

Dept hosts high level discussion panel for National Women's Day



Front Row (L-R): President of PNG Women's Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Avia Koisen, Co-Chair of PNG Persons with Disability Association, Jacqueline Garoau, Chairman of TIPNG, Peter Aitsi, and Chief Secretary, Ivan Pomaleu. BackRow: Staff from the Government Printing Office (GPO)

The Department of Prime Minister and National Executive Council hosted a High Level Discussion Panel on March 24 to mark the National Women's Day in the Country.

Our Panellist were Avia Koisen, Co-Founder and President of the Papua New Guinea Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Jacqueline Garoau, CO-Chair of PNG Persons with Disability Association, Chairman of Transparency International Papua New Guinea Chapter Peter Aitsi and they were supported by Chief Secretary to Gov-

ernment Ivan Pomaleu in the absence of Governor of East Sepik Hon. Allan Bird.

For the panel discussion, we had two sessions where each panellist were given a question each to give their view and or opinion on the challenges that women face in the workplace and how does corruption affect the empowerment and progress of women?

The Panel discussion was opened by the Chief Secretary Pomaleu and urged women to put to keeping on moving forward despite the obstacles and challenges that may hinder them.

He said there are people who are out there who will support you if you keep on doing your best.

This was the same message reiterated by all the panellists saying that there will be a lot of hardships in the process for women to be empowered and to have equal participation in all sectors of work but we must keeping going forward.

Media Director Matrom John said the Panel Discussion was a success with plans to host a bigger event next year in collaboration with the Department of Personnel Management and TIPNG.

She said this is the first ever Panel Discussion hosted by the Department of Prime Minister & National Executive Council to commemorate the National Women's Day.

"We have always marked the day internally in the department and this year, we are bringing it to a high level as a symbol to women all over the country, to show that, "We are watching and listening to their concerns for equal participation and empowerment," Ms John said.

"Thank you, Chief Secretary Pomaleu for your support to make this event happen."

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 ADVISE AND SUPPORT TO THE PRIME MINISTER, THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.



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MESSAGE

BY PRIME MINISTER, JAMES MARAPE, MP
ON THE OCCASION OF UNITED NATION
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On this occasion of the week of recognizing our women, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous life-empowering care that our women of Papua New Guinea have given to us past, present, and into the future.

The women of our country live among some of the most challenging environment in the world – geographically, socially, and economically. They continue to persevere in the face of hardship while giving birth, raising their children, putting them through school, and managing households that are not always in their favour, within environments that are plagued by injustice and strife.

Yet they persevere. Some of them have made it into the modern public arena and continue to excel, demonstrating the courage and toughness of character that so often defines this gender.

This week, as we end the United Nations International Women's Day on Wednesday 08 March 2023, let me take this opportunity to make a special appeal to our men in Papua New Guinea. I want to call on our men to recognize the value in our women and treat them with respect and kindness.

To our men, if any of you are subjecting your woman to violence or disempowerment of any sort, I appeal to you to end this practice today. Our mothers,

wives and daughters deserve more, they deserve better.

As head of your government, let me indicate some efforts we are undertaking to improve life in Papua New Guinea for our women. Our Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Gender Based Violence comprising some senior parliamentarians continues to seek solutions to address the many issues facing our women today.

These challenges are many, varied and complex, and stem from cross-cutting issues of economic and financial empowerment, literacy, policing and our court system, health standards, and the list goes on.

Fundamentally, these are also national issues of development, and as my government continues our efforts in nation-building with opening up our country in the massive infrastructure work we have undertaken; as we work to improve our agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors to economically empower our people, I am of the hope that we will address some of these issues as well. Financial empowerment of our women is important in this cause to free them, many of whom remain subjugated because of the lack of financial independence.

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Message from the Chief Secretary

Welcome everyone to the third 2023 edition of the Inside Sir Manasupe Haus fortnightly 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 third edition for 2023 of the Inside Sir Manasupe Haus Newsletter, on pages 1 & 2, we bring to you Prime Minister James Marape's message to commemorate the International Women's Day.

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from South Korea informs Prime Minister Marape on PNG-Korea trade relations.

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Happy Reading!

Ivan Pomaleu, OBE
Chief Secretary

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This year, we continue to improve our court system, especially our village courts. These are necessary in early conflict resolution. Policing must be improved. Our 2023 National Budget supports this work, where we will begin growing the capacity and capability of our police force. I am comforted by the offers of assistance from our outside partners such as Australia to assist strengthen our Internal Security. We all need a safe, secure environment to live and thrive, but more so our mothers, wives and daughters.

Our health sector is also the target of work. Twenty-two modern hospitals must stand within each province, with health centres that are stocked and staffed nearby within districts. Health care must be accessed within an hour via any mode of trans-

port. Through this, we want to improve maternal and child mortality, and put more emphasis on preventative health. Our specialty cancer and heart hospitals in Port Moresby are ready where our women can access top-rate medical attention for heart problems and cancer without the need to seek this elsewhere outside the country.

