



## Office of the President

MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS & MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS



The formation of the Fourth Bougainville House of Representatives exactly a year ago amplify change that is sweeping across Bougainville. More than fifty percent of the old house did not return and new members were elected into the BHOR. The introduction of new leaders into Bougainville politics is an indication of the intellectual drive of the new generation of leaders who have taken up the mantle to lead Bougainville to independence.

The fourth house is unique in the sense that there is a younger generation of leaders who have a more progressive perspective on how Bougainville will attain its political aspirations. For the first time a mother and son duo as well as a father and daughter duo were elected into parliament. For the first time also two women were made members of cabinet in the Bougainville Executive Council.

### FIRST YEAR ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE TOROAMA GOVERNMENT | 2020 - 2021



Upon assuming the Presidency, President Torosua vowed to introduce socioeconomic and political reforms that would promote development and put Bougainville on the path to political independence. He introduced a Six Point Strategy at the inauguration of the Fourth House last year as the guiding principle to achieving these reforms.

#### The Strategy focuses on;

1. **Political control of Bougainville's Destiny which is independence,**
2. **Economic Growth and Control,**
3. **Administrative Control,**
4. **Mobilizing Private Sector & Civil Society,**
5. **Long Term Vision & Planning and**
6. **International Relations.**

In the first one hundred days, President Torosua focused on establishing the government through the formation of the Bougainville Executive Council and the appointment of the 14 ministers of cabinet. During

this time span the new government progressively assessed its strengths and weaknesses in its respective government departments and agencies. This resulted in the Torosua Government realigning its efforts to build its governance, public service and social sector capacities.

The foremost priority of the ABG is securing Political Independence for Bougainville under the President's Six Point Strategy. This requires a holistic approach to achieving progress on Bougainville through continued negotiations with the National Government, promoting fiscal self-reliance, improving development infrastructure and improving law and order.

In the last twelve months the ABG has achieved several key milestones in the political, administrative and socioeconomic sectors. These achievements are indicators of the government's commitment to Bougainville's Independence Ready Mission initiative.



## POLITICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

On the political front the ABG has achieved much success with President Toroama and Prime Minister Hon. James Marape commencing the first Post Referendum Joint Consultations in March of this year. President Toroama formally presented Bougainville's official position on Independence to the National Government during the consultations. The second Joint Consultations in July in Enga Province approved the timeline for Bougainville's political settlement that must not happen before 2025 and no later than 2027.

These two milestones are the culmination of other preparatory activities that the government has undertaken and completed in the last twelve months.

These are;

- ***Signing of the Joint Communique***
- ***Signing of the Sharp Memorial Agreement***

*(dispensation of drawdown requirements)*

- ***Constituency Independence Readiness Mission initiative (33 Constituencies Launched)***
- ***Progression of outstanding JSB Agendas (Economical and Autonomous Arrangements)***
- ***Commencement of the Joint Consultations.***
- ***Continuation of drawdown of powers and functions.***

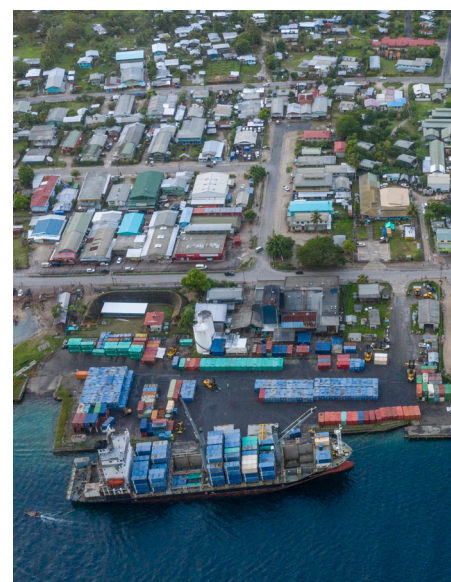
The aforementioned, are activities that the ABG has achieved in the past year as part of its journey independence. The government will continue to progress these agendas through the JCB and JSB Meetings as Bougainville transitions from an autonomous region into an independent state.

Another momentous

political achievement is the launching of the Bougainville Independence Mission for all 33 constituencies and the six regional seats for Women and Ex-Combatants. The initiative calls upon each constituency member to provide leadership to ensure that their constituency is independence ready through by progressing socioeconomic development in their respective constituencies. Under this initiative the ABG government institutions will also be required to produce results that render them independence ready.

It is also worthy to note that this government commemorated the 20th Anniversary of the Bougainville Peace Agreement on August 30th of this year. Themed Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Bougainville Peace Agreement as the Cornerstone of our Independence Mission encapsulates the vision of the Toroama Government to deliver independence for Bougainville.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SECTOR ACHIEVEMENTS





The last twelve months has seen the Bougainville economic sector undergo reforms to improve and expand its capacity. These reforms are part of the Toroama Government's Six Point Strategy's second point that stresses on Economic Growth and Control. These reforms are aimed at creating a self-sustaining economy through the development of Bougainville's resources and encourage foreign investments.

The Toroama Government established the Bougainville Strategic Planning and Research Secretariat which has undertaken this new direction as its first order of business. The Secretariat has created a new pragmatic macroeconomic model under the Bougainville Blue Print to facilitate these reforms. This model will drive state owned enterprises and the private sector to generate internal revenue through exports and foreign investments. It will create development through employment and infrastructural development.

This model also requires interagency cooperation within the ABG. The Department of Economic Development is currently collaborating with the Department of Primary Industries and the Department of Mineral Energy Resources to look at feasible means for economic growth. Under this initiative the government has already identified and begun work on several high impact economic development projects.

