

By BOLA NOHO
(Public Relations Officer, National Cultural Commission)

PAPUA New Guinea's (PNG) currency is unique and has been derived from the country's diversified cultural elements.

The Kina and Toea are PNG's legal tender which we use today was treasured during the barter trade system in the past.

They were scarce but were all found only along the coastal areas and were traded with other goods and services with neighbouring tribes. But in the highlands especially in Ialibu, area, nobody knows where it came from. They believe it was dropped from the sky when thunder strikes during the storms.

The Kina became precious in the culture, a way of life for the people of Southern Highlands Province. Its value has been maintained for generations before the arrival of the first Europeans in the area. The history was that gleaming iridescent gold-lipped pearl shells (*Pinctada maxima*) became the most prestigious objects of the highlanders who could possess with pigs.

The pearl shells were objects of rarity and importance as wealth items in the highlands. They were traded from the southern coastal areas through barter system into the highlands areas.

They were made more popular by the arrival of early explorers and patrol officers through trade routes into Western Highlands Province.

These pearl shells commonly known as Kina shells were flown into the Western Highlands in boxes by the Leahy brothers who were exploring for gold in Waghi Valley.

They were used to pay wages to the local people who loved the shells as much as the explorers loved the gold.

Large number of Kina shells entered Southern Highlands through Ialibu through trade routes linking its neighbouring province of Western Highlands.

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Govt needs to adjust expenditure forecast

By Stanley Nondol

The government needs to adjust its 2015 expenditure, and restrain borrowing against future revenue and focus its spending on core and high priority areas of education, health, law and order and infrastructure in light of the falling global oil and mineral prices.

Director of the Institute of National Affairs, Paul Barker made these comments following the big drop in the global oil price to around 35 percent where PNG LNG is directly tied to this oil prices as a new comer to the market. He says the LNG selling prices are linked to oil prices and if the LNG pricing is different it will still be affected.

The PNG Chamber of Commerce states that the global drop in minerals prices are likely to continue in 2015 and anticipates that the oil prices to drop by about 50 percent next year.

The Opposition leader Don Polye, over the weekend also urged the government to adjust its 2015 budget projection as the world oil prices are now more than 35 percent lower than the time of the 2015 budget, adding that the fall in LNG and oil prices will reduce the government revenue by K1.4 billion in 2015.

Mr. Polye further warned that if the government fails to do necessary adjustments, PNG budget deficit in 2015 will increase to 8.8 percent, and the debt to GDP ratio will increase to 75 percent in 2017 which is two and a half times the maximum level in the Fiscal Responsibility Act.

Minister for Finance and Treasury, James Marape and Patrick Pruaitch respectively in separate statements defended the government budget focus and re-assured the country that the government is fully aware of the current development in the world commodities markets and is closely monitoring the movements in prices.

Both Minister stated "there is no need to panic" as the government will take necessary measures to ensure the adverse movements in the revenue outlook is contained and the 2015 budget remains on track for the stated fiscal year.

Mr. Barker says tax from oil revenue has been a major portion of revenue from the total government revenue, but it has gone down significantly because



LNG Gas project site in Napanapa Central Province. *Fail photo.*

the total production from Kutubu Oil has gone down from the beginning of 2000 and slowly going down in terms of its quantity.

"LNG started production in May of this year and the price was pretty strong early in the year, but as we have seen in the last few months, few weeks and even before the start of 2015 the price has dropped well below so GDP estimate for next year which has been reduced from 22 percent to 15.5 percent. This is partly because the LNG production has commenced early. So some GDP portion brought forward to 2014. We got reduced GDP for next year because of lower growth.

"But the revenue to come from PNG equity in the PNG LNG and start of other taxes will also have to be adjusted because of these lower prices. And if the price remains low, we have to reduce our forward estimate in 2016 and 2017 as we may not know what the price will be.

"The oil prices fall significantly below the \$US60 per barrel. A few months ago it was on US100 per barrel. It has two sides, one it gives opportunities for industries using energy to see lower prices and lower cost of productions. Airlines and other industries getting boost. The

construction industry and tourism industry may enjoy lower cost of production as well.

"Down sides are PNG big growth at the moment is based on the development of LNG. Although LNG doesn't create many jobs, it provides revenue to the state and although revenue has not focused to be too high for 2015, 2014 or even 2016 and building up into to 2017 and 2018. It's a long term source of revenue, but with this lower prices, revenue focus for the 2015 particularly leading into the later years will be reduced so government expenditures needs to be adjusted accordingly.

"We need to have practical policy to improve the non Mining sector," Mr. Barker says.

