

## PM MARAPE LAUNCHES 50TH ANNIVERSARY LOGO IN SOMBER CEREMONY



Relevant Agency Heads and Ministers meet with Prime Minister James Marape to plan lead up events to the 50th Anniversary of Independent, 16th September 2025

**My fellow Papua New Guineans, today, we gather at a pivotal moment in our nation's history. As we stand on the threshold of our 50th Independence Anniversary, we are reminded of the remarkable journey that has brought us to where we are today.**

We celebrate our independence, won on September 16, 1975, after years of struggle and determination. We honor the sacrifices of our founding fathers and mothers, who fought tirelessly for our nation's sovereignty.

As we reflect on our past, we acknowledge the wisdom of our ancestors, the resilience of our communities, and the determination of each generation to build a better future.

Our Constitution, crafted by the Constitutional Planning Committee, has been our guiding light, upholding the principles of democracy, human rights, and self-determination.

However, as we celebrate this milestone, we are also met with sadness. Today, we mourn the passing of our second Prime Minister, Sir Julius

Chan, the last man standing from the generation that birthed PNG in 1975.

It has been my most unpleasant task, that, during the tenure of my position as the Prime Minister, I have had to preside over the passing of Sir Michael Somare, Sir Mekere Morauta, Sir Rabbie Namaliu, and now Sir Julius – our first lot of prime ministers. It is clear that our nation is transitioning into another phase of our journey as an independent country. This also means the responsibility upon the shoulders of present leadership both in Government and Public Service will now be greater felt by all of us.

To Lady Stella, children, grandchildren, and the people of the New Ireland Province, I offer my sincerest condolences. May you find comfort in the knowledge that his legacy will live on in our hearts and in the foundation he helped lay for our nation.

In honor of his memory and the memories of all our founding fathers and mothers, we will observe a one-week period of National Mourning, starting immediately. May this time of reflection and remembrance bring us

closer together as a nation and remind us of the sacrifices made by those who came before us.

As we move forward, let this 50th anniversary remind us that our nation's strength has always come from its people – from the wisdom of our ancestors, the resilience of our communities, and the determination of each generation to build a better future.

Let us celebrate our rich cultural heritage – not as separate tribes, but as a united nation proud of its traditions, its democracy, and its vision for the future.

Let us embrace reconciliation, not just in words but in action, ensuring that no Papua New Guinean is left behind.

And let us be inspired – not just for today, but for the next 50 years – to build a nation of peace, prosperity, and unity.

Together, let us move forward. Together, let us celebrate our history and inspire our future.

God bless Papua New Guinea.

Thank you.



## PRIME MINISTER MARAPE'S TRIBUTE TO SIR JULIUS

**It is with profound sadness that I extend my heartfelt condolences to the family of Rt. Hon. Sir Julius Chan, GCL, GCMG, KBE, PC, the people of New Ireland Province, and the entire nation of Papua New Guinea on the passing of one of our most esteemed leaders.**

His passing comes at a pivotal moment in our nation's history, as Papua New Guinea prepares to celebrate 50 years of independence—a milestone he played a crucial role in achieving. As we reflect on our journey as a nation, we must also honour the legacy of great leaders like Sir Julius, whose vision, courage, and leadership helped shape the Papua New Guinea we know today. A Legacy of Leadership and Economic Vision

Born on August 29, 1939 on Tanga Island, New Ireland Province, to a Chinese migrant father, Chan Pak, and a local New Ireland mother, Miriam Tinkoris, Sir Julius rose from humble beginnings to become one of Papua New Guinea's founding fathers. Educated at Marist College Ashgrove in Brisbane, Australia, he gained expertise in governance and economic management—skills he later used to shape the economic policies of an independent Papua New Guinea. Sir Julius's political career began in 1968, when he was elected as the Member for Namatanai in the pre-independence House of Assembly. Recognising the need for strong leadership, he co-founded the People's Progress Party (PPP) in 1970, one of Papua New Guinea's longest-standing political parties. As a key figure alongside Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare and other national leaders, Sir Julius played a vital role in leading Papua New Guinea to independence in 1975, ensuring the nation had a strong economic and governance framework. Architect of Papua New Guinea's Economy

Sir Julius served as Prime Minister twice



The casket of the Late Rt Hon. Sir Julius Chan arrives in Kavieng, New Ireland Province

(1980–1982 and 1994–1997), leading the nation through critical periods of economic reform and political transition. However, one of his most significant contributions came in 1975, when he was appointed Papua New Guinea's first Finance Minister upon independence.

In this role, he oversaw the introduction of Papua New Guinea's national currency—the Kina and Toea—a defining moment in the country's economic history. His leadership in financial policy ensured that Papua New Guinea had a strong and independent monetary system, laying the foundation for future economic growth.

Beyond his tenure as Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Sir Julius was a driving force behind Papua New Guinea's economic policies, holding multiple ministerial portfolios, particularly in finance, commerce, and trade. His ability to navigate global markets, trade agreements, and fiscal management helped guide Papua New Guinea through both prosperous and

challenging times.

A Champion for Decentralisation and Provincial Development

After stepping away from national politics, Sir Julius dedicated himself to serving his people as Governor of New Ireland Province. He was a strong advocate for decentralisation, autonomy, and provincial economic empowerment, believing that true national development must begin at the provincial level.

His vision for provincial self-reliance was reflected in initiatives such as the Malagan Declaration, which emphasised:

- Sustainable economic growth
- Infrastructure development
- Improved education and healthcare services

His governance model in New Ireland became a benchmark for provincial leadership, demonstrating the power of regional development in shaping the nation's progress.

A National Icon in Papua New Guinea's

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### Department Vision and Mission Statement

Our vision is to provide strategic leadership in supporting the Government of PNG in the Development, Coordination and Implementation of sound policies, programs and effective governance that works for the benefit of the people.

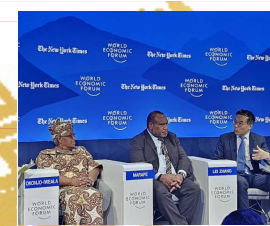
Our mission is to provide coherent, high quality and timely advice and support to the Prime Minister, the National Executive Council and the Chief Secretary to Government.

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# Message from the Chief Secretary

Welcome everyone to the first 2025 edition of the Inside Melanesian House monthly newsletter.

I would like to take this time to acknowledge everyone's contribution towards the smooth operations of the Department last year and your continued dedication to the call to serve the people of Papua New Guinea.

Everyone of us must continue to work together to continue to deliver quality basic services to our people right across the country, and enable them to become economically viable, leading to economic independence.

Do not forget to adopt Christian values in your work ethics and your workplaces as well. Let us all work together with honesty, respect and tolerance to take back PNG.

In this first edition for 2025 of the Inside Melanesian Haus Newsletter, on pages 1 & 2, we bring to you Prime Minister James Marape's tribute for the Late Rt. Honourable Sir Julius Sungmen Chan. On page 3, Prime Minister Marape returns after a successful government visit to Palau. On page 4, the World

Economic Forum can be a potential catalyst for PNG's economic growth. On page 5, representing PNG, Prime Minister Marape lead discussions on Financing Conservation. On page 6, The Prime Minister commends China for opening up its market to PNG Agricultural Products. On page 7, Australia celebrates Australia Day and Prime Minister Marape looks back on our shared history and ensuing relations. On page 8, Papua New Guineans are called to stop betelnut spitting indiscriminately and littering ahead of our 50th Anniversary celebrations. On page 9, UN Women Asia Pacific Regional Director Christian Arab personally introduced the new PNG UN Women Country Representation Peterson Magoolu to Prime Minister Marape. On page 10, Prime Minister Marape calls on Public Servants to renew their dedication to public service as we reach 50 years of Independence. On page 11, Prime Minister Marape meets with US Ambassador to PNG Ann Marie Yastishock to look at how PNG can work with the Trump Administration. On page 12, the Prime Minister concluded a series of high-

level meetings at the World Economic Forum with a productive discussion with Patrick Pouyanné, CEO of TotalEnergies focusing on the Papua LNG project and its future progress. On page 13, Prime Minister Marape meets French Ambassador H.E. Pierre Fournier to strengthen PNG-France Relations.

