

Note:
The last Von Trapp story is now deferred to the November issue of *Wantok Today*.

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Advocating for policy change and government recognition

By Lorraine Siraba, a Research Communication Specialist with PEAN

LITERACY programs in PNG have been in existence since pre-colonial days and continue to play a crucial role in community development, transformation of lives, promoting social inclusion and contributing to a literate population.

In light of rapid population growth and the high number of children been pushed out of the formal education system, the bulk of the population who are unable to access some form of learning are absorbed by adult literacy programs. Today adult literacy programs include children as young as four years, learning alongside their parent, and an increasing number of young people between the ages of 12 to 21.

To be illiterate is like been in a prison said Maria, a literacy student in NCD. "You cannot fill out a bank deposit slip, read medicine labels, help your children with their school work or communicate effectively".

Cecelia is another literacy student in her late 40's and comes from East Sepik. Her parents migrated to West New Britain province to work on the Oil Palm Blocks. She now lives at Nahavio Oil Palm block as a small palm holder. As a child, Cecelia never went to school because her parents did not place her into school and as a result she doesn't know how to read and write.

"I couldn't read books, my Bible or even general information. I would buy books at the Catholic Church and ask my children to teach me to read. When I go to the bank, I am unable to read and understand the figures.



A drama group performs during the recent policy launch in Port Moresby. Photo: Lorraine Siraba

I ask the security guy to swipe my Kundu card and check my balance. When they tell me the balance then I tell them how much to withdraw from the ATM. Sometimes I ask my children to go to the bank for me. After attending

literacy class, I can now check my own balance as I can read the numbers. I am no longer dependent on others. I am happy and my family is happy. My children encourage me to stay in literacy school. They are

concerned that if I don't learn how to read and write, then it would be hard for me to receive the money they are sending me when they work, she said.

Continue to page 3...

Lack of media coverage on the plight of West Papuan refugees – Iowara Camp, Western Province

By Rueben Tabel, Jonaclaire Pais, Pukman Gedabing & Zuleika Winfrey (DWU Journalism students)

WHAT sort of media coverage does Western Province receive? What kind of news is most reported about the province? What do we hear on the radio? What do we see on television? What do we read in the newspapers? Thanks to the media, multinational corporations and mining companies like Ok Tedi, ExxonMobil, Horizon Oil, Talisman and Mitsubishi have become somewhat synonymous with Western Province....but apart from mineral extracting activities, what other significant events are happening in Western? Of course the media reports on border issues, but have we completely erased a desperate populace not only from sight and mind, but also from human interest?

Continue to page 3

Other stories inside...

Today Music Scene
Empower Youths in the 21st century... P2



Advocating for policy change and government recognition P3



Water runs through every place I've visited P4



YOUTH SAY... Empowering youths in the 21st Century

with
Issac Liri



For this month, *Wantok Today* caught up with Eleanor, Neil and Rueben... For Youths who would like to share their ideas and contribute in any way in *Wantok Today's* Youth Say, please feel free to email Isaac Liri on iliri@wantok.com.pg...Remember, if we stand together with one voice, we can make the world a better place.



Name: Neil Alemae
Age: 21
Origin: Milne Bay, Solomon Islands & AROB
Dream Job: Communications & Media Officer for any top Company or Government Office
Current Employment: Student (DWU)

My challenges as a youth today:

Personally, being a youth and a student at the same time requires a lot of wise decision making because I definitely find it hard to juggle between school work and my young, proactive life. I really have to think twice all the time before choosing between my friends and my studies because peer pressure to hang out and socialize with my mates always has more interesting ac-

tivities to do than school work. We enjoy drinking and doing extra-curricular activities and forget about our assignments and tasks which are given by lecturers.

As a result we always rush at the eleventh hour to submit assignments, and of course, without proper analyzing and careful thinking. This then adds on to the fact that we are not performing to the best of our abilities as we are expected to...so called university students.

What we must do to become better citizens:

I think youths should stop being lazy and have more time for themselves to be more productive and innovative.