I call on all agencies of government and all public servants handling the matters of women to do more, to dig deeper – the Department for Community Development, Police, the Courts, together with NGOs, whose work have contributed tremendously in this area. Doctors Without Borders, Marie Stopes, PNG Tribal Foundation as well as many others including our own people who continue to fight for our women, thank you.

As I close, I thank the United

Nations and its various offices here in Papua New Guinea for the important work it has been doing for our women, and for continuously shining the light on this area that is so important to our nation's development – our women.

Let me end by thanking and congratulating our women of Papua New Guinea once more, and by similar token, extending my heartfelt warm wishes to our women of the Pacific – for bringing us into the world, for nurturing us; for your unconditional love, care and support. We thank God for your lives and your sacrifices.

May God bless you all.

HON. JAMES MARAPE, MP
PRIME MINISTER

Published:
Thursday 09 March 2023

Prime Minister Marape opens East Sepik Provincial Specialist Hospital



(L-R): Prime Minister James Marape and East Sepik Governor Allan Bird cutting ribbon to officially open the ESP Specialist Hospital

Prime Minister James Marape officially opened the East Sepik Provincial Specialist Hospital in East Sepik Province on March 27.

Prime Minister Marape said in 2022, the National Government made a decision to build provincial hospitals around the country in the 22 provinces and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

"We made that decision after COVID-19 shutdown the country and revealed to us that we had only 44 beds with inbuilt oxygen valves in the whole country," he said.

"Another thing was that Health and the economy go hand in hand. Therefore in 2022, we gave more funding to the health sector."

Prime Minister Marape said in

the 2022 Budget, his government also increased funding for education infrastructure and roads that will contribute towards reducing the time people use to travel to their nearest health facilities.

"Today we have more than 300 contractors working in road construction, Health infrastructure development and education," he said.

"Modern Health care is an entitlement for our people and a security for our economy."

The Prime Minister said the Specialist Hospital is an asset for not only the people of East Sepik but also the people of Papua New Guinea.

He added that the National Government has already allocated K15 million to start work on staff housing so Specialist

doctors can be brought in to work at the hospital.

Prime Minister Marape further added that he has brought another K5 million for the hospital to start work on a seawall to protect this state asset from rising sea levels and another K3 million for the Provincial Government to start feasibility studies on alternate sources of energy supply.

He said the government will now work on sourcing cheap loans to ensure all the other Provinces can have hospitals that are built to standards like the East Sepik Provincial Specialist Hospital.

"I would rather borrow from tomorrow's earning to build for not only tomorrow but for today," Prime Minister Marape said.

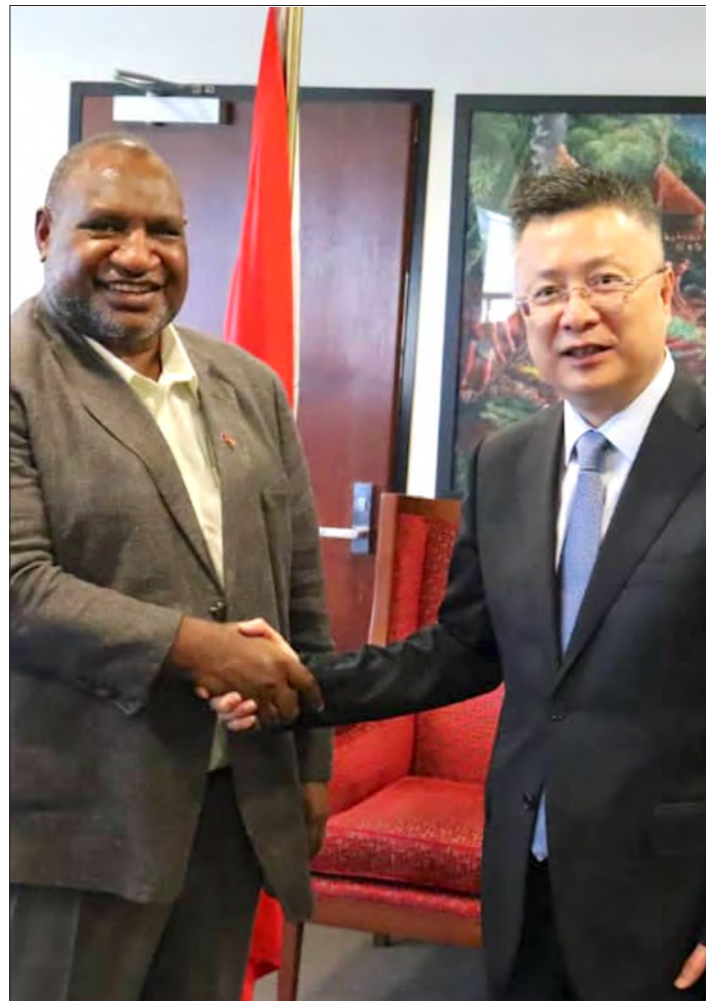
He said he is doing that now because he does not want to pass on the development burden to do the next generation.

