

# Wealth from land, answer to poverty

By HARLYNE JOKU

CREATION of wealth out of customary land is the answer to PNG's poverty and social issues

This is the advice from the Secretary of Lands and physical Planning Papi Kimas.

Mr Kimas was speaking at the opening of the land administrators and valuers' conference held at the National Research Institute yesterday.

He told the conference that he was getting sick and tired of "misconceived" ideas by certain non-governmental organisations on the issue of customary land registration.

"They have to get it right. Customary land registration is not going to remove land from customary landowners, it's about

them registering their land to develop and create wealth for themselves and their families," he said.

Mr Kimas said that people who were serious about development needed to develop their land.

In PNG 3 per cent of the land is State land while the rest is customary.

Mr Kimas said land wealth could far exceed wealth gained from non-renewable resources such as gold, copper, oil and gas.

He blasted those that conduct land valuation, surveyors and administrators of land for having the system fouled up making it almost difficult for ordinary Papua New Guineans to get help in regard to their land.

"I am very disappointed with

these officers who have thrown their code of ethics out of the window. How do they administer land cases in the country? Let's be realistic and honest about these issues. Let's get the system administering land right," he said. Mr Kimas urged key land officers to action the government's vision 2050 which highlighted the second most important pillar as land.

He said economic wealth was vested in all Papua New Guineans but when people did not get it right on what their land value was and messed up then they could say goodbye to their wealth and future opportunities. Mr Kimas said there would be a new structure of the department announced and launched next month.

## Bougainvilleans in Lae cast votes

PEOPLE from the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (ABG) living in Lae had the chance to vote yesterday when polling began around 12 noon.

Many Bougainvilleans turned up yesterday at the Vele Rumana building, where polling was con-

ducted and cast their votes.

Michael Rombe, one of the polling officials, said that voting was delayed for a day after the ballot papers arrived late on Monday afternoon from Bougainville.

He said there was a good turnout, from the many Bougainvilleans

living within Lae city.

He said that polling would still continue until Saturday citing that there were no major problems as everyone came in an orderly manner, checked their names and cast their votes into the ballot boxes.

## Bad 'apples' face axe

By HARLYNE JOKU

CERTAIN public servants branded as "a few rotten apples" involved in corruption and fraud of public funds will be identified and removed.

This is the warning issued by the Secretary of National Planning and Monitoring Joseph Lelang and NCD metropolitan superintendent Fred Yakasa at a joint press conference held yesterday as they announced their intention to stamp out corruption in the public service.

Mr Lelang and Mr Yakasa said they had enough evidence especially into dealings of certain officers in the key departments of Finance, Planning, Treasury and Department of Petroleum and Energy at the National Planning headquarters at Vulupindi Haus.

Mr Lelang said he had before him a list of cases that involved fraud, collusion and corruption related to misuse of public funds and he would soon be referring the names to police to probe into and charge the "few rotten apples" who were involved.

He said these few workers had collaborated with outsiders to defraud the State of public funds and engage in corrupt activities.

"In a number of these instances, we have gathered enough evidence for police to deal with and we have handed them all to the police to deal with them," he said.

"That is the extent to which we are going to clean up this rot that continues to remain elusive and undetected for some time now," Mr Lelang said.

## Vote good leaders: Ogio

By SIMON ERORO

MEMBER for North Bougainville and Minister for Higher Education Michael Ogio became the third person yesterday to cast his vote in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville elections yesterday in Port Moresby.

Other notable faces who cast their votes yesterday were Sam Akoitai, former MP for Central Bougainville and Michael Laimo MP for South Bougainville and former Minister for Education in the Somare Government.

Mr Ogio reminded the Bougainvilleans back home and in other towns and cities of the country to vote without intimidation but for better leadership in the region.

He said these people who they wanted to be their leaders must be of substance and integrity because this was the second general elections.

"The deciding factor is what we have achieved in the previous government. When I see the province especially our infrastructure in health, education, roads and any other infrastructure in general... I feel very sorry," Mr Ogio said.

He said the National Government's Budget over the last five years allocated millions of kina into these areas for improvements but there was nothing tangible to confirm that the money was put into good use - service delivery.

Mr Ogio asked his people to vote for candidates who can make things happen for Bougainville.

"As Member for North Bougainville, I am willing to work with anyone who succeeds as president in unity for the betterment of the people of the region," he said.

## Carbon trade roles confirmed



**KIRK William Roberts, CEO of Nupan (PNG) Trading Corporation Limited, pictured right listening to a presentation by landowners in the East Sepik region.**

**At this meeting, it was decided that the East Sepik landowners would appoint Nupan and Roberts have their power of attorney and project developer for Carbon Trade, ending months of confusion.**

**Mr Roberts promised the landowners that "like what we are doing for the landowners and peoples of Kamula Doso and East Pangia, and all our other project areas, we will work tirelessly to get your carbon trade project approved by the international community at the highest possible level, and bring back revenue to the land-**

**owners and people.**

**"No matter how hard it is, or how long it might take, or how much the logging companies or politicians try to stop us, we will represent the interest of the landowners and the people to the best of our ability and we will win!"**

**Mr Roberts, who left Port Moresby last weekend for a quick trip to Hong Kong, the international headquarters of Nupan, for the annual board meeting, is now in his Brisbane office putting the finishing touches on the presentations to the VCS and CCBA to be made in Washington, for the final verification of the process he has designed Port Moresby for PNG. He is due back in POM within the next week.**

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