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ELECTION '97 HAVE A SAY

Vote in poll or shut up

Getting ready at a glance

A COUNTRY deserves the leadership it gets. So goes this old saying. And it is true.

For whether the political leadership is good or bad the leaders are there because voters chose them at elections. If the politicians leading the country are good then it is because the voters — the people chose wisely.

Conversely, if they are bad then the country deserves them for electing them. That is the bottom line — the meaning of elections. And now Papua New Guinea is at this crossroad again.

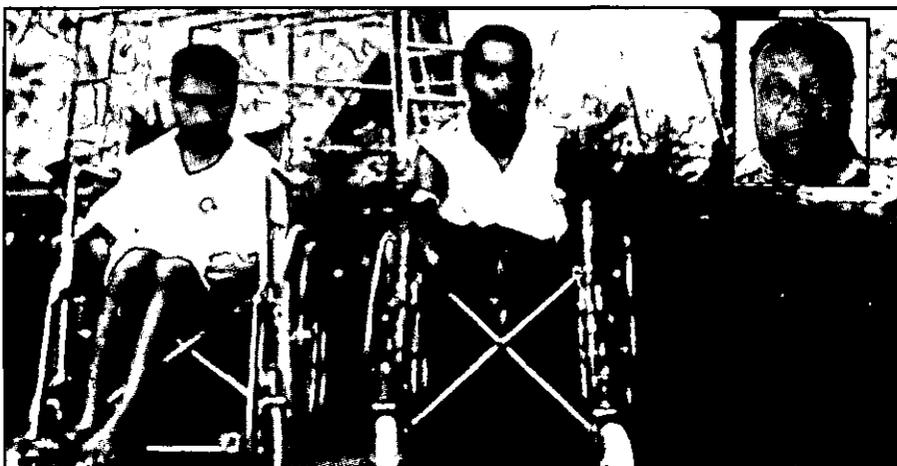
Next June the nation goes to the polls in the 1997 general election to choose which route Papua New Guinea will take to the year 2000, the beginning of the 21st Century. The people have the authority to choose either a good or bad Government, Electoral Commissioner Mr Rueben Kaitulo said today in Port Moresby.

"Real power is in the hands of the people the people who vote. Make no mistake about this." So will people make use of this enviable opportunity to vote in the election to choose the leadership which will decide Papua New Guinea's destiny into the 21st Century?

In past elections, many of the so-called middle-class and upper-middleclass Papua New Guineans particularly the urban elite — have made a mockery of elections and stayed away from voting. Yet this is the very group that is always critical of political leadership when something is wrong.

"Frankly, these people should not complain about the political leadership they get if they choose not to vote," a seasoned political campaigner said in Mr Hagen, Electoral Commissioner Mr Kaitulo summed it up well: "It's a five-minute decision to vote — and if you do not, it takes another five years before you can vote again." Voting starts June 14 and finishes June 27. Voter enrolment continues until the end of March.

Real power with people Electoral Commissioner



FORMER patrol officer Frank Gabi (inset right in picture) has always been a conscientious man.

So he is making sure that the two disabled youths in the picture above are voting in the election. They are Raymond Gaigo (left) aged 22 of Tubuserera village, Central Province, and Simon Girisua aged 25 of West New Britain.

As the bossman for elections in Port Moresby, Mr Gabi was checking on eligible voters and found

Even the sick are voting

that, Mr Gaigo and Mr Girisua of the Cheshire Home at Hohola were eligible to vote so he arranged to make sure they do.

No eligible voter is being overlooked and arrangements have also been made for Port Moresby General Hospital patients and prisoners to vote.

Soldiers and Policemen will be allowed to vote before starting their tour of duty on Bougainville or along Papua New Guinea's international borders.

Those already on duty in those areas will vote by postal ballot.



"ALL politicians, and all people, must work together to give Papua New Guinea a peaceful and law-abiding environment to exercise its democratic responsibility to elect a Parliament to take us into the new century, into the new millennium"

— Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan

Census not necessary

ELECTION 97 can be held without a census.