Prime Minister Marape urged the people to trust that his government is not taking out loans that will make the country so indebted with no way to pay back the loan.

He also placed on record his acknowledgement of the contributions and work made by the O'Neill Government for the work on the Specialist hospital.

Prime Minister Marape then thanked the contractor, WAMED for working through challenges like COVID-19 that shutdown the country and still deliver the project on budget.

PNG Gov't reaffirms relationship with People's Republic of China



(L-R): Prime Minister James Marape meets with China's Special Envoy for Pacific Island Countries, H.E. Qian Bo

Prime Minister James Marape has reaffirmed Papua New Guinea's relationship with the People's Republic of China in the 'Friends to All; Enemy to None' diplomatic policy when he welcomed visiting Special Envoy, His Excellency Qian Bo to Papua New Guinea.

None' diplomatic policy when he welcomed visiting Special Envoy, His Excellency Qian Bo to Papua New Guinea.

Ambassador Qian was appointed by the Chinese Government in February this year as the Special Envoy for Pacific Island Countries and starts a tour of the Pacific beginning in PNG.

At a high-level meeting on March 7 at the Prime Minister's Office, Sir Manasupe House in Waigani, Port Moresby, Prime Minister Marape and Ambassador Qian discussed various bi-lateral matters concerning their respective countries and the relationship both countries share.

"We are friend to all, enemy to none; we relate with East, West, North and South in the manner that do not compromise each other's positions. We respect the sovereignty of nations," said Prime Minister Marape.

"China has been a very important partner to PNG in all sense of a bilateral relationship – in politics, government-to-government, and business-to-business. We certainly welcome you to PNG. You are here in a country that is a very close friend of China.

"Your appointment as Special Envoy for the Pacific reflects your President's commitment for a close rapport between your country and us in the Pacific. We appreciate this."

The Prime Minister reiterated the Free Trade Agreement between the two countries and

asked for the detailing of this to entail downstream processing and business operations in PNG, adding that this was the number one focus of his government.

"There is no relevance in government-to-government conversations if there is no security in my economy, and I would like China to embrace that line of thinking. We ask for a deep economic relationship that seals our people-to-people engagements, business-to-business, and on the basis of that, a good government-to-government relationship."

Prime Minister Marape said with China's capability in business and trade, PNG welcomed China, especially in the "upper industrial level in the economic zones".

The Prime Minister also reiterated his earlier calls for China to consider opening up direct flights between Port Moresby and Shanghai in a co-sharing arrangement to tap into the Chinese tourism market.

"PNG will not compromise its relationship with China. Our Foreign Minister is working on our foreign policy that is coming out – key among them is the respect of the sovereignty of each nation," he said.

Prime Minister Marape thanked Ambassador Qian for reaffirming China's relationship with PNG.

Chinese Government invites Prime Minister Marape for a dialogue in China

Prime Minister James Marape has been invited to address the Government of China in an important dialogue toward an offer the Prime Minister is yet to officially accept.

The invitation was delivered in person by visiting Chinese Special Envoy to the Pacific, Ambassador Qian Bo in Port Moresby.

Prime Minister Marape in return thanked Ambassador Qian for the invitation as he paid special compliments on Chinese President Xi Jinping with whom he had a one-on-one dialogue during his visit to Bangkok for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting at the end of last year.

"I have great respect for President Xi Jinping. I appreciate

the invitation to engage at the leadership dialogue. It is a high honour for PNG to be picked possibly among many other nations.

"I want to also offer my congratulations on his re-election for an historic third term.

"Chinese stability ensures global world economy has a stable outlook. That is the con-

tribution his re-election has given to the world.

"All economies depend on the stability of certain parts of the world and China is the leader in trade and commerce in our region. Where there is stability in leadership, the rest of the economies that depend on China can focus, plan and work better together," said Prime Minister Marape.

Better roads and communication for people of Lasul-Baining - PM Marape



L-R: East New Britain Governor Michael Marum and Prime Minister James Marape at Tokua Airport, on their way to meet the people of Lassul-Baining

Prime Minister James Marape has assured people of remote Lasul-Baining in Gazelle, East New Britain, of better roads and communication.

He gave this assurance on March 10 at remote Kurindal in Lasul-Baining Local Level Government (LLG), Gazelle, East New Britain, when launching the brand-new KKC Veneer Mill.

The Prime Minister was told of the difficulties the people faced in travelling through rugged terrain to Kokopo, as well as having no access to communication.

Prime Minister Marape said road access would be a priority of Government, given the economic importance of the area.

"Your MP, Hon. Jelta Wong, has told me of the state of the road connecting you with the outside," he said.

"The Government has already allocated K3 million for road development with another K7

million for next year. I can assure you that work has already started with funding allocated to Gazelle District, however, the cost will be a lot higher. We have taken this on board and will work with you through National Forest Authority, Department of National Planning, company, district and province. We will work out a tax-credit arrangement so that our people here have road access to Kokopo and Kimbe."