"In the last few years we were hoping to see a boost improvement in the non Mining sector but we have not seen that in the non mining sector and hopefully that will happen in the last few years and the government may have the policies for that non Mining sector. We need to have practical policies and to boost agriculture.

"There has been an attempt to create separate LNG market and price mechanism separate from oil but at the moment it's a new commodity and we are tied to the current oil prices in the world

market," Mr. Barker says.

Mr. Barker added that the government needs to focus on its priorities. On the expenditure side it needs to avoid further borrowing against future earnings. Its always risky borrowing so the government introduced the fiscal responsibility Act in 2006 to put a ceiling on the borrowing on the debt to GDP.

He further said the government needs to adjust to the 2015 budget projection and restrain on the level of borrowing, and in terms of expenditure, it needs to concentrate on the core activities. The core activities are basically, infrastructure maintenance, and doing some restoration and upgrades on basics infrastructures in schools, hospitals, and the law and order sector and ports and maintain a satisfactory standard.

"In the last few years enormous amount of money ranging from K1.2 billion to K2 billion was channeled towards the 2015 Pacific Games Sports facilities. PNG doesn't need to make it the most expensive. It's not the Olympics, it's the Pacific Games and we don't need to spend too much more than any other Pacific nation can afford to spend. We don't need to be showing off to the Pacific," He said.

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

with **Issac Liri**



Greetings readers!! All year round the *Wantok Today* Youth Say section has been interviewing young people giving them the opportunity to openly share their views about life and the challenges they face in their respective societies. For this issue *Wantok Today* decided to get the views of young people about their personal thoughts of this festive season. **What is your definition of this festive season?**



Name: Joylyne Karato
Age: 22
Home Province: Enga
Dream Job: Journalist
Current Employment: Trainee Journalist

This festive season is the time when King Jesus was born in Bethlehem some thousands of years ago and we are celebrating his birthday. This is a time when families come together to celebrate the coming of the Lord Jesus. For me, I normally go to church and participate in church activities to celebrate his coming by giving gifts to other fellow Christians and sing Christmas songs together.



Name: Casper Kwalu
Age: 25
Home Province: Central
Dream Job: To be my own boss

Every time when Christmas is here, I reflect and review the whole year. I appreciate the good and bad experiences I encountered during the year and I feel grateful to the Lord for helping me make it through the year.

During the time of the year there are many challenges as well, especially from friends. Invitations to attend parties are common. I always try my best to celebrate this festive season with its true purpose, and that is to be with my family and enjoy every bit of it.



Name: Elizabeth Oseya
Age: 23
Home Province: Milne Bay
Dream Job: System Analyst
Current Employment: Service Co-ordinator (Able Computing)

Jesus Christ is the reason for this festive season. It is a time chosen by everyone to remember the birth of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. John 3.16 " For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him will not die but have ever lasting life". Jesus Christ was given to us as the free gift of eternal life. In other words this festive season should be a time to give and never expect anything back just like when Christ was given to us



Name: Darren Kila
Age: 24
Home Province: Central/Bougainville
Dream Job: Professional Accountant

The Christmas period is sometimes known as the one of the dangerous times of the year, this is because every Christmas many lives are taken because of the various activities that take place in our communities.

For myself, I think that many times we skip to understand the true meaning of this festive season and get involve in all kinds of activities.

As a Christian country, we know its true purpose but we ignore.

This Christmas I will try my best to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.

Say NO to Drugs and Homebrew!



NOKEN STILIM WARA!



Noken paitim meri na bagarapim ol pikinini!



Young band (Generation Dot-Com) striving to enter music industry

By **Isaac Liri**

Generation Dot-Com is a new band currently recoding their volume one album titled *Gutpla taim, taim nogut*, under the Twinstar Musical Studio in Port Moresby.

This band consist of young men who come from different parts of Papua New Guinea who grew up and live in the nation's capital, Port Moresby.

In 2004 they formed their band while still studying at Wardstrip Primary School. After graduating and going to separate secondary schools in 2006, they still managed to keep in touch with each other, meeting during weekends, composing songs and developing their musical skills.

Years in secondary school were said to be adventurous according to them, even though they had the enthusiasm to record, the talent in singing and playing musical instruments, the capital to support them to achieve their dream was missing.

In 2007 they recorded a couple of singles with Tribal Records, a studio established in Port Moresby and operated by the band known as South tribe.

Unfortunately the project with Tribals Records never eventuated

so they went home dreaming at night on what direction to take to accomplish something that kept them busy especially during school holidays.

After most of them completed grade 12 at the end of 2009, they came together again, made their plans, selected a few songs in their previous demos and visited the Twinstar Musical Studio, seeking for a recording deal.