For youths like me who are currently studying or working, they should consider having more time management and commitment to whatever it is they do. And for those who do nothing but linger around street corners and public areas thieving and living off stolen money and items, the government should cater for them through provision of an orphanage or create more job or schooling opportunities for them which will keep them off the streets.



Name: Eleanor Maineke
Age: 25
Origin: Autonomous Region of Bougainville
Dream Job: Educator
Current Job: Research Associate at Panguna Peace Building Strategy

My challenges as a youth today:

*Dependency Syndrome *Employment Opportunities *

To help address issues such as drug & alcohol, single motherhood and dependency, which are

entangling most youths in the society, especially in a post-conflict society as Bougainville, I for one see the need lies in education.

But firstly, all kids need discipline, management and guidance by the parents.

Education is one major key to unlock all the challenges faced by the youths of today.

*As in today's world, it is mostly "whom you know" when it comes to seeking employment. We have to be smart in seeking employment after the completion of our education journey.

What we must do to become better citizens:

As a youth, I think that we need and must change our mindsets as individuals first and then we will foster and bring change to our society. Create youth organizations and network with each other for the change of a nation.



Name: Reuben Tabel
Age: 24
Origin: Madang
Dream Job: Communication and Advocacy Officer
Current Job: 4th Year Student (DWU)

My challenges as a youth today:

As a youth I find it hard to say no to accept my peer groups' offer in terms of socializing, especially going out partying.

Many challenges I do face as a youth, trying to

be the best, to treat my friends with respect providing and giving what is needed to satisfy their basic needs and wants.

As we know, no man is an island, all human beings are social and spiritual beings.

I sometimes find it hard to look beyond a person eyes to see and figure out what best I can do to satisfy him or her.

I face challenges also in terms of managing my time and having time for my family, friends and school work.

What we must do to become better citizens:

Listen to others and lead at the back, accept corrections from my friends, families and love ones, Respect others view and idea on certain issues, Be there when the people friends need me,

Don't make empty promises, talk little and action more, and be my own boss.



Jazz music vital in PNG Genre needs more awareness, exclusive interview with Francis Be ...

By Isaac Liri

HISTORY records that jazz music was born in the United States of America when African-Americans wanted to express their emotions through music.

With the harsh conditions surrounding them in their new homeland, jazz music brought easiness to their hardships.

Wantok Today caught up with music lecturer Francis Be this month to listen to his views about jazz music in Papua New Guinea and the genre's significance to a country that is rapidly changing year by year.

When we talk about change, we need various elements to adapt to our societies and with that comes creativity. The Department of Music at the University of Papua New Guinea understands that jazz is an avenue where creativity dwells and therefore, it is included in their course outline.

According to Francis, jazz music influences students and shapes their mindsets to see the environment around them in a different angle. When they learn more about jazz, they learn more about life.

"Jazz is not a fixed music that one has to follow everything written

in the piece, jazz has no rules, but it established in a positive form where it brings out something unique the world has never seen or heard off," said Francis.

The principle of creativity mentioned by Francis can be applied in life in many ways, and at UPNG, music students undergo this process that is rarely implanted in the minds and attitudes of the majority.

Speaking as an expert, Francis said that in the process of playing jazz, a musician is free to create any melody as he or she is playing. When you apply this concept in life, it is all about moving ahead and adapting as you come across new things life.

Unlike other genres of music like rock, reggae and hiphop which are famous among a large proportion of people, jazz requires more awareness in Papua New Guinea.

Francis said that we can copy jazz from America however, we can make our own changes and play jazz in a Papua New Guinean way using our creativity.

"We can write our own jazz songs, sing in our own languages, and take ownership of it," Francis explained.

A few bands have come out of



Francis Be, HOD Music Department UPNG in his office at the University of Papua New Guinea. Jazz is an avenue where creativity dwells,

UPNG and are currently playing jazz music in and around Port Moresby.

"Since the idea of jazz is new, the Nation's Capital is a good starting point for jazz before it expands, if that is possible," said Francis.

After talking with Francis I came up with a conclusion that jazz music can only expand if there is proper awareness.

Francis believes that if more bands and radio stations play jazz, the style of music will capture as

more people in this lovely country of ours.

I left Francis with a question in my mind. Should we have a jazz radio station in Papua New Guinea?

