



May 2013 edition

Be the Change; it starts with you!

The Ombudsman Commission has urged all citizens of PNG to report and break the cycle of corruption in society.

This was the message from the Acting Chief Ombudsman Phoebe Sangetari when addressing participants at the Jack Pidik Park at 5-mile during the 7th Sir Anthony Siaguru Walk against Corruption on 26 May 2013 in Port Moresby .

The walk was facilitated by Transparency International (PNG). Sangetari told participants not to turn a blind eye on corrupt practices anymore.

“Report corruption, for too long we have turned our backs on corruption. You can be part of the solution to break the cycle or be part of the cycle”.

“You have the power in your hands to make a change. You as an individual make the change and others will follow you. Your mindset, behaviour and attitude will affect those around you which will result in the change you want to see in PNG”.

She said corruption is everyone’s business and Papua New Guineans must make it



Acting Chief Ombudsman Phoebe Sangetari leading the 7th Sir Anthony Siaguru Walk against Corruption in Port Moresby.

our business to fight against corruption and corrupt activities.

She encouraged individuals to be role models in their communities by being the change.

“You be the beacon of hope and together we can fight corruption and do more than just take part in this walk”.

The first and most important step to take against corruption is to say no and act on what each individual believe in a transparent

society. The second step she pointed out was for individuals to respect and enforce the laws that are in place. PNG has so many laws yet we take shortcuts to achieve our favours. This disease is eating the fabric of society and affecting every walk of life.

She added that the fight against corruption should not be left to TIPNG, Ombudsman Commission and the police, it is everyone’s business.

VISION

Fair, just and effective leadership and good governance in Papua New Guinea.

MISSION

To promote and foster quality leadership and good governance and strengthen respect for Rule of Law in accordance with Section 218 of the Constitution.

The Ombudsman Commission is committed to (6) fundamental values in all dealings with government bodies, the private sector, members of the public and the leaders.

The values uphold are;

- ◇ Impartiality
- ◇ Integrity
- ◇ Independence
- ◇ Accountability
- ◇ Responsiveness
- ◇ Respect

[Ombudsman Commission Strategic Plan 2011– 2015]

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MBP trains LLG officials to improve governance Page 2

Nationwide LLG pre-election awareness ends Page 3

OC participates in DWU Open Day Page 4

OC visits Bewani & Macca Base Page 5

MBP takes lead in training LLG Officials

The Milne Bay Provincial Administration is one of the first to take on the initiative to train its LLG officials to improve good governance practices at the district and local level government. The Ombudsman Commission was pleased to be part of the team to conduct this training held in Alotau this month.

Provincial Administrator, Henry Bailasi said the Provincial Administration is making initiatives to strengthen the capacity of its districts and local governments. He added that it is ensuring that they are appropriately equipped to cater for huge

funding that is allocated to them in this year's budget.

While agreeing, Overall LLG Coordinator, Michael Kape said they want to equip their leaders at this level on the LLG processes and procedure, hence this workshop.

The Ombudsman Commission prepared to present an overview of its roles and functions, and the enforcement of the Leadership Code including its experiences and compliance issues.

However, this was not possible because of the heavy rain and bad weather which restricted those participants from the islands to travel in to the headquarters. The workshop was postponed to the following week.

Mr Bailasi acknowledged the Commission's immense contribution since

2009 up to the recent 2013 LLG pre-election awareness educating eligible voters on qualities of good leadership and duties of local government presidents as well as ward members.

These sorts of awareness and trainings are of great benefit to the people and the public servants of Milne Bay.

The Provincial Assembly Clerk, Stanley Antonio, confirmed that the workshop was later held and had representatives from all the 16 LLGs in the province.

However, it was unfortunate that all the anticipated presenters from Port Moresby including the Department of Provincial and Local Level Government Affairs did not attend. Mr Antonio said it was a let down not having key departments attend. He said these sorts of training are important and he was thankful to the Ombudsman Commission.

editorial

May edition of Wasdok Newsletter

Hello readers!

Welcome to another edition of Wasdok newsletter, keeping you informed of the Commission's activities during the month.

In this month, OC winds down its three-month nationwide awareness exercise that has seen the Commission reach out to some of the most remote centres of the country in its endeavour to educate the nation on qualities of good leadership.

Read more about the awareness in different provinces and also a personal experience encountered during the exercise .

Cheers!
Editor

No gov't intervention in Tufi District

From page 3

It was noted in the awareness that people needed more of the same awareness on the roles and functions of the Commission and the government system as a whole.

One of the interested feed-back on the awareness was the penalties given to LLG members if they breach their duties and responsibilities. The people were very keen to know the process to lay a complaint against the leaders.

It was also raised that for the last five years, some of the LLG's have not held meetings and nothing has been done to report this misconduct to the responsible authorities. This was because the people themselves were not aware of the requirement of a minimum of four meetings every year in the Ward and LLG.