On page 14, Prime Minister Marape provides an update after his meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of ExxonMobil Daran Woods. On page 15, High-level Delegation from TotalEnergies inform the Prime Minister that TotalEnergies will advance Papua LNG and Workforce development initiatives. On page 16, Prime Minister Marape launches the PNG 50th Anniversary Logo in a somber ceremony after the passing of the Late Rt. Hon. Julius Sungmen Chan on the same day.

Happy Reading!

Ivan Pomaleu, OBE  
Chief Secretary

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## TRIBUTE IN MEMORIAM OF SIR JULIUS

50th Year.

The passing of Sir Julius Chan is even more poignant as Papua New Guinea approaches its 50th anniversary of independence. This is a moment of national reflection—to acknowledge and honour the founding leaders who built the foundation of our country. His contributions to Papua New Guinea's economic independence, governance structures, and financial policies cannot be overstated.

His autobiography, "Playing the Game: Life and Politics in Papua New Guinea", provides a profound insight into his life, struggles, triumphs, and defining moments. His wisdom, leadership, and vision for a prosperous Papua New Guinea will continue to inspire generations to come.

A Personal Tribute

For Rachel and me, this loss is deeply personal. I had the privilege of working alongside Sir Julius in my early years in politics, having been mentored within the People's Progress Party. He endorsed me in 2002 and again in 2003, alongside Honourable Dr Allan Marat, shaping my journey into leadership.

I also share a close friendship with his sons, making this loss even more profound. Yesterday (January 29), in Cabinet, I reflected emotionally on

the passing of Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare, and today, we find ourselves mourning yet another national icon.

A Call to Leadership

With Sir Julius Chan's passing, the last of Papua New Guinea's founding leaders is now gone. This moment must resonate deeply with all of us in leadership today—it marks a transition in our nation's history.

We, the current generation of leaders, must now rise to the occasion. Let us put aside personal interests, political divisions, and petty disagreements. Let us place our nation first, just as these great men did before us.

Sir Julius Chan lived and died in service to Papua New Guinea. As we honour him, let us commit to being responsible stewards of the leadership entrusted to us by our people.

A Final Farewell

I extend my deepest sympathies to:

- The people of New Ireland Province
- The people of Namatanai
- The family of Sir Julius Chan

May God grant them strength and peace during this time of loss. Farewell, Sir Julius.

Sir Julius Chan is gone, but he will never be forgotten. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

## TOTALENERGIES TO ADVANCE PAPUAN LNG AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES



Prime Minister James Marape, supported by Minister for Public Service Joe Sungi and Minister for Provincial and Local Level Government Affairs Soroi Eoie, meet with TotalEnergies Vice President Oceania and Southeast Asia Mehmet Celepoglu, Managing Director of Marketing and Services PNG Daniel Dominie, Managing Director for Exploration and Production for Papua LNG Arnold Berthet and senior staff of the Papua LNG Office in Port Moresby

### A High-Level Delegation from TotalEnergies meet with Prime Minister James Marape to advance Papua LNG and talk about workforce development initiatives.

Prime Minister Marape on January 28, 2025, welcomed the high-level delegation from TotalEnergies to discuss the progress of key LNG projects in Papua New Guinea, including the flagship Papua LNG project and new exploration opportunities at Mailu in Central Province. The delegation included Mr Mehmet Celepoglu – Vice President Oceania and Southeast Asia, Mr Daniel Domine – Managing Director of Marketing and Services PNG, and Mr Arnold Berthet – Managing Director of Exploration and Production for Papua LNG. The meeting centred on project timelines, workforce development, and the significant economic benefits these initiatives are expected to deliver for the country.

During the discussions, TotalEnergies provided an overview of their operations and outlined their strategic roadmap for advancing LNG production in PNG. Four key work streams were highlighted: securing competitive contractor offers, marketing LNG, finalising project financing, and obtaining regulatory approvals. Substantial progress has already been made, including optimising project designs, encouraging competition among contractors, and securing

supply agreements with LNG buyers. The delegation detailed specific design optimisations that have helped reduce project costs.

These included reducing the diameter of gas pipelines to attract more competitive bids, replacing condensate pipelines with an FSO (Floating Storage and Offloading) pipeline system, and implementing horizontal drilling to minimise environmental impacts. These measures have not only lowered costs but also ensured alignment with global sustainability standards. Prime Minister Marape used the opportunity to underscore the importance of prioritising Papua New Guineans in the workforce. He stated, "I do not want 10,000 overseas workers to fill these roles. I want 10,000 Papua New Guineans—from Kikori, Gulf Province, and other communities across the country—trained and ready to contribute."

Prime Minister Marape delivered a strong message to TotalEnergies and its contractors, emphasising that employing Papua New Guineans is non-negotiable. "We expect at least 5,000 Papua New Guineans to be employed in these projects. This is imperative, and we will work closely with all stakeholders to make it a reality," he said.

The Prime Minister also reiterated his government's commitment to creating a favourable investment environment.

He offered access to land at reduced costs to facilitate operations, storage facilities, and long-term strategic developments. "Compared to Singapore or other regions, Papua New Guinea offers a more affordable and strategic location for investments. We are open to discussions about relocating parts of your operations to key project sites," he said.

Additionally, Prime Minister Marape addressed the need to reduce fuel costs and improve supply chain efficiency. He encouraged TotalEnergies to explore partnerships with local companies to develop integrated supply chains that reduce reliance on costly imports. The meeting underscored a shared vision for a sustainable and inclusive future for Papua New Guinea. Both Prime Minister Marape and the TotalEnergies delegation expressed optimism about the transformative potential of these LNG projects. The Prime Minister concluded, "Investing in Papua New Guinea is investing in a free market and a growing economy. Together, we can create opportunities that will benefit not only Papua New Guineans but the entire Pacific region."

The TotalEnergies delegation reaffirmed their commitment to working closely with the PNG government to ensure the success of these projects, further strengthening Papua New Guinea's position as a key player in the global energy market.

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## CONGRATULATIONS PRESIDENT TRUMP

**On behalf of the Government and the people of Papua New Guinea, Prime Minister James Marape warmly congratulates President Donald J. Trump on his inauguration as the President of the United States of America.**

Prime Minister Marape emphasised the deep and enduring ties between Papua New Guinea and the United States, built on mutual respect, shared values, and a commitment to advancing peace, security, and development in the Pacific region.

"The United States has been a steadfast partner in Papua New Guinea's development journey.

"Our partnership has brought about tangible benefits, including through initiatives under the Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA), which strengthens our collaboration in regional security and defense," he said.

The DCA, signed to bolster cooperation between the United States and Papua New Guinea, underscores the strategic importance of the Pacific region and the shared commitment to promoting stability, security, and sovereignty.

"The Defense Cooperation Agreement is a vital pillar of our bilateral relationship, reflecting the mutual trust and shared vision between our two nations.

"We look forward to building on this foundation, ensuring the security of our region while fostering development and prosperity for our people," he added.

Prime Minister Marape also commended the United States' continued engagement in critical areas such as education, health, and climate resilience, which are integral to Papua New Guinea's development priorities.

"As a Pacific nation, we value the United States' leadership in addressing regional challenges and its commitment to the prosperity of the Pacific.

"Together, we can continue to work towards a more sustainable, secure, and thriving future for our peoples," he said.

Concluding his message, Prime Minister Marape extended his best wishes to President Trump, expressing optimism about further strengthening the bilateral relationship between Papua New Guinea and the United States under his leadership.

## MARAPE HIGHLIGHTS PRODUCTIVE ENGAGEMENTS



*Prime Minister James Marape meets with ExxonMobil CEO Darren Woods on the smargins of the 2025 World Economic Forum. Picture supplied*

**Prime Minister James Marape provided an update following his productive meeting with ExxonMobil CEO Darren Woods (pictured) during the World Economic Forum in Davos, highlighting key discussions on the PNG LNG, Papua LNG, and P'nyang LNG projects.**

During the meeting, Mr Woods reiterated ExxonMobil's strong commitment to progressing these critical energy projects. As the world's leading oil company, ExxonMobil continues to play a pivotal role in developing Papua New Guinea's energy resources. Prime Minister Marape shared that Mr Woods assured him of ExxonMobil's dedication to collaborating closely with TotalEnergies and other partners to ensure timely decisions and progress on Papua LNG. "Mr Woods assured me that he will also be meeting with TotalEnergies CEO Patrick Pouyanné, and I will similarly engage with Mr Pouyanné to align commitments and expedite the Papua LNG project," Prime Minister Marape stated.