Advocating for policy change and government recognition

Education CSO groups recently launched a national campaign advocating for policy change and government recognition of adult literacy programs as a strategy for sustainable development. The campaign was launched on a high note by the Education Minister, Nick Kuman, who assured the CSO groups with the words "the government has heard your voice!"

From page 1...

This is a typical story of many Papua New Guineans throughout the country, who have not had the opportunity to go to school or who did not complete their education and are now enrolled in adult literacy programs.

A Community Consultation on education conducted by the PNG Education Advocacy Network (PEAN) revealed that cost factors, poor access and parental expectations for children to help out at home were common reasons cited for not completing school.

Safety, poor infrastructure such as toilets for females, transportation disinterest and no school in the area were other reasons why children did not complete their education.

These factors compounded with cultural, geographical and social factors add to the high number of Papua New Guineans who are illiterate. The most important effect of illiteracy on society is that, it works as an inhibitor. That is to say, the more illiterate people there are in a country, the harder it will be for the country to develop.

Education and literacy survey conducted by PEAN in Simbu, Gulf, New Ireland, NCD, Sandaun and Madang Provinces (2007-2012) showed that literacy rates are estimated at 41% which is 15% less than the 2000 Census rate of 56%. This equates to over 50% of the population or a staggering 4 million



Students marching with banner on National Campaign for adult literacy day 2014.

lion Papua New Guineans are illiterate or cannot read and write. The survey further shows that 19% of children who completed primary education are literate and only 23% of those who completed secondary school are literate. This basically means that 1 out of 5 children who complete primary school is literate and only 1 in 4 that completes secondary school is literate.

Education Minister, Honourable Nick Kuman described these statistics as not only alarming but totally unacceptable, when speaking at the launching of the National Campaign for Adult Literacy in NCD, which was attended by more than three hundred literacy students and representatives of literacy providers.

Mr Kuman reiterated the government's commitment to education and raised concern that despite

the government's effort, more and more children continue to remain out of school.

He said, "Many of these children will grow into adulthood without the basic skills to read, write and comprehend. I acknowledge that education in this country is developing unevenly".

"Not only that, in Bougainville, a generation of education was lost due to the conflict and adult literacy programs are playing a crucial role in providing an alternate form of education."

"We are already making changes in the way we deliver education. Part of that change must now include embracing Adult Literacy Education", Mr Kuman said.

"We need the support of civil society to enable us to provide education for all citizens. As Minister

responsible for Education I now call for a working partnership between education civil society groups and the Department of Education which my Ministry can now take on board to further the work of adult literacy providers".

The Minister assured the adult literacy providers and students that the Adult Literacy will be a policy of the government and announced the inclusion of adult literacy students in the free education policy.

"As the Minister for Education, I am making a commitment for the tuition free education subsidy to also be extended to out of school youths and children enrolled in adult literacy classes to give them a chance to be educated. I believe this is the way to go to reduce the high number of Papua New Guineans who are unable to read and write".

"In light of the government's drive for sustainable development, investing in adult literacy is a fundamental investment in the people and in the future of this country.

This is a daunting challenge to meet. But if we want to give the future generation the best possible opportunity in life, then this government needs to join hands with education CSOs and work together," Mr Kuman said.

The national campaign for adult literacy coincided with the nation literacy week celebrations from the 8th-12th September and brought together civil society groups involved in delivering non-formal education, to raise a united voice for

government recognition of adult literacy as a strategy for sustainable development.

The Campaign facilitated by PEAN, paves the way for policy shifts that will ensure that the work of education civil societies is better coordinated and complements the government's efforts in providing education for all citizens.

PEAN's Executive Director Priscilla Kare in welcoming the Minister's invitation for further collaboration on adult literacy said addressing adult literacy is crucial for sustainable development but has been neglected for many years.

"Many Papua New Guineans missed out on school and want to go back to complete their formal education but are unable to do so because of fear, shame, uncertainty or they just don't have the money.

Adult literacy programs provide that avenue for these people to engage in some form of learning as well as complete their education through the Education Department's Flexible and Open Distance Education (FODE) which are integrated into adult literacy programs," Ms Kare said.

