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Post-Courier:

ABG starts capacity building training

THE Autonomous Bougainville Government's Department of Mining officially started its capacity building training program for its technical staff last week with the attachment of two staff with the Department of Mineral Policy & Geohazards Management (DMPGM) and the Mineral Resources Authority (MRA).

The training is in line with the ABG's desire to build its capacity to be able to draw down on mining powers and functions which would enable the Autonomous Government to manage the mining sector on Bougainville.

Department of Mineral Policy & Geohazards Management Secretary Nellie James received and welcomed the ABG staff on Monday this week. "I am pleased to finally implement the National Government's commitment to the ABG and particularly to its Department of Mining and welcome on board their two technical staff who will be attached with us and the Mineral Resources Authority for the next three months. Between the MRA and us, we are committed to providing the best possible training for them including placing them with the various operating mines in the country," she said. The two staff are Leslie Siowi, a graduate environmental scientist and Simon Jaintong, a communications and project liaison officer. Chief executive officer of the ABG Department of Mining Steven Burain expressed his appreciation and looked forward to the successful outcome of the training program.

"This is the start of what will be a milestone achievement for us and I look forward to the successful outcome of this training program. The DMPGM and the MRA have been very supportive and played a pivotal role in the implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Supervisory Body (JSB) on the drawdown of mining powers and functions", he said. Mr Burain said that the training attachments will see both his staff spending equal amounts of time over the next three months between DMPGM and MRA concentrating on mineral policy and mining regulation.

Peace finally reigns

By WINTERFORD TOREAS

A BIG peace ceremony was held last Wednesday at the Wakunai station between the Wakunai people from central Bougainville and the Siwai from south Bougainville.

The reconciliation was over the death of a youth from Wakunai who was shot dead by armed men while he was in Siwai last August.

The ceremony was witnessed by senior Autonomous Bougainville Government ministers Robert Hamal Sawa (Peace and Reconciliations) and Glyn Tovirika (Veteran Affairs). It started off with the acceptance of the traditional Siwai ritual known as “smesme” by the Wakunai people.

The smesme contained K2000 in cash and two contributions of shell money. These were given by the Siwais as a start of the reconciliation process to the Wakunai people to create peace.

Following the acceptance of the smesme, the Siwai group led by chief Jonathan Ngati then paid K27,000 as part compensation to relatives of the dead man. Chief Ngati, who is also the ABG minister responsible for Local Level Government thanked the Wakunai chiefs and people for accepting the smesme and K27,000 part compensation payment.

Mr Ngati said they were late in paying the compensation because they (Siwai) had wanted to do the payment “in a very customary way.”

While accepting the smesme and compensation payment chief Amos Tevaria of the Wakunai people said they were “receiving the payment with happy hearts”.

Chief Tevaria also assured the Siwai people that their safety would be guaranteed while travelling through Wakunai on their way to Siwai or Buka.

The relatives of the dead youth initially asked for the total compensation payment of K200,000 and this K27,000 is part payment done by the Siwais.

Stabbing on the rise

By WINTERFORD TOREAS

COMMUNITY policing in the Wakunai district in central Bougainville is improving, says Wakunai police station commander Sergeant Oscar Tugein.

However, the only problem preventing police from effectively carrying out their operations is the lack of logistical support. Mr Tugein said since the launching of their police operations codenamed “Operation Kovovio” three weeks ago there has been a drop in criminal activities in the district.

“Kovovio means let’s do it in the Rotokas dialect and since we started this operation there has been a big improvement in the law and order situation in Wakunai. “However, although police are trying their best to improve the law and order situation in the area the only problem preventing us from fully carrying out our operations is the lack of logistical support.

But this is not so much an issue to us because though we do not have a vehicle to use, we are still trying our best to do our duties,” Sgt Tugein said. He said the only problem increasing in the district is stabbings.