The Prime Minister emphasised the government's focus on synchronising Papua LNG and P'nyang LNG to maximise benefits for Papua New Guinea.

"When we combine the gas resources from Papua LNG and P'nyang LNG fields, we have 11 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas. This is a tremendous opportunity, and our government is committed to supporting ExxonMobil,

TotalEnergies, and their joint venture partners to sequence the projects effectively," he said.

The discussions centred on expediting final investment decisions (FID), construction, and the first production of gas for Papua LNG, followed by transitioning resources to advance the P'nyang LNG project.

"We aim to ensure that once Papua LNG is operational, efforts are swiftly mobilised to develop P'nyang LNG. Together, these projects, along with the existing PNG LNG operations, will secure Papua New Guinea's status as a leading gas-producing nation through 2060 and beyond," he added.

Prime Minister Marape highlighted that later, Mr Woods and Mr Pouyanné will be meeting to discuss their joint approach to advancing Papua LNG and P'nyang LNG. These discussions aim to ensure a collaborative path forward for the projects.

"The commitment of these global leaders to Papua LNG and P'nyang LNG is crucial for PNG's economic future. Their shared focus on these projects gives us confidence in achieving our vision of sustainable resource development that benefits all Papua New Guineans," he concluded.

Prime Minister Marape reaffirmed his government's dedication to supporting the projects and ensuring their successful implementation, securing long-term economic growth and energy security for Papua New Guinea.

## PM MARAPE RETURNS FROM SUCCESSFUL PALAU VISIT



*Prime Minister Hon. James Marape meets with H.E Surangel S. Whippis Jr, President of Republic of Palau*

**Prime Minister Hon. James Marape has returned to Papua New Guinea after a productive visit to Palau, where he attended the inauguration of President Surangel Whippis Jr. and held strategic discussions on regional collaboration.**

The visit underscored Papua New Guinea's commitment to strengthening relationships with Pacific Island nations and enhancing cooperation in areas of shared interest, particularly fisheries, maritime security, and regional economic development.

"Palau is an important partner in the Pacific, and our collaboration highlights the significance of our shared resources and cultural ties. Together, the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) nations

control 25–30% of the world's tuna supply and 60% of the tuna catch from the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). Papua New Guinea contributes approximately 17% of the WCPO's tuna catch, making us a leading player in this vital industry," said Prime Minister Marape.

**Key Outcomes of the Visit**

1. **Regional Fisheries Cooperation:** The Prime Minister discussed opportunities to enhance the management and sustainability of Pacific fisheries. Palau's partnership in the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) was highlighted, with unused fishing days being transferred to PNG in the past, creating mutually beneficial economic opportunities.

2. **Tourism and Connectivity:** Talks

included exploring direct flight routes between PNG and Palau, with potential extensions to markets such as the Philippines and Japan. These routes aim to boost tourism and trade opportunities for both nations.

3. **Cultural and Historical Ties:** The visit also highlighted deep cultural connections between PNG and Palau, with many Palauan citizens tracing their roots to PNG. This shared history, dating back to pre-colonial times, remains a foundation for continued people-to-people relationships.

4. **Strategic Partnerships for Development:** Plans to expand fisheries processing hubs in PNG were discussed as part of a broader strategy to enhance the value chain in the maritime economy. Key locations such as Manus were identified for potential development, which would generate jobs and drive economic growth.

The Prime Minister emphasised that the visit to Palau is part of his government's strategic focus on building partnerships across the Pacific. "These relationships are crucial not only for resource sharing but also for fostering economic resilience and regional stability. Palau may be small in population, but its influence in the Pacific maritime space is significant, and together we are stronger," he stated.

The Prime Minister also reaffirmed PNG's commitment to collaborating with Pacific nations on shared challenges, including climate change, marine conservation, and economic development. As PNG marks its 50th anniversary of independence, Prime Minister Marape noted that such partnerships are critical to shaping the nation's path toward greater self-reliance and prosperity.

## PM DEMANDS ACTION ON FUEL MONOPOLY

**Prime Minister James Marape has issued an apology to small third-level airlines affected by ongoing fuel shortages and called for immediate action to address the fuel supply monopoly in Papua New Guinea. He described the situation as unacceptable and urged Puma Energy, the country's sole fuel supplier, to demonstrate greater corporate responsibility by ensuring fuel availability for all sectors, particularly small aviation operators.**

"I want to offer my sincerest apologies to the small third-level airlines struggling due to the lack of aviation fuel," Prime Minister Marape said. "It is deeply frustrating that we continue to be held to ransom by a monopoly on fuel supplies in

our country. This situation is unacceptable, and we are taking steps to address it."

The Prime Minister highlighted that the government began work last year on alternative fuel supply options and storage infrastructure to reduce dependency on a single supplier and secure the country's fuel needs.

"This alternate fuel storage and supply system is expected to be completed by mid-year, around September 2025," he said.

In the meantime, the government is working with the Central Bank, Puma Energy, and the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy to support small airlines impacted by the crisis.

"We have asked the Central Bank, Puma, and the Energy Minister to explore

ways to assist small airlines during this period. I commend Air Niugini, which has worked with other state enterprises to find alternative supply solutions to keep the sector running," Prime Minister Marape said.

Prime Minister Marape issued a strong appeal to Puma Energy to fulfill its duty of care to the people and businesses of Papua New Guinea, given its monopoly position in the fuel supply chain.

"Puma Energy has enjoyed a monopoly on fuel supply in Papua New Guinea for too long. With that privilege comes a responsibility to the people and businesses of this country. I urge Puma to step up and ensure fuel is available

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# WEF 2025: A CATALYST FOR PNG'S ECONOMIC FUTURE



Prime Minister James Marape (third from right) participates in Discussion Panel at the 2025 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Pic Supplied

**Prime Minister James Marape has described the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, as an eye-opening experience and a significant opportunity to engage with global leaders in science, technology, business, and economic development.**

Reflecting on the forum, Prime Minister Marape said, "WEF was not just about nation-to-nation discussions but also about connecting with global companies, technology innovators, and key investors. It provided a rare chance to meet the leaders of some of the world's most influential organisations in one place—ExxonMobil, TotalEnergies, Newcrest Mining, and Newmont Corporation, to name a few—and discuss the future of Papua New Guinea as an investment destination."

During the forum, the Prime Minister met with top executives, including the presidents and CEOs of ExxonMobil, TotalEnergies, and Newmont, as well as other influential players in the oil, gas, and mining sectors. These discussions reaffirmed their commitment to long-term investments in Papua New Guinea, including key projects such as Papua LNG, P'nyang LNG, and Wafi-Golpu.

"ExxonMobil and TotalEnergies shared plans to ramp up their investments in PNG, with Total committing \$200–300 million to exploration activities this year in Central Province," the Prime Minister stated.

"These companies have expressed strong confidence in PNG's economic potential, underscoring their belief in

the stability and growth of our nation." The Prime Minister highlighted that these investments represent over \$20 billion in economic developments slated to take place in PNG over the next five years. "This is a testament to the confidence global investors have in our economy and our resources, positioning PNG as a key player in the global energy and resource markets," he said.

Prime Minister Marape emphasised PNG's geographical and strategic importance in the Asia-Pacific region. "With Asia driving the next century of global economic growth, PNG is uniquely positioned as a resource-rich nation close to major markets in Southeast Asia, China, and India. This proximity, coupled with our membership in ASEAN-related frameworks, makes PNG an attractive investment destination," he said.