Awareness programs were conducted in Afore, Kirota, Kokoda, Ambasi and Tufi in Oro province.



Nationwide LLG pre-election awareness ends

The Ombudsman Commission is winding down its three-month nationwide awareness exercise to educate the people of the qualities of good leadership in preparation for the upcoming LLG elections in June.

The Commission has covered all the provinces targeting people in the district level except for the Autonomous Region of Bougainville which has different election dates.

In its endeavour to assist people choose good leaders in the elections; the Commission has reached out to some of the most remote areas of the country to assist eligible voters make the best choice when they cast their votes.

The awareness exercise has brought the Commission to some areas where no

government officials have gone and it was something that the people were very appreciative of.

While some people in the rural areas have a fair idea of the roles and functions of the Commission, it was the first time for most of them to hear that such office exist.

The most common issue raised throughout the country was lack of government services penetrating down to the rural areas due to lack of good governance over the years.

The awareness has got people thinking and they are hopeful that they choose good leaders in the coming elections.

On the other hand, the people have requested for more awareness on the government processes so that they are in a



Sam Kupul talking to teachers and students at Waghi Valley Secondary School in Jiwaka.

better position to ask why services are not reaching them.

The Commission in its last leg of the program conducted awareness in Oro, Morobe, Simbu and Western provinces.

Government services not reaching rural population

Educating the mass population on qualities of good leadership can be the way forward to having good governance in the country that would see much needed government services reach the most rural villages in PNG.

With the idea to see change in the ordinary people in terms of good governance and service delivery, the Ombudsman Commission conducted a three-month nationwide awareness exercise to educate voters of the qualities and values of good leadership to assist voters make the best choice when they cast their votes in the upcoming LLG elections in June.

There have been similar issues raised in almost all the provinces the Commission visited. Issues range from abandoned government offices to deteriorating infrastructure.



Simon Kwalimu talking to the people of Kirota village during the awareness.

“As you can see for yourselves, Tufi has not seen any tangible development since independence. We do not know where the government funding has gone to,” said a very frustrated woman in the awareness at Tufi Station.

The people also raised issues regarding public

servants not present in the district.

“Tufi station has been remote controlled from Popondetta. The District Administrator and the President reside in Popondetta,” said a community leader.

People have become ignorant of anything to do with the government because of lack of government services in Tufi District. This was evident during the awareness; while a handful of people were very attentive of what was being said, the rest of them got carried away with their day to day activities and paid very little attention.

Continued page 2



OC participates in DWU Open Day

The Ombudsman Commission has participated in the Divine Word University (DWU) Open Day for the first time. The Commission used the opportunity to show case its roles and functions.

DWU Open Day is an annual and reputable event that students use to exhibit their work to other students and the general public. The event has gained momentum over the years and has attracted sponsorships from business houses around the country.

The Commission upon invitation set up a stall during the Open Day on 5 May 2013. It displayed its work through pamphlets, posters and some of the reports that the Commission has produced.

This was a very good opportunity for the Commission to educate the public of its roles and functions.



Students collecting brochures and pamphlets from the OC stall on DWU Open Day.

The DWU Faculty of Arts, which invited the OC to be part of their exhibition, was very thankful to the Commission for its participation. Other participants included PNG Sustainable Development and Remington Technology, the sponsor for the faculty.



OCPNG ladies listen attentively as Acting Chief Ombudsman Phoebe Sangetari share her experience on how she started her career. Towards the end of every month, the ladies come together to share common interests and discuss significant issues. In this month's meeting, ladies were asked to share a significant moment in their lives.



OC visits Imonda/Bewani and Macca Base for the first time...feature story

“Bang, bang,” I heard the sound on my door. “Barbara, we are leaving very shortly,” said a deep male voice. I checked the time on my mobile phone and it was four o’clock in the morning. I knew it was Richard and Tabitha. I quickly got set and joined them at the Varmoneh Lodge car park. We resided at Varmoneh on the West Tower in Vanimo for two weeks while on our official duty travel.



Macca Base Logging Camp

At the car park we were joined by West Sepik Local-level Government Advisor, Bidd Pamaraka and two other officers. With no more time to waste, we headed up the East-West highway. It was cold and misty as we drove on the bumpy road. After about an hour of rough drive we pulled over at Kill-Pass. We were showed the range at Kill Pass and told that a number of small aircrafts had crashed in these mountains especially when there is thick cloud cover.

The early morning fog was gathering in the mountains ahead of us, there were showers as well as the chilly breeze that swept against our skin. We hopped back into our 10 seater vehicles and continued for another four hours before reaching Macca base logging camp in the Imonda area.

At this base camp, we spoke to families of those employed by the logging company including the off duty employees and locals from the nearby villages about good leadership qualities to help them make the right choice in the local-level government elections coming up in June. A lot of times, many of us whether in the towns, cities or the remotest part of PNG, still misunderstand the role of the ward members and the local-level government presidents, hence, the team made sure to educate its target audience, the eligible voters on this. The audience at the base camp was so content with our awareness and raised issues that

were affecting them.