Prime Minister Marape said he would get Telikom PNG to set up a communication tower at the earliest for people of Lasul-Baining to communicate with the outside world.

"I will get Telikom to come here and look for an appropriate place to set up a communications tower so that you can communicate with the outside world," he told the people of Lasul-Baining.

"Lasul-Baining will no longer be the 'last place', that I can assure you."

Marape Government believes in provincial government system

Prime Minister James Marape says the Pangu Pati-led Government he leads has "total belief and sees great value" in the provincial government system.

Prime Minister Marape said this at the end of the two-day Governors' Meeting in Port Moresby on March 13.

"We subscribe to decentralisation – which is deeply entrenched in our Constitution. That is the reason why our nation remains together," he said.

"In the midst of many challenges, 47 years on, we now have the Special Region of

Bougainville under autonomy, we have many performing provinces who want to be functionally autonomous, we also have some provinces who in terms of their internal revenue are weak.

"How do we balance this conversation so that the system and structures of government we set up do not become impediments, but assist in service delivery to the masses of our people? At the moment, as we speak, 80 per cent of our people remain in the provinces and districts.

"Recognising the importance of the provincial government system, and the functions they

have, the National Government came in this afternoon to give respect to them."

Prime Minister Marape said Minister for Inter-Government Relations, Hon. Soroi Eoe, would take recommendations of the Governors to the Government.

"This is so that, together with the Governors, we can tailor make a system that is complementary to National Government in as far as service delivery and ensuring our people are better served going forward," he said.

The Prime Minister commended the Governors for coming

together in a bipartisan approach, whether in Government or Opposition, to make decisions for the good of the people.

"This all leads on to our nation celebrating 50 years of independence. By September 16 this year, we hope to have total clarity on what are the roles, responsibilities and functions of provincial government, national government, districts and local level governments," he said.

"We hope to be expeditious in the way and manner in which we do business to deliver services to our people."

Korea-PNG trade increases by 240 per cent to US\$1.8 billion

Trade between Republic of Korea and Papua New Guinea was worth US\$1.8 billion (K6.33 billion) in 2022, a massive 240 per cent increase from 2021, according to a high-level Korean delegation visiting PNG.

The delegation is made up of politicians, government officials and leaders of business in Korea.

Delegation leader Park Byeong-seug, who is representing Korean President H.E. Yoon Suk Yeol, revealed this to Prime Minister Hon. James Marape during a meeting at Sir Manasupe Haus in Port Moresby on March 21.

He said this was largely due to the leadership of Prime Minister Marape.

“Trade volume last year (2022) between Korea and Papua New Guinea recorded US\$1.8

billion dollars, which was a 240 per cent increase compared to the previous year,” he told Prime Minister Marape.

“I believe it shows how our economic relations are complementary to each other, which means there is greater potential for both development and cooperation.

“Korea and Papua New Guinea, and their economies, are complementary because because Korea has the experience of growth and high-level technology, while PNG has high-growth potential as well as rich resources.

“Korea has grown from one of the poorest countries in the world to one of the G10 countries in the world, which is why Korea is wanting to establish win-win relations with PNG – based on mutual understanding.”

Mr. Byeong-seug invited PM Marape, on behalf of President Yoon, to attend the first Korea-Pacific Islands Summit in Seoul in May, to discuss issues of climate change as well as furthering bilateral relations. He also asked for PNG’s support to host World Expo2030 in Busan, which Prime Minister Marape pledged.

“Korea sees Papua New Guinea as the hub nation of Pacific Island countries and values the potential of bilateral relations for both cooperation and development,” Mr. Byeong-seug said.

Prime Minister Marape said the big increase in trade between Korea and PNG had not gone unnoticed by his Government, and there was room for even more growth.

“I want to offer my country as an investment destination for

Korean companies, as well as for our producers to export to your country’s markets,” he told Mr. Byeong-seug.

“We have energy sources; we have raw materials. My Government is pushing for downstream processing and we invite companies in relevant industries in your country to come into our Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

“Our GDP (gross domestic product) is well-placed to expand rapidly in the next 10 to 15 years, based on the resources we have, so we are inviting companies from friends of PNG – including Korea – to come and do business here.”

Prime Minister Marape also said there were several outstanding bilateral issues between Korea and PNG over many years which needed to be resolved.

Commerce Department finalises NEC policy submission on national gold bullion



Prime Minister James Marape speaking at a press conference and accompanied by Deputy Prime John Rosso, Minister for State-owned Enterprises William Duma and Minister for Fisheries Jelta Wong

wealth for the nation.

The submission in essence brings to reality the Government’s commitment to industrialize and downstream process of natural resources to add value to PNG’s primary commodities including gold and precious minerals, oil and gas, agriculture, forestry and fisheries products, which is an integral part of our policy directive deemed as ‘Take Back PNG,’ said Prime Minister Marape.