### These projects are;

- **Bana Special Economic Zone**
- **Tonolei Integrated Agriculture Project Manetai Limestone Project.**
- **Small Scale Mining Survey (study to formalize the sector for internal revenue generation)**

The financial projections from these projects have shown great promise. Once these projects are operational they will be more than sufficient to fund the government's annual budget.

The ABG has also sought to develop its fiscal capacity in the **"Low-Hanging Fruits"** economic sectors as a strategy to generating steady revenue for Bougainville at a faster pace. The Bougainville Planning Secretariat has already identified five key areas; Gold Refinery, Water, Beche-de-mer Farming, Seaweed Farming; export Rice Farming and Poultry apart from cash crops such as cocoa and vanilla etc... These projects will be underway in the next twelve months.

The Toroama Government has declared Bougainville **Open for Business** to attract foreign investments into the region. With Bougainville's enormous potential for economic development through foreign investments the open invitation has been made to credible investors who are ready to invest in Bougainville in the tourism,

fisheries, agriculture, forestry and mining sectors.

The government has met with several foreign and domestic investors who have shown a keen interest to invest on Bougainville in the, mineral and agriculture sectors. Unlike the previous government, this government will not politicize these investments but let the Bougainville Inward Investment Act 2018 and the responsible government agencies govern and regulate all foreign investments on Bougainville.

Another bold and insightful action by the Toroama Government was the allocation of K20 million from the 2021 Supplementary Budget to be used to purchase treasury bills from the Bank of PNG. This will accumulate revenue on an annual basis to fund other economic activities on Bougainville.

### PUBLIC SERVICE AND SOCIAL SECTOR



In September 2020, the Toroama Government inherited an administration that was in disarray and lacked clarity and vision. It had no clear direction on how it would implement the next stage of Bougainville's political journey after the 2019 Referendum. The Bougainville



Public Service despite being small and seemingly easy to manage was unstable and incapacitated to deliver the government's political vision on independence for Bougainville.

Under Administrative Control of the Six Point Strategy, the Toroama Government has established the Bougainville Independence Mission Advisory Team (BIMAT) which is playing a leading role by providing an advisory role in the consultations with PNG and in the implementation of the Wabag Joint Road Map. The ABG is now consolidated its efforts in reprioritizing the focus of the Bougainville Administration through its respective departments. Emphasis now will be on Independence Readiness oriented programs within the public service and how it administers its service delivery mechanism to the people.

Service delivery through the health, education and infrastructure development are still focal points of development in the ABG. However, government departments are now realigning their priorities to capture the essence of the Six Point Strategy as part of



the Independence Readiness initiative.

Within the last twelve months several departments have begun work on development programs that articulate the Six Point Strategy and the independence ready initiative.

These are;

- **Department of Economic Services – Developing high impact projects and formulating macroeconomic plan.**

- **Department of Law and Justice – Shaping Bougainville Justice Sector Program expansion of the infrastructure and human resource capacity programs in Central and South Bougainville (Kuveria Penitentiary MOU), increase of police personnel by 2022.**

- **Department of Personnel Management – Audit of Public Service and Formulation of Bougainville Public Service General Orders.**

- **Department of Technical Services – Expansion of transport sector programs (sealing and upgrades), introduction of electricity project under a Bougainville utilities company.**

- **Department of Health – Expansion of programs and continued management of COVID 19 Pandemic.**

- **Department of Education – Introduction of self-sustaining initiatives for institutions through SME's, MOU Signing with Vudal University.**

- **Department of Lands – Drawdown of Lands Powers and Functions from National Government and formation of the Bougainville Lands Board.**

- **Drawdown of Public Service Powers.**

- **Environmental Impact Assessment of Panguna Mine by Rio Tinto and Bougainville Copper Limited.**



At the political level, government ministries have taken the stance in the creation of innovative means that provide the vision to drive Bougainville's agenda through their responsible government departments. The establishment of BIMAT is a case in point. Much of the success of these achievements can be attributed to the Ministerial offices' effective partnerships with their departments on these programs.



## CHALLENGES

Every government has its set of challenges and especially so in the post conflict context of Bougainville.

**Some of the key challenges are perennial in nature such as;**

- ▶ ***Lack of fiscal capacity***
- ▶ ***Failures by both governments to implement JSB Resolutions***
- ▶ ***Law and order issues***
- ▶ ***Corruption issues***
- ▶ ***Improving infrastructural development***
- ▶ ***Loss of two Members of the House of Representatives & Members of BEC (Atolls and Nissan)***

Work at both the legislation, policy and program levels has already started in addressing these areas and will continue to be the priority focus from here on.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, the achievements by the Toroama Government's first year in office has been the result of reevaluating the ABG's priorities and formulating a plan to induce progress in all development sectors. Under President Toroama's Six Point Strategy, the government has been able to start implementing these plans through a cohesive coordinating mechanism that is progressing Bougainville's political agenda on independence, stimulation of economic growth and improve the efficiency of the Bougainville Public Service delivery mechanism. Many of the government's achievements are presently tangible development that have gone beyond the planning stages and will be rolled out soon.

The Bougainville Independence Mission Initiative has set the tone for a holistic approach to development on Bougainville. The reforms and the development made by the Toroama Government have

been structured to reflect the Bougainville Independence Mission. President Toroama has made it clear that progress at the socioeconomic levels must be on par with the progress we achieve at the political level.

This government is committed to progress, it is committed to good governance and above all it is committed to the development and welfare of the people of Bougainville. The people remain Bougainville's greatest asset and this government remains steadfast to delivering political and economic independence for Bougainville. It will create a conducive environment for development to thrive and peace to prevail.

The Government calls upon the support of its citizens to actively participate in developing Bougainville. Our journey to independence must be a communal effort and it requires every Bougainvillean to commit to nation building through the new socioeconomic and political pathway outlined by the Autonomous Bougainville Government.