“This is mainly due to the consumption of marijuana and alcohol by the youths in Wakunai. However, in general I can say that the law and order situation in Wakunai is improving,” Sgt Tugein said.

Website to help students

By GORETHY KENNETH

IN a place like Bougainville where youths have lost interest in continuing their education and the Government trying its best to help, there is now light at the end of the tunnel. Far across the ocean, from neighbouring Fiji, there is a school that has gone online and attracted many Bougainvillean youths, dropouts and others interested in furthering their education. Many students from as far as Arawa in Central Bougainville, Buin in South Bougainville and Buka in the north have enrolled in this school and doing their programs online. This is the St John's College located in Avalau in Fiji.

The Fiji Times, sister paper to the Post-Courier in Fiji, first reported that the school launched its website last week and had already attracted students from as far away as Africa, Nauru, Kiribati, Tonga and Bougainville, who have enrolled through the school website.

Reports reached the Post-Courier in Buka and already there are at least 15 students from Bougainville enrolled in this school and the number was increasing by the week.

Established by a former scholar, the parents of students of this remote college can now pay school fees online and do their programs online as well. From the Fiji Times, St John's College ex-scholar and former designer for the school website, Paula Tabutoa, said the parents could access the website at www.sjcawaci.com. With the assistance of Connect Fiji, an upgraded website was launched last Friday in the presence of old scholars, teachers and former administration staff of the school. Mr Tabutoa said the website had brought to the fingertips of parents, old scholars and supporters wider interactive keys for information about the college and those of their children at the Catholic-run school on Avalau. Two old websites, cawacians.com (organised by old scholars) and the school website have been incorporated into one.

"Parents can now log in and check their children's school report with a chat site in progress for communication from wherever they are in the world," Mr Tabutoa said. The website quotes principal Father Ekuasi Manu said morale was high as students know they could now have contact with their parents via the website.

In Buka, interested student Casey Colinah already got herself registered but could not travel three hours from Buka to her home village as it would be a little difficult to maintain her exercises. But she is optimistic she will get past the hurdle as she is looking for alternatives to get online and get her studies going.

Radio New Dawn:

09.11.2009

PNG commissioner makes first visit to Panguna

By Anthony Kaybing

PNG police commissioner, Gary Baki, has arrived in Buka for a five day tour of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

The commissioner began his tour by meeting with ABG officials, the Bougainville Administration and the Bougainville Police Service.

He also paid a courtesy call on acting chief Administrator, Patrick Koles, and ABG Police and Justice Minister, Hon Ezekiel Massatt.

Mr Baki will visit the Tinputz district office and the Wakunai community justice centre. He will inspect two new police houses in Wakunai and the proposed site for the new Wakunai Police Station.

Panguna executive manager, Otto Noruka, will meet the commissioner at Morgan Junction to escort them to Panguna which is a first for a commander of PNG's disciplinary forces.

Other plans include a visit to Buin to talk to police personnel and Siwai to inspect the proposed new Ameu police station site.

Police say Wakunai law & order is improving

By Anthony Kaybing

Wakunai station, notorious for its lawlessness, is facing a total makeover in its drive towards a safer community.

Wakunai police commander, Sergeant Oscar Tugen, says not much was done before he was assigned to the area.

"Now we have the community saying they are tired of the ongoing law and order problems," said Sgt Tugen, who says the crime rate in the district has gone down considerably.

Surrounding communities are now inviting Tugen and his police to carry out their awareness programs in the villages.

Marijuana, which had become thriving business in Wakuani especially in the mountainous of the Aita area, is one aspect of interest to Tugen and his team.

It has become such a major concern that village chiefs and youths have appealed to Sgt Tugen to help them eradicate the problem.

Sgt Tugen said his officers will conduct a pre-Christmas police operation.

Operation Kovovio (which, in the Wakunai dialect, means 'We Can Do It') signifies the Wakunai people's interest in turning a new leaf.

The operation will cover road and traffic programs along the Buka to Arawa Highway and general law and order surveillance in preparation for the Christmas and New Year period.