Ms Kare described the campaign as successful and said education CSOs will be working with the Minister's Office to develop a collaborative approach to improve literacy for all Papua New Guineans.

(The author is the Research Communication Specialist with PEAN)

Lack of media coverage on the plight of West Papuan refugees –Iwara Camp, Western Province

Continue from page 1

If you take a one hour dingy ride up the Fly River, and then trudge your way through 40 kilometers of red mud, you will find tucked deep in the tropical rainforests of East Awin, the Iwara Camp. This is where the forgotten people of West Papua silently endure hardships.

After ratifying the 1951 United Nations (UN) Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees in 1986, the state purchased over six thousand hectares of land in East Awin, for the relocation of West Papuan refugees. The Iwara camp, which is situated approximately 120 kilometers from the border, was successfully established in 1987 by the PNG Government and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

It has been nearly three decades since the West Papuan refugees were first relocated to Iwara. Since then, the state has granted them permanent residency, but not actual citizenship. For this reason, although West Papuan refugees have been provided with a safe haven away from the border and Indonesian military, they are still discontent with life in our country.

They do not enjoy the same rights as their fellow brothers and sisters. To elaborate, although the PNG Government signed the UN Refugee Convention twenty-eight years ago, it did not accept convention obligations covering wage-earning employment (Article 17), housing (Article 21), public education (Article 22), freedom of movement (Article 26), refugees unlawfully in the country of refuge (Article 31), expulsion (Article 32), and naturalization (Article 34).

On the other hand, if West Papuan refugees apply for citizenship through the PNG Immigration & Citizenship Service Authority they will be granted the same rights as all other PNG citizens. Under section 67 of the PNG constitution, a person who has resided in the country for eight consecutive years may apply for naturalized citizenship. However, the main obstacle in this process is the funding. Applying for citizenship involves a non-refundable fee of K10, 000 (ten thousand kina). Furthermore, this fee does not guarantee that a refugee will be granted citizenship. In fact, the application may be subject to rejection if all necessary documents are not provided.

The UN wants PNG National and Provincial Governments to take full

ownership of the Iwara Camp. After the UNHCR shut office in 2013, the Department of Provincial and Local Affairs and Border Issues assumed responsibility with Iwara Camp as the UNHCR's implementing partners. To ensure continued service delivery and sector support for Iwara Camp, a formal agreement was signed in January 2013. The Signatories include Secretary of the Department of Provincial Government, the Catholic Bishop of Daru – Kiunga, Chairman of the Iwara Committee, and the outgoing representative of the UNHCR. According to Goroka's Melanesian Institute researcher and SVD Priest, Fr. Franco Zocca, the refugees that he interviewed were skeptical about the new agreement and claimed the Provincial and North Fly District Administrations do not show interest in the development of Iwara Camp.

The Church, with its partners and agencies, has been addressing the struggles of the West Papuan refugees in terms of health and education at the camp. Other stakeholders have provided very little support.

Consequently, Fr. Franco Zocca has made a distressing observation of refugee numbers there. When he visited East Awin in 1994 the population at the Iwara camp site was 3636, and

the number of refugee children enrolled in elementary and primary schools was 1023.

He revisited the camp in October 2013 and recorded the latest figures. Considering the time span between his first and last visits, the statistics should have soared. On the contrary, numbers at the camp have dwindled. In fact, in almost two decades the camp population has dropped to 2190 refugees and the student enrolment has also decreased to only 694. What are the human stories behind these declining statistics?

The media is often referred to as the fourth estate. But, like the silently suffering West Papuan refugees, the media has also been silent on this issue. According to Iwara Camp Administrator, Jex Punai, in almost 30 years, the media have never approached him for an interview about the overall situation and development of the camp. Let's find out why the PNG media have been so quiet.

We have two daily papers in the country, the National and the Post Courier.

The National is owned by Malaysian multinational logging corporation Rim-bunan Hijau. Post Courier is owned by South Pacific Post, a subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch's global media conglomerate

News Corporation. These two newspapers are owned by profit oriented organizations, which means that their papers must sell.