Electoral Commissioner Mr Kaitulo is clear about this. "There is no law saying we have to wait for a census to be done before an election can be held," he said.

"The Electoral Commission conducts registration of eligible voters for election purposes.

"The National Statistical Office conducts a census of people of all ages for the Government's planning purposes.

"The roles of the National Statistical Office and the Electoral Commission must not be confused.

For its part, the National Statistical Office

believes the Electoral Commission has been doing a thorough job to register voters for elections.

"We trust that the Electoral Commission can do it again for the 1997 Election," a spokesman said in a Government brief.

A census this year would have made the task of compiling the Common Roll easier — but the preparations were late.



•ABOVE: Security personnel... to play key role.

No question for Rabaul, Bougainville

WHEN the Rabaul people were displaced by the 1994 volcanic eruptions, someone suggested the incumbent Rabaul Parliamentarian Sir John Kaputin no longer had an electorate to represent.

This, of course, was just a joke but the question was serious enough for Sir John to raise it in Parliament.

For its part, the matter was never an issue as far as the Electoral Commission was concerned.

And so Sir John was assured that his people would take part in Election 97.

The Prime Minister, Sir Julius Chan, told Sir John the law was clear.

The Common Roll for the Rabaul electorate was bidding for the people now living in other parts of East New Britain Province.

Bougainville preparations for the election is picking up momentum despite the conflict in the province.

"Election fever is taking hold of the province," one report from the province said.

For security reasons, preparations cannot be detailed now.

Security on the move

THE Electoral Commission is determined that Election 97 is free from the politics of intimidation.

A total K9 million is to be spent during the election on security including pay for Police, Defence Force soldiers and jail officers who will be on duty.

One thousand Defence Force soldiers will be part of the operation.

Five hundred of them will be working in the Highlands.

Covert Police and military intelligence surveillance continues — and the law passed by Parliament to ban privately owned guns was only the first public move in this campaign.

PREPARATIONS for Election 97 are progressing well so far, according to Assistant Commissioner Operations Mr Michael Malabag.

The preparations at a glance:

- August 1995 — The Electoral Commission starts to update the Common Roll in which the names of eligible voters are registered.

- January 1996 — Electoral Commissioner Mr Reuben Kaitulo seeks approval from the Governor-General, Sir Wija Korowi, to publicise the election programme.

- February 1996 — The election education program begins with a six-month K40,000 campaign on EMTV.

- March 1996 — Projections of voter registration for the whole country are released.

- April 1996 — The National Statistical Office and the Electoral Commission release a joint brief on their respective roles and voter registration.

- May 1996 — Returning Officers for all 109 electorates of the National Parliament are appointed.

- May 1996 — Joint Police and Electoral Commission workshop is held in Port Moresby to plan security measures and approve pay for security personnel who will be deployed in the election.

- June 1996 — NBC begins a six-month K60,000 election education program.

- August 1996 — Guidelines are set for people to inspect the preliminary Common Roll and lodge objections against anybody who is registered but not qualified to vote.

- August 1996 — A conference of election officials from all over the country is held in Port Moresby.

- August 1996 — The Electoral Commission briefs the People's Progress Party national convention in Port Moresby on election laws and timetable.

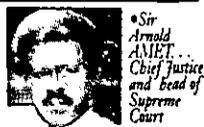
- September 1996 — The Electoral Commission puts election forms in the newspapers asking prospective candidates to fill the forms with their bio-data and submit the forms with their pictures.

- September 1996 — Joint workshop in Port Moresby by the Electoral Commission, Police, Defence Force and the Correctional Institutional Service (CIS) to review security preparations for the election and pay for security personnel.

- October 1996 — The Electoral Commission briefs the People's Unity Party national convention in Port Moresby on election laws and timetable.

- November 1996 — Joint workshop in Goroka by the Electoral Commission, Police, Defence Force, CIS and Highlands authorities to discuss election security for the region.