Sgt Tugen said he is proud of the way his officers have discharged their duties and is especially proud of the Wakunai people in their efforts to respect the law.

He also made an appeal to the Bougainville government to support his men by providing a vehicle and building a new police cell.

Bougainville development must be phased: Nisira

By Tapo Tovilu

The ABG Minister for Works, Hon Patrick Nisira, has said the government has developed a phased approach towards development in the autonomous province.

“The government has many challenges in development it must overcome,” he Nisira said, identifying four fundamental development aims the ABG government is working towards: human resource development, a communications system, a good and reliable transport system, and electricity generation.

He said that currently the ABG government is limited in what it can do by the shortage of funds for development work.

The government has responded by taking a phased approach to development.

Tapo Tovilu is a journalism student at the Divine Word University

Wakunai reconciliation with Siwai after murder

By Anthony Kaybing

People from Siwai in south Bougainville can now move freely in the Wakunai area after a peace and reconciliation ceremony last Wednesday.

The ceremony included a compensation payment for a young man from Rotokas who was shot dead in the Siwai District in August by someone from Noah Misingku’s Mekamui faction.

After the incident, all vehicles from south Bougainville were barred from travelling in the Siwai area.

An initial payment of K27,000, two *mimis* (shell money) and two pigs were given as *belkol* to settle the matter before the total payment of K200,000 is made.

Present at the ceremony was Autonomous Bougainville Government Minister for Peace and Reconciliation, Robert Hamal Sawa, Minister for Veterans Affairs, Glen Tovirika and other ABG members and officials.

Mr Sawa congratulated both parties for their understanding and quick reaction in resolving the matter. He said it was the ABG’s wish to see all conflicts settled peacefully.

Mr Sawa also made an appeal to people to respect each other and refrain from taking the law into their own hands in resolving conflicts.

Mr Tovirika said the war in Bougainville had ended and that all differences between groups must follow the right channels in letting Police handle the matter.

The National:

Baki to visit Buka

Source:

ANTHONY KAYBING

POLICE Commissioner Gari Baki is expected in Buka today for a five-day tour of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

Mr Baki will begin his tour by meeting with officials from the Autonomous Bougainville Government, the Bougainville administration and the Bougainville police service.

He is also expected to pay a courtesy call on the acting chief administrator, Patrick Koles, and the ABG police and Justice Minister Ezekiel Massatt, and their senior staff. Mr Baki will extend his visit to the Tinputz district office and the Wakunai community justice centre.

He is also expected to inspect two new police houses in Wakunai and the proposed site for the new Wakunai police station.

Panguna executive manager, Otto Noruka, would then meet the commissioner and his delegation at the Morgan junction to escort them up to Panguna the first such visit by a commander of PNG's disciplinary force.

Other plans include a visit to Buin, South Bougainville, to visit the nearby Solomon Islands near Kangu Beach and to talk to police personnel at Buin.

The national police delegation will also visit Siwai district to inspect the administration and the proposed new Ameu police station site and other police activities in the region.

The commissioner's delegation will then return to Buka on the last day of the tour to meet with the Bougainville police service and their foreign advisers before returning the following day.

Service must match pay rise

THE current situation on Bougainville coupled with the recent pay rise to members of the Royal Papua New Guinean Constabulary (RPNGC), including the Bougainville police service (BPS), requires all members to put more effort into serving the people. North Bougainville police commander Chief Insp Cletus Tsien, said every individual police officer had a task to do in order to upscale the work performance equivalent to the pay-rise. The police hierarchy on Bougainville is now putting into action the police commissioner's orders to all commanders to have "zero tolerance" on any unethical police personnel. Lawlessness in Bougainville is linked to alcohol consumption in public places and in some cases, involve some members of the BPS. It was also pointed out that overloading of vehicles, trafficking and consumption of cannabis, plus other petty offences and serious criminal cases were also on the rise.