According to the Post Courier, stories on the West Papuan refugees at the Iwara Camp are not being reported in their newspapers because Post Courier currently does not have an office in Kiunga.

Additionally, Post Courier does not have a stringer in the township or province of Western. Due to the remoteness of the location, journalists outside Western Province cannot cover stories at the Iwara Camp as it is not cost effective for their business. Iwara Camp stories will never be read in the Post Courier unless they open an office in Kiunga or engage stringers who can cover the stories at their own expense.

What about television? EMTV is owned by Fiji Television through its subsidiary Media Niugini Limited. They report on border issues, but not specifically on West Papuan refugees at the Iwara Camp. Its isolated site and absence in the mainstream media, is the reason why many Papua New Guineas are completely oblivious to the camp's existence. On the same note, not all media organizations in the country know about Iwara Camp.

Water Runs Through Every Place I've Visited

by Shannon Odonne from her Internet's Travel Stories

AS a popular saying goes, water is the essence of life where all living beings on the planet cannot do without, just like the air that we breathe for our very existence.

Water is an essence of life and as we are well aware in today's world, climate change, industrialization and mining & logging in the name of development, is contributing to water pollution, safe water security, and the global water supply.

We drink between 2-3 litres of water per day, but we use 3,000 litres per day when considering water used in food production.

Meat production is a huge culprit for hidden water waste. 1 kilogram of beef takes 15,000 litres. Reducing the amount of food you waste and throw away is one of the easier ways to reduce your water consumption.

Shannon Odonne, a travel writer is a Florida girl who left her home to travel solo around the world. Years later, she is still on this journey—sometimes with her niece in tow—traveling slowly, and sharing stories and advice from life on the road.

On one of her travel stories she focuses on water and says that "it wasn't until I left the confines of the United States that I began to witness the wealth and resource disparity present on our planet. And by disparities, I mean disparities in all terms of wealth.

"After traveling, I began to appreciate my education more because I saw how hard so many others worked for theirs.

"My food was plentiful, and I never knew hunger. I had a shower every night, and clean tap water flowing out of my faucet. I spent summers running through my sprinklers, then cooling off with a glass of lemonade flavored Kool-Aid. I never knew how much I had at my disposal.

"Water is a shared resource, and though renewable, clean water is increasingly taxed out by our usage.

Two easiest ways to help the global water shortages are to conserve water usage and eliminate food waste. Our personal choices affect the planet as a whole," writes Shannon.

Here Shannon shares her photos with water as the theme from various countries she has visited.

TYPES OF WATER AROUND THE WORLD



CLEANSING WATER: Two women on Inle Lake in Myanmar bath right on the canal thoroughfare, taking not only food from the river, but the mechanics of daily life as well. Salty Water:



SALTY WATER: The Dead Seas one of the saltiest bodies of water on earth. Life cannot flourish in the water and when standing on the shores, earth's lowest spot on land, pretty white salt crystals cover the rocks and tint the water an impossible shade of aqua-green as it laps at the knobby rock surface.



MOUNTAIN WATERS: High in the Himalayan Mountain range, the clear, gushing streams harness energy, help process foods, and offer life to the communities living off the land in rural parts of Nepal.



HISTORICAL WATER: The Neretva river flowing under Stari Most, a bridge in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has witnessed history and tragedy unfold. Stari Most stood in Mostar for 427 years before it was bombed and destroyed in the Croat-Bosniak War in the early 1990s. After the war ended, UNESCO and international organizations worked with the government to accurately build and reconstruct the bridge that stands today.



MYTHICAL WATERS: Pretending I am Nessie the Loch Ness Monster, I strike a ridiculous pose in Fort Augustus, Scotland. Part of me secretly hoped I'd see Nessie in this photo when I looked at the image.



BUSY WATER: Sydney Harbour in Australia bustles with activity as boats, both large and small, zip right by the Sydney Opera House. The boats are likely rushing to avoid the storm that rolled in 10 minutes later and let loose a torrential downpour of rain.



CONVENIENT WATER: Glancing over the low wall around the temple compound, I spotted this young monk filling buckets as monks cleaned and washed all the white temple walls.



FOOD & WATER = LIFE. Without water, we have no food.