“I am therefore greatly honoured to announce this milestone National Gold Bullion Policy developed by my government to charter a new direction for the gold bullion industry particularly to add value through downstream processing and manufacturing.

“In view of the above, I call upon all relevant stakeholders to support the Department of Commerce and Industry, Department of Treasury, Department of Mining, Bank of PNG and Mineral Resources Authority to mention a few, to take full ownership of this policy and support its implementation,” the Prime Minister said.

The Department of Commerce & Industry has finalized the NEC Policy Submission on the Gold Bullion Policy and has submitted it to the NEC for endorsement.

The Gold Bullion Policy is an initiative of the Marape-

Rosso Government to ensure our non-renewable and renewable resources are properly harnessed to increase revenue streams to support our national budget, grow our rural economy and improve the quality of life for

our people.

The Government requires a vibrant and competitive national gold bullion program to support its macroeconomic and fiscal policy functions which will grow and sustain our economy and create

Marape Gov’t serious about fighting corruption in PNG



Prime Minister James Marape, MP (File Photo)

Prime Minister James Marape says the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) is now up and running, and urged the public to report all matters of corruption

He said that three ICAC Commissioners from overseas had already been engaged.

“Any cases of corruption that the public sees out there should be reported to ICAC, as well as Police and Ombudsman Commission,” Prime Minister Marape said.

“Our Government does not tolerate corruption.

“People should not only just post cases of alleged corruption on the social media but report these to the responsible authorities.

“We also have the Whistle Blowers’ Act and the Proceeds of Crime Act for undisclosed wealth in place, so Papua New Guineans should not just post

cases of alleged corruption, they should report them.

“I reiterate that ours is an anti-corruption Government.”

Prime Minister Marape said the Proceeds of Crime Act, which was passed by Parliament last year, showed how serious his Government was about fighting corruption.

It means that public officials – politicians and public servants – must explain and prove that their wealth was legitimately obtained. Those who hold public offices, and illegally gain wealth through corrupt practices, will now come under scrutiny with passage of this bill.

“I made a commitment to this nation, when I became Prime Minister in May 2019, that we will fight corruption,” Prime Minister Marape said.

“My Government is serious about fighting corruption as shown by passage of the Whis-

tle Blowers’ Act and establishment of ICAC in 2020, and the Proceeds of Crime Bill in 2022 – which completes the trifecta of anti-corruption laws.

“If you are a politician or public servant, or any ordinary citizen who suddenly has many houses or many cars, or a fat bank account with no explanation as to where this money came from, then Police and Internal Revenue Commission (IRC) have every right to question you,” Prime Minister Marape said.

“If you have earned this honestly, then there is nothing for you to be fearful about, as you have done nothing wrong or illegal.

“We want a population made up of people who are earning an honest living.

“Gone are the days when we allowed corruption to proliferate among us.”

PM Marape calls for reforestation of areas being logged in PNG

Prime Minister James Marape has called on logging companies, landowners and the National Forest Authority (NFA) to be involved in reforestation of areas that have been logged.

He made the call on March 10 at remote Kurindal in Lasul-Baining Local Level Government (LLG), Gazelle, East New Britain, when launching the brand-new KKC Veneer Mill. This is a project fully supported by Gazelle District, East New Britain Provincial Govern-

ment and landowners.

Prime Minister Marape said the Government – through NFA - would give K3 million for reforestation of the area being logged in Lasul-Baining LLG, and gave K1 million to Gazelle MP and Fisheries Minister, Hon. Jelta Wong, as the first installment.

“I want to ask the investor, landowners and the NFA to be involved in reforestation. When you chop down trees, you have a plant a new one, so that forestry can continue in a

sustainable manner going forward,” he said.

“I want NFA to get K3 million from Log Export Development Levy (LEDL) funds and work with the company and landowners in forest regrowth, plantation forest, and bring in balsa to be grown here.

“You can grow 1000 balsa trees on one hectare of land, with one cubic metre of balsa earning K400, which means a family can make up to K20,000 per year from one hectare. This K20,000 is more than the

pay of people working in towns and cities. There is money on the land.

“I want to see forestry being a sustainable business in the Lasul-Baining area now and into the future

Prime Minister Marape commended the East New Britain leadership at all levels for being proactive in sustainable development through logging, agriculture, fisheries and tourism and said this must continue.

It is important to bring CACC to where it matters most - Pomaleu



L-R: Chief Secretary to Government Ivan Pomaleu and Acting Secretary for Dept of Treasury Andrew Oeaka receiving a traditional welcome in Eboa Village

The Chief Secretary to Government and Chairman of the Central Agency Coordination Committee, Ivan Pomaleu says that it is important to bring the Central Agency Coordination Committee to where it matters most.

Chief Secretary Pomaleu said this on March 31 during the First CACC Regional Consultative Meeting for this year at Eboa Village in Kairuku District of Central Province.

