomed the commencement of a major redevelopment project for Aropa Airport - a significant step toward improving Bougainville's infrastructure and connectivity.

Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony in May this year, Chief Secretary Mr. Kearne Nanei said the project marks a major milestone for Bougainville's recovery and redevelopment journey since the reopening of the airport in 2014.

"This is a major investment from the National Government, donor partners, and national agencies to rebuild Bougainville's transport institutions and facilities," Mr. Nanei said.

He reaffirmed ABG's commitment to work alongside the NAC, National Government, ADB, and local landowners to ensure the project's successful delivery.

Mr. Nanei also appealed for the National Government and the National Minister for Civil Aviation to consider upgrading Aropa to an international airport to enhance regional connectivity with neighboring countries like the Solomon Islands, Australia, and Nauru.

"Bougainvilleans are already trading and traveling to the



Solomon Islands, and improving Aropa's status would strengthen these ties while ensuring travels are regulated and monitored," he added.

ABG President Hon. Ishmael Toroama shared similar sentiments, thanking the National Government, NAC and ADB for their support for the project and called on Bougainvilleans to protect public infrastructure projects.

"Landowners and the people of Bougainville must work with the government to protect such developments. These projects pave the way for economic

growth and our collective vision for independence," President Toroama stated.

Hereminded Bougainvilleans that ABG was into its 19th year since its formation and called on the people to protect such projects delivered by the government, to change their attitudes, work the land and not wait for handouts.

Prime Minister Hon. James Marape, who officiated the groundbreaking, reaffirmed the National Government's commitment to supporting Bougainville through high-impact projects while

deliberations are still ongoing on Bougainville's political future.

The groundbreaking ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister Hon James Marape, who was accompanied by the National Minister for Aviation Hon Wake Goi, Governor for NCD Hon Powes Parkop, National Minister for Internal Security and Regional Member for Bougainville Hon Peter Tsiamalili and dignitaries from the National Government, ADB, CRCG Ltd and NAC.

The National Airports Corporation (NAC), in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of Papua New Guinea, will upgrade and modernize Aropa Airport's infrastructure to improve air connectivity and support economic growth in the region.

The project will include:

- Aircraft pavement repair and strengthening
- Bituminous chip seal resurfacing
- Construction of a new terminal building and carpark facilities
- Installation of a new Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI)
- Upgrades to airport power, water supply, sewerage systems, and electrical systems

The redevelopment contract, valued at K58.20 million, was awarded to China Railway Construction Group Co. Ltd (CRCG Ltd) on October 9, 2024, with project completion anticipated by 2027.

The project is one of five major airports being redeveloped under CADIP II, including Gurney Airport (Milne Bay), Kiunga Airport (Western Province), Hoskins (West New Britain), and Wewak (East Sepik).



Bougainville Boxing Team attend tournament in Solomon Islands



The Bougainville Amateur Boxing Association (BABA) led a delegation of 10 young boxers to participate in a friendly boxing tournament in the Solomon Islands in June.

The team, comprising nine male and one female fighter, was accompanied by two BABA officials—referees and judges—alongside coaches Vincent Kokofi and Martin Bana, and trainer and ABG Sports Director Fabian Kotsin.

This trip was made possible through the support of the Autonomous Bougainville Government, facilitated by the Department of Community Development.

BABA Caretaker President Llane Munau extended her gratitude to the department and its Secretary, Medley Koito, for

their assistance to the Team.

The association held the Bougainville fighting tournament at Hangers Tavern in Arawa to make the selection on the home team traveling to Solomon Islands.

“On the first fight on 8th of July, seven players took part in the fight, in which four fighters won and three lost.

“That was a big surprise for us because they fought against a strong Solomon Islands team who had more exposure to tournaments outside of the province,” added Munau.

She says the team did not expect such a good outcome from the fights.

“It shows the power our people love boxing and it was exciting to have the Secretary Mr Koito be with the team in Honiara,” added

Munau.

Munau also added that the team was recognised to participate in the Solomon Islands as a region and the team being able to showcase Bougainville’s pride by singing the Bougainville Anthem as well.

“The crowds had filled the multipurpose hall to more than two thousand people to watch the event.

“They cheered on for us and the welcome was felt among the crowds.

“On the second night of the fight two Nagovis fighters took the stage to win both fights; the first by a point and later by a knockout,” she said.

The team was also impressed with the world-class sporting facilities in Honiara, built by the Government of China in

preparation for the South Pacific Games. “Many players were surprised to see the gyms and stadiums,” she added.

Munau praised the dedication of coaches Kokofi and Bana for assembling and training a strong team within a short two-and-a-half-week camp. “All four titles were won by our team, and I was surprised because the players had only camped for two and a half weeks leading up to the tournament,” she said.

As they now prepare for the upcoming PNG National Titles in Lae this July, the team is hopeful despite limited access to proper sporting equipment.

“Mentally and physically, the players are strong. The success of this trip has sparked new interest in boxing among youth back home,” Munau said.