"An election is not an ordinary cause, and it is a very serious thing. It is basic and fundamental that elections are decided by voters who have free and fair opportunity of electing the candidate that the majority prefer. This is a sacred right and legislature has accordingly laid down very strict provisions before there can be any challenge to the expression of the will of the majority — the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea"



• Sir Arnold AMET, Chief Justice and head of Supreme Court



**ELECTORAL
COMMISSION**
Papua New Guinea

Election '97

ELECTION 97 TIMETABLE

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Issue of writs | March 27 1997 |
| 2. Close of nomination | April 25 1997 |
| 3. Start of voting | June 14 1997 |
| 4. End of voting | June 27 1997 |
| 5. Return of writs | July 15 1997 |



...THINK ABOUT
HS BIRDIES WHEN
YOU ENROL AND
VOTE FOLKS!
LALO BOIO
LASI!!



2017

Election

PNG

EH! MASKI
KOMPLEN TUMAS
LONG LO NA OPA!
YU ENROL
NA VOT!!

MY MEMBER
DIDNT *B!!*
GIVE MI BUKS
FOR PLANE
FARE TO GO
HOME!!

HO!
VAKAYAKA!
UMIAI LA-
LOA... NANO.
NANO MA
UMUI VOT!

I'LL VOTE
FOR BETTER
VIABLE YOUTH
BENEFITS!

PLANTI
TRABEL!!

...MY VOTE IS
PRECIOUS,
I MUST
LAST IT
WISELY

...EH MI
LAIK BUKIM
LAMFLAP!

BIKMAN
WANEM
TAIM YU!
WOL MONIS

VOTE @
ABUAL

...I MUST VOTE
FOR QUALITY,
NOT FOR THE
HANDOUTS!!

HAVE A SAY!!

...MI AIGRAS
LONG PITY!!

ENROL NA VOT!!



ELECTION '97 HAVE A SAY

Winning the race



•ABOVE: The Electoral Commission Printing Division. BELOW: Typesetting in computer room.



THE drive to register eligible voters in the Common Roll for Election 97 is moving ahead successfully.

Compared with Common Roll preparations for the previous election in 1992, the Electoral Commission is this time three months ahead of schedule in this vital work.

In the end, election officials aim to register 2.3 million voters for Election 97. Up to November this year, the Commission has registered more than 1.6 million eligible voters. The Electoral Commission is now working faster because it is printing the Common Roll itself. (See pictures on the left.)

"We're doing the job ourselves to avoid delays waiting for the job to be done by outside printers -- and it's working well," Electoral Commission printing boss Mr Jojo Urbazonzo said.

"Printing the Common Roll ourselves is also a security measure to avoid any possibility of voter registration being tampered with."

Indeed, the Commission is happy it bought the printing equipment. "We spent K155,000 on the equipment and it has proved to be a worthy investment," Deputy Electoral Commissioner Mr Andrew Trawen said.

Enrolment of voters will continue until the end of March but preliminary Common Rolls are expected to be ready at the beginning of 1997 for public inspection and objection of any registered voter who is not qualified to vote.

Eligible voters are Papua New Guinean citizens aged 18 and older. They must be resident in an electorate for more than six months.

- Those who cannot vote are:
- Prisoners under the death sentence;
 - Prisoners serving jail terms of more than nine months;
 - Anybody who has been convicted of an election crime within three years of Voting Day in Election 97; and
 - People who were not born in an electorate where they have not lived for five years at any one time.



•Mr TRAWEN



•Mrs GUINA...
Long serving data processor



•Mrs KENUA...
Long serving data processor

Campaigns based on ethnicity are dangerous in their potential to promote discrimination and violence -- and in their tendency to erode national unity. Persons battering our national sovereignty and unity must be made to face the full force of the law. National unity cannot be allowed to remain fragile. The Constitution works but occasionally its primary goals are subverted by persons who make inflammatory statements from time to time. It is very clearly stated in the Constitution that we must promote solidarity among citizens and between the provinces or ethnic groups and not otherwise.