After negotiating with the manager and the sound engineers of the studio, they were granted a special deal with a special rate considering the fact that they were students without any form of employment.

There recording with Twinstar went well however, a few members of the band had to go and attend university away from Port Moresby and this affected the band's progress. The band never paid their outstanding bills and everything was left incomplete.

During Christmas breaks when members of the band met together, they still did what they always did when they were teenagers, writing new songs, playing music, and bonding. During those breaks they would often visit the engineers at Twinstar just to say hello, gossip, and get updates about the music industry.



A few members of Generation Dot-Com chilling out at 5 mile, Port Moresby

This year after so many years of calling themselves as a band, the original members still have the dream to officially record an album. Some old members have already

moved on with life, leaving the dream behind, and a few new members have joined.

Generation Dot-Com's first album will be coming out at the be-

ginning of next year. The songs in the album are arranged in various music genre targeted to suit the diverse cultural lifestyles of the people of Papua New Guinea.

Districts gain higher status

By Joylyne Karato - UPNG Journalism student

THE NATIONAL Government has come up with an idea and passed an organic law which will take away some of the burden that provincial government have in providing services to local level areas, which District Administrations fail to do.

In this organic law, Joint District Planning (JDP) and Budget Priority Committee (BPC) have been abolished and replaced with a statutory authority in each district to be known as the 'District Development Authority' (DDA).

Chief Secretary, Mansupe Zurenuoc, in a press conference said that different districts will have different responsibilities depending on their capacity and unique circumstances to develop, built, repair, improve and maintain roads and other infrastructure.

He added that this authority is given the power to do things that are necessary or convenient to be done such as, entering into contracts, charge fees for work done and services provided, enter into partnerships and participate in joint ventures, and do anything incidental to any of its powers.

This is a bit different from the old system of administration where it is normally located in major centers where decisions regarding district



Chief Secretary, Mansupe Zurenuoc, in a press conference.

funds are done secretly by only one person who is the District Administrator of the district.

DDA will each receive K15 million district supports through the open member's district support grant, depending on which service delivery functions it has.

With the implementation of the DDA today, rural people and the grassroots will be given equal opportunities in making decisions and say something about their own areas how to bring in developments and services through the help of the new Act.

DDA offices will be located at

their specific district headquarters and any queries about service delivery and projects will be solved at the district and not at the provincial level.

This authority will work in close relation with the provincial administration in carrying out service delivery which will be specified by the Minister for Intergovernmental Relations after consultation with the Provincial Executive Council.

It will also approve local level government budget and draw up 5 year rolling development plan for the district, and also review the five year development plan.

It will also oversee, co-ordinate and make recommendations as to the overall district planning, including budget priorities, for consideration by the provincial government and the national government to determine and control the budget allocation priorities for the LLG's in the district.

Chief Zurenuoc said that it is passed in the Organic Law that DDA will not replace provincial governments but cooperate, coordinate and not replace the policies and plans of the provincial government.

Similar to the former JDPBPC, DDA consist of three 3 members who are appointed by the chairman where at least one of which must be a woman along with the LLG president and the open member in the district as the chairperson.

This membership is for the term of the Parliament and all public servants in the district are responsible to the district administrator.

"The Provincial Government will continue to be an important part of our decentralised system of government and the provincial government and its administration will provide overall co-ordination and will continue to provide services to the people in the provinces." Zurenuoc said.

He said that the Authority will report quarterly and annually to the Minister for Inter governmental Re-

lations where all the meetings of the authority will be done in the district and in the public in which resolutions will be delivered on a public notice board at the district office.

It will be based on their district where people will see it providing service to them and quarterly meetings to be held in the districts so that the public will participate in making decisions on delivering services.

Development Authority will commence work on January 1 next year as an administrative body, and not as a government where it can pass laws or impose taxation.

The minister for Intergovernmental Relations will present the report to NEC and if it finds that DDA misuses funds, or not fulfilling its functions, or has exercised its powers in a way that is in conflict with the policies and plans of the PG, they have all the rights to suspend them.

The minister can issue a direction to the authority to ensure proper performance of the authority's function where it can conduct affairs in a proper manner.

This DDA Act does not apply to the Autonomous Region of Bougainville or the National Capital District where there is a Commissioner already in place to look after them.

Wantok Niuspepa helped me to read in Tok Pisin

A testimony of a young men who came in contact with the Wantok Niuspepa when he was very young

By Isaac Liri

FIFTEEN years ago when Anthony Tiona started his elementary education in East Sepik province where his mother originates from, he was introduced to the only Tok Pisin newspaper, Wantok Niuspepa.