It was the Ombudsman Commission’s first ever visit to this part of West Sepik, so we took time to also talk about its roles and functions and how the office can assist them. The team also touched on the leadership code. Often the public does not see it as necessary, however, we thought it was important for them to know so that they become whistle blowers for their leaders. Macca base is located in ward 10 under the Imonda Rural Local-level Government.

At about half past ten we left Macca base and headed for Imonda station. The drive took almost two hours. The road became busy around this time with logging trucks and gin-cars transporting stacks of huge logs. The road we were travelling on was so muddy that vehicles got bogged and even turned over while trying to maneuver.

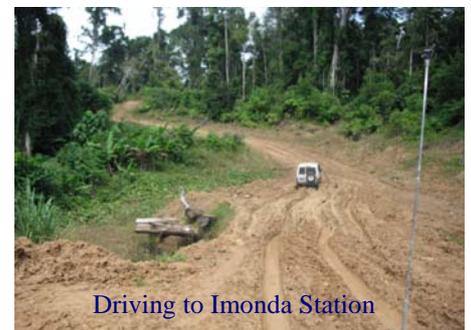
There are no proper bridges constructed. The bridges we drove over were made from huge logs and filled with soil. One could imagine how long these logging companies existed in these areas and yet the limited development and transport options for the local people. More than 10 years have passed and much of the promised infrastructure has not been completed while land disputes, which were previ-

ously rare, have also increased.

Royalties and income from logging activities have made many local people more dependant on a cash economy, with traditional food sources being at least partially replaced by tinned and packaged food-stuffs.

As we drove along, I noticed that the clean water sources near villages for drinking and processing sago have been damaged and a lot of undersized logs cut from the forests and left to rot or used to fill swamps.

After much observation on the logging activities along the way, we were now driving into Imonda station. On my right was the once operated airstrip and to the left, an old-looking building which is used by the Imonda Rural LLG. There is a health centre and several run-down permanent houses



Driving to Imonda Station

accommodating the IRLLG officers. There is total absence of service delivery here. Prior to the closure of the airstrip, third level aeroplanes was the only form of transport to Imonda until the logging company operating in the area built temporary roads which are now used by locals to travel into Vanimo.

Whilst at Imonda station, black clouds began to build in the mountains behind us.

Continued next page...



Villagers continue to suffer deteriorating infrastructure

From page 5

I was already thinking of how we were going to go back to Vanimo knowing that we could get bogged if there was heavy rain. We managed to get out in time after spending about an hour and a half with the people.

The return drive was quite tiring and so uncomfortable because of the rough and muddy road. After two hours, we were back at Macca base camp.

We stopped over for thirty minutes lunch and about three o'clock in the afternoon we headed for Bewani station. The road was quite good at least better than the one to Imonda.

It was an amazing view when driving on the plateau looking across the North Coastal Range of PNG formed by the Bewani,

Torricelli and Prince Alexander Mountains.

We could smell the difference in the air. It was so clean and fresh. It's also sad to think that soon all these pristine forest will be gone.

As we drove along, we saw part of the development site for the 140,000ha multi-million kina Bewani oil palm project.

There are already several hectares of oil palm planted and in its young stage. This is the biggest proposed oil palm development in the country which is aimed at bringing enormous benefits and boosting the economy. The people of West Sepik should experience some changes in their living standards with improved infrastructure and better basic services once this project is in full operation.

Bewani station to my surprise is so run-down and idol. It seemed more like a ghost place. The surrounding area is covered in tall grasses except the school, church and health centre grounds.

The Bewani Sub-District is being neglected and it is evident in the set-up. The Sub-District Office also operates from Vanimo town and yet Bewani is only two to three hours drive from the town.

Plans are underway to improve this station and move back all district offices operating in Vanimo.

We left Bewani at half past five in the afternoon and met the sunset in Vanimo at seven o'clock in the evening.

It is sad to see that while we drive on good roads and have easy excess to basic services in towns and cities yet still complain, our people back in the rural areas suffer more. They have come to accept the way things are for them. Their only hope is on the mandated leaders to make a difference.

The people have valued this visit by the Ombudsman Commission and are thankful for the initiative to go as far as the village level and educate them on the qualities of voting a good leader.

LLG awareness in various parts of the country



**Ombudsman Commission of Papua New Guinea,
Ground Floor, Deloitte Tower, Douglas Street, PO Box
1831, Port Moresby 121, NCD, PAPUA NEW GUINEA,
Phone: 675-308-2600 Fax: 675-320-3260,
Email:
ombudspng@ombudsman.gov.pg**

All opinions, statements and writings contained in the *Wasdok* are those of the relevant authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions, statements, writings or views of the Ombudsman Commission of Papua New Guinea. The Commission issues no invitation to anyone to rely upon this newsletter and it intends by this statement to exclude liability for any such opinions, statements, writings and views.