He added that the forum provided an opportunity to emphasise PNG's transition towards becoming a hub for manufactured products and downstream processing. "We want to go beyond just exporting resources. By establishing special economic zones and fostering partnerships with global investors, we aim to produce finished goods and export to Southeast Asia and beyond," the Prime Minister said. Prime Minister Marape also met agriculture and forestry companies at the WEF.

A key focus of the discussions at WEF was the government's commitment to reforming Papua New Guinea's investment framework ahead of its

50th anniversary of independence. The Prime Minister outlined plans for a transition to a clear and investor-friendly hybrid production-sharing model.

"This new framework will ensure that PNG benefits equitably from its resources while giving investors clarity and certainty on their returns. Existing agreements will be honored, but new projects will operate under clear laws that define taxes, royalties, and equity arrangements. This approach will reduce negotiation timelines and provide confidence for both PNG and investors," Prime Minister Marape said.

The reforms aim to create a legal structure that guarantees PNG's long-term economic security, ensuring that future governments and investors operate with clarity and mutual benefit. "This is about creating a legacy that transcends individual leaders—a structure that secures PNG's future earnings while maintaining its attractiveness as a high-return investment destination," he said.

The Prime Minister described the forum as a powerful reminder of PNG's potential on the global stage. "When the world's largest oil, gas, and mining companies express confidence in PNG as an investment destination, it shows the strength of our nation's position in the global economy," he said.

"From our proximity to Asian markets to the vast resources we possess, PNG is poised to play a pivotal role in the global energy and resource sectors for decades to come. My government is committed to fostering partnerships.

# PRIME MINISTER MARAPE MEETS FRENCH AMBASSADOR H.E. PIERRE FOURNIER TO STRENGTHEN PNG-FRANCE RELATIONS



Prime Minister James Marape meets with newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of France to Papua New Guinea H.E. Pierre Fournier

**Prime Minister James Marape welcomed the newly appointed French Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, His Excellency Pierre Fournier, in a meeting that highlighted the deepening partnership between PNG and France. The discussion held on January 28 covered shared interests including environmental conservation, military cooperation, trade, investment, and broader regional and global issues.**

Prime Minister Marape congratulated Ambassador Fournier on his appointment and recognised France's role as a key partner in PNG's development. "France is an important partner to us. President Macron is a global leader in his own right, and his vision for sustainable development, environmental conservation, and global cooperation aligns closely with our own priorities," he stated.

Ambassador Fournier shared that his predecessor has recently been appointed as the first French Ambassador to Samoa, marking a significant milestone in France's growing engagement with the Pacific region. He emphasised France's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties, underscoring its unique position as a G7 and G20 nation with a strong presence in the Pacific.

The discussion included updates on ongoing environmental and forestry conservation projects initiated during President Macron's visit to PNG. Prime

Minister Marape reaffirmed PNG's commitment to global environmental efforts, stating, "Papua New Guinea is committed to playing its role in global environmental conservation. President Macron's leadership in this area and our joint conservation projects serve as a model for what can be achieved globally."

Ambassador Fournier reaffirmed France's support for PNG's conservation initiatives and pledged to accelerate project implementation.

"France is eager to move forward on these initiatives. We will work closely with the PNG government to ensure swift progress," he said.

The leaders reviewed the recently formalised PNG-France Security Agreement (SOFA). Ambassador Fournier highlighted upcoming visits by senior French military officials, scheduled for March.

These visits aim to enhance defence cooperation, focusing on maritime security, training, and regional stability. Prime Minister Marape noted PNG's strategic geopolitical position as a bridge between the Pacific and Southeast Asia.

"Papua New Guinea is the only Pacific nation with close proximity to Southeast Asia. This unique positioning enables us to foster regional collaboration and trade," he said.

The Prime Minister also expressed PNG's aspiration to become a full member of ASEAN and strengthen partnerships with economic blocs such as APEC. He

underscored the importance of France's support in driving PNG's economic development, particularly through investments in infrastructure and trade. Ambassador Fournier extended a formal invitation to Prime Minister Marape for the United Nations Conference on Oceans, to be held in June, with a focus on biodiversity conservation and climate action.

He also discussed upcoming bilateral projects, including infrastructure financing and capacity-building initiatives.

Prime Minister Marape invited Ambassador Fournier to explore PNG's natural and cultural diversity.

"Papua New Guinea offers unparalleled beauty from sun-kissed beaches and coral reefs to snow-capped mountains. We look forward to sharing our rich cultural heritage and unique landscapes with the world," he said.

The Prime Minister announced plans to appoint a new PNG Ambassador to France to further strengthen diplomatic ties.

"This will be a key step in enhancing our bilateral relationship and ensuring continued collaboration across all areas of mutual interest," he said.

The meeting concluded with both leaders expressing optimism about the future of PNG-France relations. Prime Minister Marape remarked, "I look forward to working closely with you, Ambassador Fournier, to build on the strong foundation of our partnership and take it to new heights."



## PRIME MINISTER MARAPE MEETS TOTALENERGIES CEO

**Prime Minister James Marape concluded a series of high-level meetings at the World Economic Forum with Patrick Pouyanné, CEO of TotalEnergies (pictured), focusing on the Papua LNG project and its future progress.**

Prime Minister Marape confirmed substantial progress on the re-engineering and re-scoping of Papua LNG, which is now moving toward the next phase of development.

"Mr. Pouyanné provided updates on Papua LNG's progress, assuring us that the project remains on track despite earlier delays due to cost concerns. The initial tender of \$18 billion for construction was deemed economically unfeasible, so the project partners went back to the drawing board. Now, the re-engineering work is in an advanced stage, and they are on schedule to move from the concept stage to final investment decisions and project development by the end of this year," Prime Minister Marape said.

The Prime Minister highlighted the strong commitment from both TotalEnergies and ExxonMobil, the lead investors in Papua LNG.

"This meeting reaffirmed the earlier discussion I had with Mr. Darren Woods,

CEO of ExxonMobil. Both companies are aligned in their commitment to ensuring Papua LNG progresses within a feasible economic framework, providing a solid return on investment for all stakeholders, including Kumul Petroleum, which holds a 22.5% stake in the project," he noted.

Prime Minister Marape also emphasised that Papua New Guinea remains a robust and attractive destination for energy producers, given its proximity to key Asian markets.

"Mr. Pouyanné confirmed TotalEnergies' long-term presence in PNG. Beyond Papua LNG, they are also pursuing new exploration opportunities, including the Mailu offshore drilling project in the eastern part of Central Province, along with additional exploration in fields near the Pasca gas condensate project," he added.

The Prime Minister encouraged all current energy investors, including TotalEnergies, ExxonMobil, and Santos, to expand their exploration activities in Papua New Guinea.

"It is also exciting to see TotalEnergies investing substantial resources into new exploration. Offshore drilling in Central Province could yield promising results, and their commitment to exploration signals long-term confidence in PNG's

energy potential," he said.

Prime Minister Marape also discussed Papua New Guinea's environmental commitments and invited energy investors to partner with the government in conservation efforts.

"I have invited TotalEnergies and ExxonMobil to collaborate with the government in dedicating specific parcels of forests for carbon offsetting, ensuring their operations in PNG achieve carbon-neutral or even carbon-negative outcomes. This initiative aligns with our broader efforts to conserve forests and contribute to global climate solutions," he said.

The timeline for Papua LNG remains on track, with a final investment decision expected later this year. Both TotalEnergies and ExxonMobil reiterated their commitment to progressing not only Papua LNG but also associated projects such as P'nyang LNG.

"The consistent commitment from these two global energy leaders, TotalEnergies and ExxonMobil, is encouraging. Their focus on advancing Papua LNG and exploring new opportunities positions Papua New Guinea as a key player in the energy sector for decades to come," Prime Minister Marape concluded.

## PM MEETS NEWMONT FOR WAFI-GOLPU PROJECT

**Prime Minister James Marape held a productive meeting with Tom Palmer, President and CEO of Newmont Corporation (pictured), and Peter Toth, Newmont's Executive Vice President for Strategic Development on January 21, to progress Wafi-Golpu Project.** Discussions centred on advancing the Wafi-Golpu Project, ensuring efficiency in Newmont's operations in Papua New Guinea, and addressing the company's global restructuring.