Learning Tok Pisin in elementary school under the education curriculum, Outcome Based Education (OBE), Anthony was one of the many young Papua New Guineans who learnt how to read and write in Tok Pisin.

Whilst learning how to read and write Tok Pisin in school, Anthony needed something away from school to help him to continue developing his reading and writing skills in Tok Pisin and this is when he came across the Wantok Niuspepa.

His grandmother, a regular reader of the paper, ensured that she bought *Wantok Niuspepa* every week. Every time Anthony visited his grandmother, he would get a copy of the paper and read. The comic section was his favorite section in the paper which includes the adventures of Toro, Biabia and Kanage.

When Anthony's grandmother realised that her grandson grew the



Anthony with mum and dad.

interest of reading the *Wantok Niuspepa* every now and then, she started cutting out pieces of the newspaper, especially the comic sections which had dirty jokes.

"Every time when I visited grandmother at her place and read a copy of the paper, I would realise that the comic part was already cut out, I knew that grandmother didn't want me to read the crap so I would just go ahead and read other sections of the newspaper," Anthony recalled.

As the years passed and Anthony grew, his grandmother left the comic section when she realised that her grandson was matured enough to read such comics.

Today Anthony still looks forward to read the *Wantok Niuspepa* every time he pays a visit to his grandmother. He said that it was a habit he developed when he was very young, and today the habit is just part of his normal life.

When asked which newspaper would he buy today as a university student getting prepared to graduate with a Bachelor in Degree in Mathematics and Computer Sci-

ence at the University of Papua New Guinea, Anthony admits that he would either buy the Post Courier or National because of the daily reports required to update him on current issues, however, he still loves *Wantok Niuspepa* as a unique newspaper written in a language widely spoken and understood in the country.

Anthony's mother, Margaret Tiona confirms Anthony's testimony as a boy who read *Wantok Niuspepa* while studying in elementary school, and from a mother's perspective, she is very proud of what a newspaper can do for a boy who has been a top student in his class from Primary to Secondary School.

"*Wantok Niuspepa* has played a

major role in helping my son to read, and to see him grow up and achieve a lot in his education career, I am very grateful to the producers of the paper," said Mrs Tiona.

Mrs Tiona added saying that after Anthony learnt how to read in Tok Pisin and went on learning to read in English in grade 3 in Primary school he never found difficulties when he was bridging from one language to another.

Before leaving Anthony and his family, Anthony said that he is very grateful of what *Wantok Niuspepa* has done for him, and he will always have memories of the newspaper as a tool that started him off.



Anthony with the rest of his family.

First PNG female mangrove specialist awarded

...Winner of WOW IBBM Young Achievers Award

By Lorraine Siraba

MARINE Conservation is a unique science field that young women who want a real challenging but exciting experience should take up, says Mazzella Maniwavie, winner of the Westpac Women IBBM Young Achiever's Award.

COURAGEOUS would be the word, I would use to describe this young woman who not only celebrates the Westpac Women's Award but also the Publication of PNG's first Community-based Mangrove Planting Handbook which was launched earlier in June 2014.

"It was a long journey and I still have a lot to learn in order to be reputed as an expert in this field", she humbly said.

At 27 years of age, Ms Maniwavie is Papua New Guinea's first female specialising in the field of mangrove restoration and conservation. Her achievements are a testament of the untapped potential of young people especially young women's contribution to nation building.

"Although we have a lot of young Papua New Guineans graduating as biologists and environmentalists, very few specialize in specific marine fields such as mangroves and research on other marine animals that are critical to the health of our coastal ecosystems and important to the bulk of our coastal people, who highly depend on marine resources to sustain their livelihoods", Ms Maniwavie said.

"It is very exciting because there is still so much that we have yet to learn. I would encourage young vibrant Papua New Guinean women to be adventurous and grasp the many opportunities available for women in our society today, and to excel to another level and to never settle for less. The sky is the limit and if you never try, you will never know the great things you can achieve", she said.

Mazzella's love for the environment and oceans goes back to her childhood years growing up with her two siblings at Motupore Island Research Centre in Bootless Bay, Central Province, where her father

was stationed as a Marine Biologist.

"My love for nature particularly the ocean was developed during my childhood. I learnt at a very early age how we as humans, depend heavily on our environment and its inherent values to sustain our lives. I was determined from then to protect the environment so nature can continue to look after us."

"My father was a role model marine biologist who had the greatest influence on my decision to follow in his footsteps at a very young age. He was one of few marine biologists in PNG. I grew up seeing all the work he did in protecting the environment, particularly in the area of mangrove and coral reef conservation which inspired me to take up this field. Mangrove restoration and rehabilitation is in its early developmental stage and I saw this as an opportunity to specialize in this field as no female had ventured into this area. I thought to myself- I should do it!"