He told the people of Eboa that they were the reason why CACC was present today in their village for this important meeting.

“We wanted to ensure that we stay connected to what you have in mind. We wanted to make sure that you have the ultimate opportunity to deal directly with us; to tell us what your issues are and to make us understand them.

“I want to acknowledge the speech of the Kairuku Member Hon. Peter Isoiamo. We are here to listen more than to speak so I want to thank you for speaking on behalf of your people and for telling us what it’s like; for giving us an inside view of what your important challenges are and what your priorities are.

“This is the reason why we came. Let me tell you a little bit about CACC. The CACC sits under the National Executive Council. NEC is a committee of ministers. We, CACC, are the committee under the NEC.

“Now, what does that mean? That means that every policy, project and document that goes before the NEC comes through CACC. We clear it before it goes to the ministers and the Prime Minister to deal with.

“So, we are at a place where we do a lot of things; we read about it, we hear those who

represent different policies and proposals coming through. But sometimes, we don’t see what it means to be on the ground. We cannot make the connections on what it means to our people in villages such as Eboa. And so, it was important that we brought CACC to where it matters most.

“We need to be able to appreciate that what we do here means something here in the village, LLG, district and province,” he said.

Mr Pomaleu said this was not the first time CACC had these regional meetings. The CACC has had regional meetings before and mostly were held in towns. However, this time CACC is taking the meetings to the villages and communities. This is the first held in Central Province for the Southern Region.

“We will do four meetings this year in the regions. The

Southern region gets one and this is the one in Eboa Village; for Momase, it will be held in Sepik; for the Highlands, it will be in Enga and for the New Guinea Islands; it will be in Manus.

He is hopeful that over the course of a few years, CACC will be able to cover as many of the villages in the country.

“We hope to be able to understand the key issues that are important to our people on the ground.

“We will be able to translate some of the government’s important policies to those who receive them so that we are able to make the important connection. We are able to appreciate what we are deciding here or recommending to our government to do, which means something to our people.

“I want to reflect on the speech that the Honorable Member has made, which covered a lot on agriculture, SME, transport, education, infrastructure, health, village developments that are all important to us.

“Honourable Member, we are looking forward to your district development plan, we might send a representative to the launch if you give us an invite.

“We won’t be able to have all the answers as we sit at a place where we have to help our government determine priorities and that is subject to leadership and the government that you are part of to determine how we allocate resources. However, we certainly can become sympathetic to your issues.

“Our government does have priorities but these are the people who make it happen. These are the people who will put the paper work together, these are the people who will potentially decide on the numbers and go to the budget. These people are your district members,” he said.

PM Marape meets TotalEnergies officials in Africa

Prime Minister James Marape met with officials of TotalEnergies and Compagnie des Bois du Gabon (CBG), in Libreville, Gabon.

He was accompanied by Forests Minister Hon. Salio Waipo and Environment and Conservation Minister Hon. Simon Kilepa.

Compagnie des Bois du Gabon (CBG) has partnered with France-headed global oil, gas, and energy major TotalEnergies SE to develop a forward-looking model of sustainable and responsible forest management that combines sustainable harvesting, biodiversity conservation, and long-

term carbon storage.

CBG is a key player in Gabonese forestry, recognized for its responsible and sustainable management of 600,000 hectares (ha) of forest, certified to the highest international standards of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and for its ongoing contribution to protecting biodiversity.

Prime Minister Marape wants such an arrangement in PNG.

“TotalEnergies and CBG have a very good partnership here in Gabon,” the Prime Minister Marape said after the meeting.

“They are also in partnership with the government here on

land use in regards to forest management.

“Such a partnership has already started in Papua New Guinea at Kuriva in Central Province.

“TotalEnergies is also looking at more such partnerships in PNG to offset their carbon footprint (through the Papua LNG Project).

“I also want major oil and gas companies in PNG, such as ExxonMobil and Santos, to get involved in such partnership.”

Meanwhile, the two-day ‘One Forest Summit’ in Libreville started on March 1.

The Libreville meeting, on 1 and 2 March 2023, aims to lead to new commitments and concrete initiatives concerning the advancement of knowledge and the promotion of scientific cooperation on forest ecosystems, the promotion of sustainable value chains in the forest sector, the development of innovative sources of financing, notably by exploring market-based solutions for biodiversity conservation.

The One Forest Summit also expects to promote solidarity between the world’s three major tropical forest basins, the Congo Basin, the Amazon Forest and the forests of South East Asia including PNG.

PM’s vision to have services one hour away from people realized for Gaulim

The vision of the Marape/Rosso Government to bring services to within an hour from the people by road, Air and water has become a reality for the people of Gaulim in the East New Britain Province.

The Member for Gazelle and Minister for Fisheries, Hon. Jelta Wong joined hands with the Minister for Health Dr. Lino Tom and Member for Pomio and Chairman of Parliamentary Committee on Health Matters Hon. Elias Kapavore to officially open the Gaulim Community Health Centre on February 9.