Electoral Commissioner Mr Kaiulo

Election team of veterans

THE team of officials organising Election 97 are veterans of many campaigns -- starting with Election 72 for political independence.

They have worked their way up through the ranks of the Electoral Commission from junior positions.

Some of them are:

• Moses Wapulu -- Director of Political Party Registry.
A Toki from Manupit Island in the volcano-devastated electorate of Rabaul, Mr Wapulu aged 43 has worked in the 1972, 77, 82, 87 and 92 elections.

Started as trainee electoral officer in 1971.
• Andrew Trawen -- Deputy Electoral Commissioner.

From East Sepik, Mr Trawen aged 41 has worked in the 1977, 82, 87 and 92 elections.

Started as trainee electoral officer in 1974.

• Rex Sabin -- Assistant Commissioner Information and Education.

From Madang, Mr Sabin aged 41 has worked in the 1977, 82, 87 and 92 elections.

Started as trainee electoral officer in 1975.
• Kila Burro -- Senior Electoral Officer.

From Rigo, Central Province, Mrs Burro, a mother of three, has worked in the 1977, 82, 87 and 92 elections.

Started in 1975 as a typist.

• Michael Malabag -- Assistant Commissioner Operations.

From Central Province, Mr Malabag aged 37 has worked in the 1977, 82, 87 and 92 elections.

Started as trainee electoral officer in 1976.

• Rex Au -- Assistant Commissioner Finance and Administration.

From Central Province, Mr Au aged 40 has worked in the 1977, 82, 87 and 92 elections. Started as accounts clerk in 1976.

• Keveo Sibona -- Data Processor.

From Hisiu, Central Province, Mrs Sibona a

mother of three, has worked in the 1982, 87 and 92 elections.

Started in 1980 as typist.

• Kila Ralai -- Senior Auditor.

From Hula, Central Province, Mr Ralai aged 33 has worked in the 1982, 87 and 92 elections.

Started in 1981 as a checker of registered voters in the Common Roll.

• Morea Veri -- Assistant Commissioner Programs and Research.

From Lealea, Central Province, Mr Veri aged 47 worked in the 1982, 87 and 92 elections.

Started in 1982 as Project Officer after 14 years as a Government patrol officer.



•Mrs SIBONA



•Mr RALAI



•Mr AU



•Mr WAPULU



•Mr SABIN



•Mrs BURRO



•Mr MALABAG

Power to the sisters

IN the Electoral Commission, they don't use buzz words like empowering women that are now synonymous with women's rights.

No. They let action speak for itself. Mrs Karo Kila, pictured at right, is just one example of what the Electoral Commission does for the Papua New Guinean sisterhood.

Back in 1976, Mrs Kila started as a clerical assistant. Now she is the Commission's accountant -- and it is her job to monitor how the K28 million for Election 97 is spent.

A mother of three, Mrs Kila is reserved but keeps an open line of communication with her staff who respect her for always being there when the going gets tough.

"She's a nice boss to work for," a male staffer said.

Mrs Kila has worked in all elections since independence.



•Mrs KILA

A job for teacher(s)

IT'S a case of teacher working with student once more -- with the shoe on the other foot... the student now in charge.

Back in 1969 to 1972, Mr Gari Gamoga, pictured right, was teaching Electoral Commissioner Mr Kaiulo at Kwikila High School in their Central Province home.

Now Mr Gamoga will be a polling official for Mr Kaiulo in Election 97.

And it's not nepotism at all. On the contrary, it's a Government decision that teachers and students throughout the country be used as polling officials during voting from June 14 to June 27.

The schools will be on holidays so school work will not suffer.



•Mr GAMOGA



•Sir WIWA

I concur that public, prospective candidates as well as political parties must be given adequate time to prepare themselves for this all-important national democratic event -- the Governor-General, Sir Wiwa Korowi, to Electoral Commissioner Mr Kaiulo.



•Mr KAIULO