Prime Minister Marape emphasised that Newmont's global restructuring will not impact its operations in Papua New Guinea.

"Mr. Palmer and Mr. Toth assured me that PNG remains a significant part of Newmont's global portfolio. They are committed to ensuring efficiency in the Lihir gold mine operations while staying focused on progressing the Wafi-Golpu Project," said Prime Minister Marape.

The Prime Minister also reaffirmed the government's commitment to finalising the Mine

Development Contract (MDC) for Wafi-Golpu within the first quarter of 2025.

"I have instructed the State Negotiating Team to review the draft MDC currently under consideration. Upon my return, we will finalise all outstanding matters in February to ensure the contract is signed at the earliest possible time. This will allow the project to move toward a Final Investment Decision (FID) and subsequent development," he added.

The Wafi-Golpu Project is poised to become one of the world's largest copper mines, with significant gold resources. Prime Minister Marape emphasised the project's transformative potential for Papua New Guinea's economy and its people.

"The State will have a 30% equity stake in the project, with 10% of that stake allocated to the Morobe Provincial Government and landowners. We are committed to ensuring the benefits of this project are shared equitably among all stakeholders," he stated.

The Prime Minister also confirmed that the government will engage with the Morobe Provincial Government

and landowners to finalise community benefit-sharing agreements.

Prime Minister Marape acknowledged Newmont's status as the world's leading gold mining company and welcomed their continued presence in Papua New Guinea.

"Mr. Palmer assured me that Newmont will maintain its Port Moresby office despite the company's global restructuring. This demonstrates their commitment to PNG as an integral part of their portfolio," he said.

The Prime Minister also highlighted an opportunity for Papua New Guinean individuals, companies, and superannuation funds to invest in Newmont, whose shares are now listed on the Port Moresby Stock Exchange.

"This opens up opportunities for our people to participate directly in the success of the world's largest gold mining company," he added.

Prime Minister Marape concluded the meeting by reaffirming his government's commitment to advancing the Wafi-Golpu Project as a national priority.

## PNG LEADS DISCUSSION ON CONSERVATION FINANCING DURING WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM



Prime Minister James Marape speaking during discussions on Financing Conservation at the 2025 WEF

**Papua New Guinea took the lead in discussions on Conservation Financing at the 2025 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.**

Prime Minister James Marape January 21, led a panel of discussion, hosted by Conservation International, to leverage financing for the protection and conservation of nature in countries around the world.

Prime Minister Marape was accorded the prime spot on the panel to open the meeting by introducing Papua New Guinea and high-lighting its position as a world leader in biodiversity, tropical rainforest and marine resources, where he spoke to the panel of over 20 speakers and the audience.

The panel discussion was part of the series of meetings held simultaneously on Day 2 of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos.

PM Marape called for stronger global efforts in sustainable management of natural resources worldwide, after

pointing out Papua New Guinea "mega richness" as a host of up to seven percent of the world's biodiversity, the world's third largest tropical rainforest (jointly with Indonesia), and – collectively with the countries of the Pacific a substantial part of the world's marine resources.

The panel was held to discuss means of rallying financial support from among investors toward the area of nature conservation, food sustainability and marine resource protection.

Conservation International spokesperson at the meeting Patricia Zurita, while introducing Prime Minister Marape, highlighted a financing gap of between \$700 million to \$1.3 billion annually that she said nature conservation needs to close.

"We have created a global financing system that is rewarding anything but nature, yet we depend on nature for everything," she said.

Panelists acknowledged PNG for its biodiversity and marine richness as they spoke of their various

endeavours in conservation and the financing mechanisms such as impact funds, they have created to channel financing toward these causes.

"We (PNG) hold a lot of stakes in the conversation on conservation. A lot of people showed respect to PNG today because of what we have in Nature in our biodiversity, rainforests and marine resources," Prime Minister Marape said after the meeting.

"I want to thank Conservation International and the World Economic Forum for providing this platform to advance the discussions on financing of nature conservation.

"It was a good turnout of private and public sector partner engagement, where we all share the view that we belong to one planet that hosts finite resources, and these resources need to be sustainably managed," he said.

The Prime Minister has invited Conservation International to PNG to further these conversations later this year or in 2026.

... continued from page 3

## FUEL MONOPOLY IMPACTING SMALL AIRLINES

to all sectors, particularly small airlines that are vital to connecting our remote communities," he said.

The Prime Minister also addressed the foreign exchange (forex) challenges impacting Puma's ability to import fuel, highlighting the government's efforts to ease these constraints.

"The government has taken steps to improve forex availability through the Central Bank and commercial banks. As the largest consumer of forex in our country, Puma must do its part to ensure fuel supplies are maintained. Using the forex situation as an excuse

to limit fuel imports is not acceptable," he said.

Prime Minister Marape announced that the Petroleum and Energy Minister will convene an urgent meeting with Puma Energy, the Central Bank, and other key stakeholders to resolve the aviation fuel shortage affecting small airlines.

"The Energy Minister will call a meeting with all relevant parties to address why small third-level aviation fuel is not being imported and why small airlines are bearing the brunt of this crisis. We need immediate solutions to ensure fuel is available for these essential

operators," he said.

Prime Minister Marape issued a clear warning that the government will not hesitate to take stronger measures if the situation does not improve.

"Do not force the government's hand to apply strong-arm tactics. That is not our first option, but if we are left with no choice, we will act to protect the people of Papua New Guinea," he said. Looking ahead, the Prime Minister encouraged new fuel suppliers to enter the Papua New Guinea market to break the monopoly and ensure a more competitive and reliable fuel supply.



## PEACEFUL NEW YEAR IN PORGERA

**People of Poregera commended for a peace observation of the eve of 2024 and the dawn of 2025.**

Prime Minister James Marape has commended the people of Poregera for a peaceful New Year's Eve and reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring long-term stability, safety, and prosperity in the region.

"Poregera's quiet and peaceful New Year's Eve is a positive and encouraging sign for a community that has faced significant challenges in recent years.

"As we mark the beginning of 2025, Papua New Guinea's 50th year of independence, this calm provides a foundation for renewed hope and progress in Poregera," PM Marape said.

The resumption of operations at the Poregera Gold Mine in December 2023 has brought renewed economic activity to the region. The mine, a key contributor to the nation's economy, is expected to generate substantial opportunities for local communities and the country at large.

"The reopening of the Poregera Gold Mine is a milestone for Papua New Guinea. It not only revitalises our economy but also provides livelihoods and infrastructure development opportunities for the people of Poregera and Enga Province," he said.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the lawlessness and illegal mining activities that have previously plagued the region. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to maintaining security and upholding the rule of law.

"Stability is the cornerstone of progress. We have deployed additional security forces to Poregera to protect communities and safeguard the operations of the mine. Let me be clear—lawlessness will not be tolerated, and we will continue to act decisively to ensure the safety and well-being of our people," he said.

Prime Minister Marape urged the people of Poregera and Papua New Guinea to unite and work together to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the mine's reopening.

"As we celebrate our 50th year of independence, we must remember that our strength lies in our unity. Let us work hand in hand to build a Poregera that reflects the promise of a brighter future—a future defined by peace, development, and shared prosperity," he said.

## CHINA OPENS MARKET TO PNG AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

**Prime Minister James Marape commended the Chinese Government for its commitment to strengthening bilateral trade ties by granting Papua New Guinea access to its vast agricultural market. This milestone, facilitated through the National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority (NAQIA), is set to unlock significant economic opportunities for PNG producers.**

The Prime Minister on January 1 praised the progress made in recent years, particularly the successful collaboration between NAQIA and China to meet the required phytosanitary and agricultural standards.

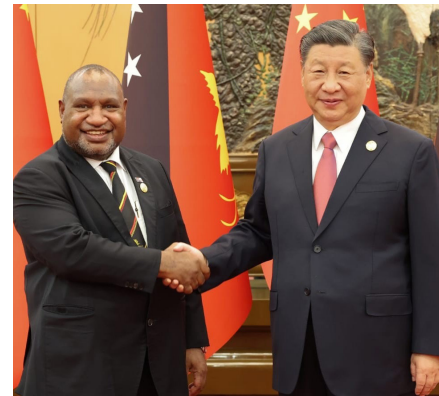
"Our government has worked very hard over the last five years to secure this historic agreement, and I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Chinese Government for facilitating this process. Their recognition of PNG's agricultural potential is a testament to the strength of our bilateral relationship," said Prime Minister Marape.