Minister for Health Dr. Lino Tom said in the National Health Plan, there are five Key Result Areas (KRA), the first one talks about Community involvement or partnership with the community.

“That means, everything the we have done or are currently doing, if the people do not take ownership or show appreciation of the services that

have been brought to you, services will be affected,” he said.

“I want to remind you again that the project cost over K5 million which is a big investment that came from our development partners. “

Minister Tom said we as a country do not have enough financial resources to support all our people that is why we have development partners like Australia and the ADB come in to support our development agendas.

He said therefore, the least Papua New Guineans can do is to look after the important infrastructure that have been given to us.

The National Health Plan 2021-2030 has five Key Result Areas. The KRA’s are:

1. Healthier Communities through effective engagement
2. Working together in partnership
3. Increase access to quality

and affordable health services

4. Address disease burdens and targeted health priorities

5. Strengthen health systems.

The Minister for Health also gave a challenge to the East New Britain Provincial Health Authority and by extension, all provincial health authorities to send qualified people sitting in Offices in towns, to work at rural facilities right across the country.

He said when we build such infrastructures around the country, we want all provincial Health authorities to audit their structures and to send qualified people to work and manage those infrastructures.

Minister Tom said right now, the authority to manage the health facilities and staffing rest with the PHA’s however, if there is mismanagement, the National Health Department will intervene so that Quality

and accessible Primary Health Care can reach the people.

“We want all rural health facilities to be open and operational.”

He said we all know that the major impact to the health and wellbeing of our people comes from the rural health centres and not the major hospitals in the towns and cities.

The Gaulim Community Health Centre is a Level 2 hospital and was funded by the ADB and the people and Government of Australia, and the construction was managed by the ADB.

This facility will provide supervised birthing, anti-natal care, short-term inpatient care and a range of other out-patient services.

The new Gaulim Community Health Centre facility will actively reduce the amount of time and resources the people in the community use to travel to Kerevat and Nonga to get primary health care.

PNG Government to assist in Vanuatu's cyclone disasters

Prime Minister James Marape has offered the country's support to Vanuatu after the disasters brought on by tropical cyclones Judy and Kevin.

Prime Minister Marape on March 5 offered his sympathies to the people of Vanuatu and said Papua New Guinea stood ready to assist its Melanesian brother regain its footing after natural disasters hit the island nation beginning Friday last week.

Vanuatu, now in a declared State of Emergency, was first hit by a Category 4 tropical

Cyclone Judy and, two days later, by Cyclone Kevin, with winds measuring up to 230 kilometres an hour, according to the Fiji Meteorology Service. On Friday (03.03.23), two earthquakes registering 6.5 and 5.4 in magnitude also hit the island nation. No casualties have been reported as yet but hundreds of people remain in emergency evacuation centres in the Capital of Port Vila.

Prime Minister Marape said he was very concerned at the news and said his government would do everything to help the people of Vanuatu over-

come these disasters.

"I am very concerned to hear this news of destruction and damage brought about by the cyclones," said Prime Minister Marape.

"Our Pacific Island states are prone to natural disasters of all kinds and the smaller island countries feel the effects even more than bigger countries like PNG. As Pacific people, we always stand together united to face these challenges.

"Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu share a long history of working together and at this

time when our Melanesian wantok needs our help once more, we will give the needed support to help the affected people of Vanuatu rebuild their lives in the aftermath of Cyclone Kevin," said the Prime Minister.

Various areas of PNG such as West New Britain have also been affected by the recent strong winds and rain.

Prime Minister Marape said assessments of the damages would be carried out and government support also given to affected Papua New Guineans.

PM calls on logging industry to venture into downstream processing

Prime Minister James Marape has reiterated his call on the logging industry to venture into downstream processing than to continue exporting

He made the call on March 10, at remote Kurindal in Lasul-Baining Local Level Government (LLG), Gazelle, East New Britain, when launching the brand-new KKC Veneer Mill.

This is a project fully supported by Gazelle District, East New Britain Provincial Government and landowners.

This is the second veneer plant in the country after Angoram in East Sepik and the Prime Minister wants it to be the building block for transformation into a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Lasul-Baining. Earlier this month, he visited the Gabon SEZ in Central Africa and saw for himself how downstream processing of logs was transforming the economy of this country

Prime Minister Marape was accompanied by Forests Minister Hon. Salio Waipo, Fisheries

Minister and Gazelle MP Hon. Jelta Wong and Housing Minister Hon. Dr Kobby Bomareo.

The mill is very much in line with the Marape Government's push for downstream processing of logs and other resources.

It is providing employment and training to hundreds of young people, as well as building the local economy, in this rural area of East New Britain.

"We have to add value to our resources," Prime Minister Marape said.

"Logs which are downstream processed add four to five times more value to round log exports.

"This is why my Government is committed to stopping round log exports by 2025, the only exception being traditional landowners.

"Logging companies who have been in the country should follow the example of KKC and go into downstream."