"I started firstly as a volunteer with Motupore Island Research Centre's Mangrove Rehabilitation Project which originated in the East Hiri communities and then expanded on to other provinces through various trained individuals and environmental groups."

"I spent the next 6 years specializing in mangrove restoration and recently developed tools and techniques that will increase the survival of replanted mangrove trees.

When I graduated from university I was challenged to put this knowledge into practice through running community training on mangrove restoration firstly in Central, Port Moresby, Gulf and now full time in New Ireland Province with the Wildlife Conservation Society.

My greatest challenge during such mangrove restoration trainings was translating scientific information into simple pidgin that can be understood and actioned at the community level."

Mazzella's journey in this technical field has been challenging. She reflects on her time at the University of Papua New Guinea enrolled in the Bachelor of Science (BSc) in



Mazella and local field assistants taking a break under the mangrove forest.

Photo: Lorraine Siraba

Biology program followed later in the Bachelor of Science Honours (BScH) in Marine Biology specializing in Mangrove Conservation.

"I think one of my biggest challenge was time management, trying to balance study and my social life. Scientific research requires a lot of critical thinking, dedication and patience.

Securing funding to carry out my research was another challenge in itself, and learning how to manage and acquit large amounts of money at a young age and at the same time working within a time frame to meet my objectives and achieve my degree.

Another big challenge was the environment in itself where I was doing my research. In difficult environments such as the mangrove habitat, I required a lot of physical strength and perseverance and at times I needed males to assist me in doing my field surveys. It was intimidating at times to realise my physical limits as a woman but being very determined has brought me a long way."

All these challenges has certainly moulded Mazzella to be strong in all aspects enabling her to tackle the day to day tasks set before her.

"If I am out in the field, my typical day starts at 6 am where I am either travelling between island communities doing awareness on the importance of mangrove ecosystems and its protection or training communities to do mangrove replanting as an adaptive measure to coastal erosion and flooding resulting from climate change. On a more intensive day I do mangrove health surveys with island commu-

nities, which is very laborious depending on the size of mangrove forests we survey. When I am in the office my typical day starts at 8 am and finishes at 5 pm and involves long periods of data entry, analysis, reading research articles and reporting".

Sustainable environmental practices including mangrove conservation is critical in light of climate change and its impact on Pacific island nations. Loss of mangroves will have a serious economic impact on both fisheries and coastal communities who depend on the coastline for their sustenance.

As a strong advocate for environment conservation, Mazzella says marine pollution is a major environmental issue in PNG particularly in our major cities and towns.

Plastic pollution in particular is a major hazard to marine plants and animals and the government has to seriously look into developing best practices to manage waste and educate people on the impacts of such pollution on the marine environment.

She said everyone including young people have a part to play in the conservation and protection of our environment and the small simple actions we take every day can have a great impact in the future.

"I think the first and foremost step is change our attitude in the way we look at the natural environment and take time to learn how we impact it. Helping the environment does not have to be complicated or particularly time consuming. There so many simple but effective ways

that we can do for the community, society and environment."

Some of them include:

Planting a tree: it's good for the air, land and good shade for your house. Trees also provide oxygen for us and help to regulate the world's climate and atmosphere.

Avoid littering: to help your environment clean up your local area and ensure that you do not litter. If there is no bin where you are, carry your rubbish until you get to the next one. Waste, especially plastics are hazardous for marine animals. Turtles, sea birds and other animals can mistake plastic for food or become tangled in it and die.

Buy reusable water containers: Most plastic water bottles are not recycled and take many years to decompose. Using a reusable container is a better choice for the environment.

Get involved in a community project: find out about local community projects at your school or within your province and support them in protecting the environment.

Share information: Pass on the knowledge you've learnt to your peers and families. If every person you know takes one small step toward protecting the environment, the collective effort can make a big difference that will benefit the whole planet".

Mazzella is appreciative of those who have helped her in her journey to conquer the world.

"I dedicate this award to my late father who had been the greatest inspiration in my life and profession and to my organization the Wildlife Conservation Society for recognising the work that I do and for giving me the opportunity to reach greater heights in my carrier.

How do you feel as an outstanding woman achiever of your category?

I am so happy and very humbled by the opportunity that Westpac is providing to increase the profile of young woman and I am so grateful to the sponsors, as this award recognition and its benefits will open a lot of doors for me".

Note:

Mazzella is from East Sepik and East New Britain Province. Her late father Thomas Maniwavie contributed immensely to Marine conservation in PNG.

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