With a population of 1.4 billion people and a rapidly expanding middle class, China represents one of the largest and fastest-growing coffee markets in the world. Coffee consumption in China has been rising at a rate of approximately 15% annually, far outpacing global averages. While the market demand for coffee is substantial, PNG's current production levels are insufficient to meet its potential export volumes.

"China alone needs a substantial amount of coffee every month. The market is there, but unfortunately, we are not yet producing enough to supply this demand," said the Prime Minister.

"This untapped opportunity pains me because we could be earning significant foreign exchange revenue in U.S. dollars through exports to China. Our farmers and producers must seize this opportunity and scale up production to meet market demands." Prime Minister Marape highlighted the government's achievements in opening up new markets for PNG's agricultural produce. "In addition to China, we've worked tirelessly to secure access to India, Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia, the Philippines, and our traditional partners in Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and the U.S. Asia, being our closest neighbor, offers immense opportunities for growth, and China, as the largest market, stands at the forefront," he said.

The Prime Minister called on PNG citizens to take advantage of these expanded market opportunities by



*Prime Minister Marape meeting President Xi Jinping last year during the One Belt One Road Forum. File Pic*

increasing agricultural production. "While the government continues to open doors for our exports, the responsibility now lies with us as a nation. Our people need to work harder on the land to grow and produce more. Coffee is just one example—our agricultural potential spans far wider. Let us step up and take ownership of these opportunities," he urged.

To further enhance PNG's ability to capitalise on these markets, the government is considering the establishment of a National Export Agency. This agency would coordinate the export of PNG's agricultural and food produce, ensuring that farmers and producers have direct access to international markets. "This initiative will support producers by reducing barriers to export and streamlining processes to get our goods to market quickly and efficiently," said the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Marape emphasised that these advancements in trade are part of a broader effort to strengthen PNG's relationships with its neighbors. "The healthy bilateral relationships we have fostered with China and other nations are not just political achievements—they are economic lifelines. These partnerships will ensure PNG has access to global markets, boosting our economy and creating opportunities for our people," he said. Prime Minister Marape urged the nation to focus on productivity and export readiness. "I thank the Chinese government for opening its doors to our agricultural products, and I call on our people to rise to the challenge. Together, we can transform PNG into a leading exporter of coffee and other agricultural goods, creating wealth and opportunities for all."

## PM MARAPE MEETS US AMBASSADOR YASTISHOCK TO STRENGTHEN PNG - US RELATIONS



*Left: Prime Minister James Marape sharing a light moment with (Right) Ambassador of the United States of America to Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu H.E Ann Marie Yastishock, during their meeting*

**Prime Minister James Marape met with U.S. Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Her Excellency Ann Marie Yastishock, in a comprehensive discussion that reinforced the growing partnership between Papua New Guinea and the United States. The meeting held on January 28 highlighted critical areas of cooperation, including security, environmental policy, economic growth, and regional stability.**

Prime Minister Marape and Ambassador Yastishock reaffirmed their mutual commitment to strengthening diplomatic ties as both countries prepare to celebrate 50 years of bilateral relations this year. The Prime Minister remarked, "The United States has been a longstanding friend of Papua New Guinea. Our partnership has spanned decades and has proven crucial in areas such as defence, development, and climate action."

The leaders reflected on the U.S.-PNG Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA), signed in 2023. Ambassador Yastishock assured the Prime Minister that the agreement enjoys strong bipartisan support in Washington and will remain a cornerstone of the U.S.-PNG relationship. "We have communicated the importance of the DCA to Washington, and we expect the partnership to grow stronger in the years ahead," the Ambassador stated.

Prime Minister Marape expressed his gratitude for the DCA and its role in ensuring regional security. "This agreement is not just about defence; it is about strengthening PNG's role as a key strategic partner in the Indo-

Pacific," he said. The leaders discussed plans for future high-level military exchanges and joint exercises aimed at enhancing regional stability and resilience.

The leaders also touched on environmental issues, particularly PNG's commitment to conservation and global climate goals. While addressing the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement, Ambassador Yastishock emphasised that climate action remains a priority for the U.S. government. "The United States remains committed to balancing climate action, energy security, and economic prosperity. We look forward to finding practical ways to work together to achieve these shared goals," the Ambassador said. Prime Minister Marape highlighted PNG's leadership in climate initiatives within the Pacific.

"Papua New Guinea is at the frontline of climate change. As custodians of vast forests and marine biodiversity, we are committed to partnering with global leaders like the United States to ensure sustainable solutions for our planet," the Prime Minister stated.

The discussion also addressed economic development, with both leaders agreeing on the importance of increasing U.S. investment in PNG. Ambassador Yastishock acknowledged the untapped potential of PNG's economy and committed to working with American businesses to explore investment opportunities. "There is a significant amount of investment potential here, and we aim to encourage U.S. companies to explore these opportunities in collaboration

with the PNG government," she said. Prime Minister Marape underscored the importance of sustainable economic partnerships, stating, "We welcome more U.S. investments in key sectors such as energy, infrastructure, and technology. PNG is open for business, and we are committed to creating an environment that attracts international investors."

Recognising PNG's unique geopolitical position as a bridge between the Pacific and Southeast Asia, the leaders discussed PNG's aspirations to join ASEAN as a full member. "Papua New Guinea's geographic and strategic positioning makes it a natural link between Asia and the Pacific. We look forward to strengthening our role in regional organisations to promote collaboration and shared prosperity," the Prime Minister said.

Ambassador Yastishock highlighted U.S. efforts to assist PNG in addressing human trafficking and improving its standing in the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report. She expressed gratitude for PNG's collaboration in providing critical data to improve its rankings. "We are committed to working together to address human trafficking and other critical human rights issues," she said. As PNG and the United States prepare to celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations, Ambassador Yastishock extended an invitation from Washington for Prime Minister Marape to participate in commemorative events. She noted that senior U.S. officials are likely to visit PNG during this milestone year.



## BUBBLES

How do you know  
carrots are good for  
your eyes?

You never see a rabbit  
wearing glasses.

Why did the frog  
take the bus to work  
today?

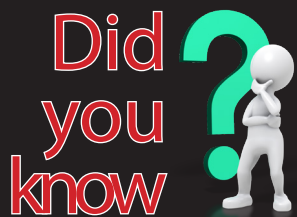
His car got toad away

What is the  
astronaut's favourite  
part of the computer?  
The space bar

What did the shark  
say when he ate the  
clown fish?

This tastes a little  
funny.

What do you call a  
pony with a cough?  
A little horse.



The fear of long words is called  
Hippopotomonstrosesquippedal.  
Courtesy of BBC <https://www.sciencefocus.com/science/fun-facts>

## RENEW PS DEDICATION AS PNG MARKS 50 YEARS

**Prime Minister James Marape has called on public servants across Papua New Guinea to rise to the challenge of delivering better services to the nation, as the country reflects on its 50th year of independence.**

His remarks follow a visit to his electorate in Tari-Pori, where he met dedicated frontline public servants working in Hela Province. During his visit, the Prime Minister was moved to see several coastal families — doctors and other professionals — who have left the comfort of their home provinces to serve the people of Hela. He acknowledged their sacrifice and praised their commitment to nation-building. "These public servants are an inspiration. They have chosen service over comfort, working in some of the most challenging areas of our country. Their dedication reminds us that public

service is a noble duty, one that requires commitment, sacrifice, and a deep sense of responsibility," he said. The Prime Minister stressed that frontline workers across the country — including doctors, teachers, police officers, and administrators — need greater support from government agencies and senior officials based in Waigani. "We who are in head offices must rise to the occasion. Our work must be efficient and effective, ensuring that those on the front lines have the tools, resources, and support to carry out their duties. We must break the habits of complacency and serve with renewed purpose." Looking ahead to the Public Service Dedication Ceremony on January 10, Prime Minister Marape urged all public servants to reflect on their roles and responsibilities. He reminded them that they are paid with taxpayers' money to serve the people and

must work tirelessly to meet the needs of the nation. "As we dedicate the year 2025 to public service, I ask every public servant, both elected and appointed, to reflect on your service to our country. Let us be the catalysts of positive change. Let us rise together for PNG." Prime Minister Marape also took a moment to honor the legacy of past public servants who have contributed to the country's development over the past five decades. "To those who have served Papua New Guinea faithfully over the past 50 years, we thank you. Your work has laid the foundation of our nation. Now, it is our duty to build on that foundation and serve our people better." The Prime Minister emphasised that true nation-building requires collective action from all levels of public service. He called for a renewed commitment from everyone in government.