Prime Minister Marape com-

mended KKC for venturing into such a remote part of East New Britain and transforming the lives of the people.

"This project employs 500 to 1000 people."

"It spins around about K100,000 every month into the society here, and indirectly embraces 3000 to 5000 people, in terms of business spin-offs.

"It is a wonderful testimony to partnership between national government, provincial government, district, local level government, people and investor.

"This is a project which confirms to the rest of the country that you (Lasul-Baining) are not a forgotten place and people. God has blessed you with natural resources.

"Many people say this LLG is the 'last place', however, you deserve the presence of Government and companies.

"This project affirms that even the most-remote areas can be unlocked for their

economic potential."

Prime Minister Marape said such companies like KKC Veneer Mill, which brought development into rural areas, deserved incentives like tax holidays, reduced export levies and tax deductions.

The KKC Veneer Mill is located on a 300-hectare run down cocoa and coconut plantation purchased from Agmark.

The mill has a berthing facility and a sustainable energy plant to provide power for the operations.

When it is in full operation, it will take about 200,000 cubic metres of round log and process it into timber, plywood, wood chip and pellets.

When it goes into full operation, the company will employ up to 3,000 people. Currently, it employs up to 1,000 people who work in various areas like logging, mill, reforestation, shipping, road infrastructure and power production.

Logs will be harvested from natural forest and plantations.

Gov't happy with TotalEnergies progress



Prime Minister James Marape (5th from right), Deputy Prime Minister John Rosso (3rd from right) and Ministers at a high level meeting with TotalEnergies executives

Prime Minister James Marape and his senior Ministerial team have been briefed by Senior Executives of TotalEnergies that Papua LNG was on schedule for FEED (Front End Engineering Design) announcement and will move into early preparatory works and as well as Final Investment Decision late this year or early next year.

The Total team was led by Mr Julian Pouget, the Senior Vice President for the Asia Pacific region who is here for the FEED announcements.

"We were pleasantly informed that by next year construction of multibillion Kina worth of infrastructures would start

and run until first gas in 2027." Prime Minister Marape said.

"And with our P'nyang gas agreement we will extend construction money into P'nyang development that will see our country having a much longer construction period than the PNG LNG period years."

It is anticipated that Papua LNG construction will start in 2024 and complete in 2027 with first gas and P'nyang LNG construction would continue into 2031 or 2032.

Prime Minister Marape asked the company to urgently work with Government in finalizing the local content plan, the local labor recruitment and training to do away with for-

eign workers coming in on jobs which Papua New Guineans can be trained to do.

Prime Minister Marape said that government's technological colleges are on standby to mass train workers to participate in the LNG construction phase and operations as well.

He also directed for TotalEnergies Partnership with Kumul Petroleum and MRDC to produce local fuels using domestic market gas provisions and also asked for support for Kumul Petroleum to build a standalone train for other gas from stranded fields.

The Prime Minister also asked TotalEnergies for expansion in their green energy concepts

especially to partner Government to offset carbon footprints and to have a LNG product that is carbon neutral.

All in all, Prime Minister Marape is very pleased that TotalEnergies appreciated all of government's concerns and their support to government policies on local content, downstream processing, local labor hire, development forum with land owners and provinces and districts concern, infrastructure development and others.

Tonight will be the announcement of FEED and government gives commitments to stand with this project until first gas in 2027.

Cabinet approves rescinding of NFA application of vessel day scheme price

Prime Minister James Marape says Cabinet has recently approved to rescind on the application of Vessel Day Scheme Price used by the National Fisheries Authority.

The Prime Minister said the application of Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) Price of the fixed price of \$10, 500/Day Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and pro rata benchmark for Archipelagic Waters (AW) that was approved in National Executive Council (NEC) Decision No. NG67 / 2017 has been rescinded.

"Cabinet has also approved

for the National Fisheries Authority, through the National Fisheries Board to be given back the express powers and flexibility to set the VDS prices based on the fishing conditions, climate change, global tuna prices movement and other economic factors affecting fishing operations," Prime Minister Marape said.

"The National Fisheries Authority through the National Fisheries Board will also get back the power to set respective variations in the internal rate of return (IRR) for each fishing arrangements."

Prime Minister Marape said Cabinet further approved for the Rebate to be set at US\$ 250/Tonne and it is subjected to be reviewed in 2025 and 2030 respectively, consistent and in compliance with NEC Decision No. NG47/2017.

He said all these changes are part of the NFA reforms to;

(i) Optimized revenue from the sale of fishing access rights on behalf of the State;

(ii) Increase downstream processing, to exports, employment opportunities, and indirect revenue through tax,

particularly in the processing sector; and

(iii) Encourage growth in the number of purse seine vessels reflagged to PNG under the domestication policy.

The Prime Minister said all these reforms are in line with the Government's objectives for the future management and development of the tuna fishing and processing sectors in Papua New Guinea and to maximise fisheries contributions to 70% of the country's exports through downstream processing.