## PM CONGRATULATES KIAP ON APPOINTMENT AS CHAIR OF COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION BOARD

**Prime Minister James Marape has congratulated Winnie Kiap, CBE, on her appointment as the new Chair of the Commonwealth Foundation Board of Governors.**

Ms Kiap's appointment marks a significant milestone for Papua New Guinea and the Pacific region. The Commonwealth Foundation is one of three key intergovernmental agencies of the Commonwealth, alongside the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth of Learning. The Board of Governors includes representatives from Commonwealth governments, High Commissions based in London, civil society representatives, and the Commonwealth Secretary-General. The position of Chair is traditionally held by a

distinguished citizen from a Commonwealth member country and is appointed by the Heads of Government. In congratulating Ms Kiap, Prime Minister Marape noted the strong support she received from the Board of Governors, which convened on December 9, 2024, to elect the new Chair. Ms. Kiap becomes the fourth successful female to hold this prestigious position. "Ms Kiap's election to this role is a testament to her exceptional diplomatic career and extensive experience within the Commonwealth. She has previously served as Chair of the Commonwealth Secretariat Board of Governors from 2016 to 2018 and played pivotal roles within Commonwealth organisations during her tenure as Papua New Guinea's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom from 2011 to 2022. Her previous

contributions, including serving as a member and deputy chair of the Commonwealth Foundation Board, make her eminently qualified for this new position," he said. Prime Minister Marape also highlighted Papua New Guinea's long-standing relationship with the Commonwealth, consisting of 56 member countries, and the various areas of partnership that have benefited the country. "The Commonwealth has been a valued partner to Papua New Guinea, particularly in areas such as election support, debt management, environmental initiatives, and empowering youth through ICT," Prime Minister Marape said. He further underscored the significance of Ms Kiap's appointment, not only for PNG but for the broader Pacific region and for professional women across the Commonwealth.

## PM MARAPE REFLECTIONS ON PNG-AUS RELATIONS

**Prime Minister James Marape on January 23 extended his warmest wishes to the government and people of Australia on Australia Day, January 26, 2025, reflecting on the enduring relationship between Papua New Guinea and its longstanding partner in the region.**

"As Papua New Guinea celebrates 50 years of independence this year, we pause to acknowledge Australia's historic role in our nation's journey," said Prime Minister Marape. "From the early days of nation-building to the establishment of critical institutions, Australia has stood with us—not only as a neighbor but as a steadfast friend and partner." The Prime Minister highlighted Australia's significant contributions during the pre-independence period, including investments in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and governance, which laid the foundation for PNG's emergence as a sovereign nation. He also paid tribute to the collaboration between leaders such as Gough Whitlam and Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare, whose shared vision ensured a peaceful transition to independence in 1975. Prime Minister Marape also honored

the contributions of kiaps—Australian patrol officers who served in some of PNG's most remote and challenging regions. "These men were more than administrators; they were builders, educators, and peacemakers. Their efforts remain a lasting legacy of the partnership between our two nations," he said. He emphasised that the PNG-Australia partnership has continued to grow stronger over the past five decades, evolving to address the challenges and opportunities of the modern era. One recent milestone is the Bilateral Security Agreement, signed in December 2023, which formalises cooperation between the two countries in areas such as defense, policing, cybersecurity, and maritime security. "This agreement demonstrates our shared commitment to safeguarding regional stability while respecting PNG's sovereignty," noted Prime Minister Marape. The Prime Minister also described PNG's upcoming inclusion in the National Rugby League (NRL), supported by the Australian government, as "a historic moment for PNG that not only celebrates our sporting talent but also strengthens cultural and personal connections between our peoples."

He reiterated Australia's role as PNG's largest trading partner and its ongoing support in key areas such as infrastructure, climate resilience, and education. He highlighted Australia's contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic, including vaccine distribution and medical support, as a testament to the enduring partnership between the two nations. "Australia has helped us build capacity through long-term initiatives such as scholarships and technical training, empowering Papua New Guineans to contribute meaningfully to our national development," Prime Minister Marape said. As PNG celebrates its golden jubilee of independence, the Prime Minister reaffirmed the nation's commitment to strengthening its relations with Australia. "Our relationship is built on shared values of democracy, freedom, and equality. Together, we can continue to build a safer, more prosperous, and inclusive Pacific for future generations," he added. On this Australia Day, Prime Minister Marape expressed his gratitude to Australia for its unwavering friendship and support. "Happy Australia Day. May the next 50 years bring even greater achievements for our peoples and our region," he concluded.

## PM EXTEND WARM WISHES TO PRC PEOPLE

**Prime Minister James Marape has extended his warmest wishes to President Xi Jinping, the government, and the people of the People's Republic of China on the occasion of Chinese New Year, which falls on January 29, 2025.**

"This special occasion symbolises wisdom, transformation, and renewal—values that resonate deeply as our two nations continue to strengthen our friendship and partnership," Prime Minister Marape said. He highlighted the shared milestones between Papua New Guinea and China as PNG prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary of independence on September 16, 2025. "This is a time for us to reflect on the journey we have taken as a nation and the partnerships that have supported us along the way. The friendship between PNG and China has been a vital part of this journey, helping to drive development and create opportunities for our people," he stated. Formal diplomatic relations between Papua New Guinea and China were established in 1976, just a year after

PNG gained independence. Since then, the partnership has flourished, underpinned by shared goals of economic development, cultural exchange, and mutual growth. "As we approach the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2026, we celebrate the significant milestones achieved together. Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, China has become one of PNG's most important development partners," said Prime Minister Marape. He highlighted the signing of five Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in April 2024 as a pivotal step in strengthening cooperation. These agreements focus on trade, infrastructure development, cultural exchanges, and capacity-building initiatives, showcasing the shared commitment of both nations to fostering sustainable growth and prosperity. Prime Minister Marape commended China for its transformative contributions to PNG's development. He cited major infrastructure projects such as the Ramu 2 Hydro Project,

which will deliver reliable and affordable energy to PNG, supporting industrial growth and improving the quality of life for thousands of Papua New Guineans. He also highlighted the Pacific Marine Industrial Zone, a flagship initiative to boost PNG's fisheries and export industries. "These projects are more than just infrastructure—they are cornerstones of economic empowerment, helping us unlock our country's potential and create sustainable livelihoods for our people," he said. In addition to infrastructure, China's investments in education and human capital development were recognised. "Through government-supported scholarships, many Papua New Guinean students are pursuing degrees in critical fields such as STEM, medicine, business, and other disciplines. These students not only build their futures but also strengthen the bond between our nations through shared learning and cultural understanding," the Prime Minister added.



## CALLS FOR END TO BETELNUT SPITTING AHEAD OF PNG'S 50TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY

**As Papua New Guinea prepares to celebrate 50 years of independence, Prime Minister James Marape has called on all citizens to take pride in their country by ending the habits of betelnut spitting and littering, which continue to stain the nation's image.**

He urged everyone to embrace a cleaner, healthier, and more respectful environment as a tribute to PNG's progress over the past five decades.

"As we prepare to mark this historic milestone, let us reflect on who we are and what kind of country we want to be.

"We cannot continue to celebrate our independence while our streets, public spaces, and buildings are covered in betelnut stains and litter. These are small but significant actions that reflect our respect for our communities and our pride in being Papua New Guinean," he said.

The Prime Minister emphasised that tackling betelnut spitting and littering requires a shift in mindset and a commitment to personal responsibility from every citizen.

"Change starts with each of us. Whether you are a street vendor, a public servant, a student, or a parent — we all have a duty to keep our towns, cities, and villages clean.

"When you chew betelnut, do so responsibly. Dispose of your waste properly. Don't spit on the streets, walls, or public spaces. These small actions make a big difference in how we present ourselves as a nation," he said.

He added that cleaning up public spaces is not just the job of local authorities or cleaning crews but a shared responsibility for every citizen.

"Don't wait for someone else to clean up after you. Show your pride in PNG by keeping it clean," he said.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the health risks associated with betelnut chewing and the environmental damage caused by improper disposal of betelnut husks and plastic waste.

"Betelnut spitting contributes to the spread of diseases such as tuberculosis and oral cancer. It also makes our public spaces dirty and unpleasant. Littering clogs our drains, pollutes our rivers, and harms our environment. These issues impact our health, our economy, and our future," he said.

Prime Minister Marape urged citizens to be more mindful of the impact their habits have on public health and the environment, particularly as the nation

works toward creating cleaner and greener communities.

To mark the 50th Independence Anniversary, the government will launch a nationwide cleanliness campaign aimed at promoting responsible waste management, anti-littering awareness, and betelnut-free public spaces.

The campaign will focus on education, community clean-up events, and enforcement of anti-littering laws.

"I am calling on local governments, churches, schools, and community leaders to join this effort. Let us work together to clean up our towns and villages, not just for this anniversary but for future generations," he said.

Prime Minister Marape reminded citizens that cleanliness and respect for public spaces are key indicators of a nation's progress.

"Papua New Guinea is 50 years old. We are no longer a young nation. We have matured, we have grown, and now it is time to show the world that we are proud of who we are and where we come from.

"Let us make our streets, our towns, and our villages a reflection of that pride. Let us celebrate our independence by honoring our land, respecting each other, and keeping PNG clean," he said.

## PM MARAPE CALLS FOR RESPONSIBLE ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

**Prime Minister James Marape has raised concern over alcohol-related crimes during the festive season and urged citizens to reflect on the values of peace, respect, and unity as Papua New Guinea approaches its 50th Independence Anniversary in 2025.**

Addressing reports of incidents of violence and disorder linked to alcohol, including homebrew, Prime Minister Marape called for greater responsibility from individuals and communities to safeguard the nation's peace and stability.

"As we prepare to mark 50 years of independence, it is more important than ever for us to reflect on how far we've come and how we can shape a better future for our country," Prime Minister Marape said.

"The rise in alcohol-related crimes over the festive period is a reminder that we must all play our part in building a safer and more responsible society."

The Prime Minister emphasised that irresponsible alcohol consumption

continues to be a major contributor to violent crimes, road accidents, and family disputes. He called on community leaders, churches, and families to help foster responsible behavior and promote peaceful celebrations in the lead-up to the nation's golden jubilee.

"This milestone year is a time for celebration, but it must be done responsibly," he said.

"The 50th Anniversary of Papua New Guinea is not just about looking back at our journey since independence but also about committing to the future we want for our children. That future must be built on respect, unity, and peace."

Prime Minister Marape outlined several measures the government is taking to address alcohol abuse and its impacts on society. These include:

Strengthening liquor licensing laws to ensure compliance by retailers.

Increasing police patrols during holiday periods to curb alcohol-related violence.

Rolling out nationwide awareness

programmes on responsible alcohol consumption.

Engaging with community leaders to address the root causes of alcohol abuse.

"We will ensure that liquor outlets comply with the law. Those who breach their licensing agreements will face penalties, including closures," he said.

"At the same time, we will work with communities to promote positive values and behaviors as we approach our 50th Independence Anniversary."

Prime Minister Marape urged citizens to see the upcoming 50th anniversary as an opportunity to strengthen national unity and reaffirm their commitment to building a stronger Papua New Guinea.

"This year is an important moment in our history. It's a time to reflect on where we have been, but more importantly, on where we are going as a nation. I call on all Papua New Guineans to work together, put aside differences, and embrace the values of peace and respect that have kept us united for five decades," he said.

## PM MEETS WITH UN WOMEN ASIA-PACIFIC DIRECTOR

**Prime Minister James Marape had a meeting with UN Women Asia Pacific Regional Director, Christine Arab, on January 30th, to discuss issues of women in Papua New Guinea.**

Prime Minister Marape made the time to see Ms Arab to discuss the status of women and girls in PNG, and particularly the issues of Gender-Based Violence and Sorcery Related Accusations, while offering the support of United Nations to Prime Minister Marape and his government.

Prime Minister Marape reiterated his government's stance on universal education for all children of PNG, and support in education through existing government programs such as the free education policy to give equal opportunities to girls and boys alike.

He continued by further reaffirming women's important role in upholding the household and raising children which he said are vital components of a solid foundation for any society.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the focus on small business development (SME) among the bulk of the population that is working to draw in women to become small scale entrepreneurs who can better empower themselves.



*L-R: UN Resident Coordinator Ricahrd Howard, Prime Minister James Marape, UN Women Asia Pacific Regional Director Christine Arab, UN Women Papua New Guinea Counter Representative Peterson Magoola*

The Prime Minister also briefed Ms Arab of the current efforts being undertaken by the Royal PNG Constabulary to upgrade its operations so it could be better placed to respond to offences being committed against women.

He advised that UN Women programs could do better by being grounded into the provincial governments structure for better sustainability of these programs, as well as the inclusion of churches in sustaining these programs.

## GOV'T RESPONDS TO BUSINESS RISK CONCERNS

**Prime Minister James Marape has acknowledged the concerns raised by the Papua New Guinea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PNGCCI) regarding the law-and-order challenges affecting businesses and foreign investment in the country.**

He reassured the business community that his government is committed to addressing law-and-order issues to create a safer and more conducive environment for business operations in 2025 and beyond.

"I understand that law and order remain a key concern for businesses operating in Papua New Guinea, and I assure our local and foreign investors that the government is taking concrete steps to address these challenges," Prime Minister Marape said.

"Our commitment to improving security is unwavering, as we know that safety and stability are critical for both businesses and communities."

Prime Minister Marape outlined the government's ongoing efforts to tackle crime and improve public safety, particularly in areas that impact businesses and investments.

"Our government has increased funding for the police force and defense forces to strengthen law enforcement capabilities.

"We are also working to modernise our justice system and improve the coordination between law enforcement agencies to ensure that offenders are held accountable," he said.

He noted that a major part of the government's strategy includes addressing underlying socioeconomic issues that contribute to crime, including unemployment, lack of education, and poverty.

"We are tackling the root causes of crime by investing in education, creating jobs, and improving access to services. We believe that by empowering our people and communities, we can reduce the risks faced by businesses and citizens alike," he said.

Prime Minister Marape commended the resilience of businesses operating in Papua New Guinea despite the challenges posed by the current environment. He acknowledged the businesses that continued to operate after the January 10, 2024, looting and burning incidents.

"The resilience and commitment shown by businesses such as Steamships, Brian Bell, City Pharmacy, and Big Rooster, among others, reflect the strength and determination of the business community in Papua New Guinea.

"I want to assure these businesses that

the government is on their side and is working to make PNG a safer place for investments," he said.

Prime Minister Marape emphasised the importance of collaboration between the government and the private sector in addressing law-and-order issues and creating a safer environment for businesses to thrive.

"The government cannot address these challenges alone. We need the continued partnership and support of the private sector to build safer communities and foster economic growth.

"Together, we can address the risks and create opportunities that will benefit both businesses and the people of Papua New Guinea," he said.

The Prime Minister also encouraged businesses to participate in ongoing discussions with the government to provide feedback and suggestions on improving the business climate.

With Papua New Guinea approaching its 50th Independence Anniversary, Prime Minister Marape reiterated his government's commitment to creating a more conducive environment for businesses to grow and prosper.

"As we prepare to celebrate our golden jubilee, we must all work together to create a safer, more prosperous PNG."