

O'Neill: National Budget cut expected

PRIME Minister Peter O'Neill says the Government will avoid inflating the cost of election operations next year as the 2017 National Budget would be drastically cut down.

He said previous governments used to increase budgetary allocations for election funding during election periods but his government will avoid that practice as a means of prudent fiscal management and minimise the level of electoral corruption.

Mr O'Neill said the money plan for next year is expected to be reduced as the country has not received adequate revenue inflow due to the unfavourable global economic conditions.

"The global economy has taken a massive downturn and our national income is reduced. But let me remind our people that the government's core policy areas will not be affected," Mr O'Neill said.

He said Government's core policy areas in education, healthcare, law and order, economic and infrastructure development sectors will continue to enjoy substantial amount of funding.

Chief Secretary Isaac Lupari has confirmed that he has recommended the government not to reduce funding for the pri-



Prime Minister Peter O'Neill



Chief Secretary Isaac Lupari

ority areas; instead other departments including the Finance, Treasury and Prime Minister's departments are all expected to receive a reduced allocation.

"Next year will be a very tough year for the nation. Public servants and their families must be able to make sacrifices as the 2017 National Budget will see drastic cuts.

"I told the Government not to reduce the money allocated for health, education, law and order, and infrastructure.

"Money must go to these sectors. I advised the Finance and Treasury departments to reduce their own allocations. I had cut down the budget for my department (PM & NEC Department).

Mr Lupari said some departments will not be receiving funding as they were duplicating the same roles and functions



Opposition Leader Don Polye fears that school aged children might not be in classroom.

as other departments or statutory bodies.

"We will not allocate funds to some departments. There a duplication of roles and functions. This has created a huge burden for government," he said.

Meanwhile, Opposition leader Don Polye has warned the country to prepare for turbulent times starting next year.

The former Treasurer said effects of government's numerous borrowings and reckless spending in 2016 will be felt in 2017 budget cuts.

Mr Polye warned the government not to pass

the buck down to the consumers, especially the little people whom he says will suffer the most.

"PNG Kina is not strong any more, taking a downward trend and the buying power is fast diminishing," Mr Polye said.

He said most of the government departments will have budget cuts and this will have serious consequences on their operations.

Mr Polye says economy has been hard-hit by the combination of global economic variables coupled with massive borrowings and government's inability to

effectively manage the country's economy.

"Massive borrowings and unbudgeted expenditure seen this year will eat into 2017 budget and the effects will be passed down to the people," said Mr Polye.

"I have warned the government on numerous occasions not to go on a borrowing spree as this will have an adverse effect on PNG economy. "The government failed to take heed of the warnings and now you

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Rubbish Drum

The Need for SDGs in PNG

By Josiah Ururu Kana

Human rights is defined as an individual's right to a decent acceptable living standard and welfare that does not violate the rights of another person.

Here in Papua New Guinea, the deprivation and violation of human rights is a very broad issue of concern. And so far, since pre-independence and post-independence days, many categories of cases have been discovered, although there are many NGOs and humanitarian organisations advocating for human rights, not much result have been achieved.

Papua New Guinea has many cases of deprivation and violation of human rights such as lack of clean water and sanitation, quality education, safe environment, gender equality, freedom of movement and information and many more.

In a country that was rated as one of the most corrupt nations in the world with an estimated 40% of people living in poverty, what now can be done to enhance the human development in our country? This in turn brings in a perspective of a new form of approach. As the new 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals is a set of 17 aspirational goals with 169 targets between them. It was given birth to by the United Nations, through a deliberate process involving its 193 member states, as well as the global civil society.

The goals are contained on paragraph 54 of the UN Resolution A/Res/70/1 of 25th September, 2015.

There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals that needs to be implemented in the country and abroad but there are also highlighted ones that are vital in terms of Human development in PNG, and they are as follows: G1) No poverty; G2) Zero hunger; G3) Good Health & Wellbeing; G4) Quality Education; G 5) Gender Equality; G6) Clean Water & Sanitation; G16) Peace, justice and strong institution.

These 7 goals are foundational in terms of total eradication and deprivation & violation of Human Rights in the country.

Now we have to look at each goal in detail to understand it's important to issue at hand.

Goal 1: No Poverty; To end poverty in all its forms.

Here in PNG, poverty is more than lack of income and or re-



Young people are now taking the lead in creating awareness among their peers in understanding the 17 SDGs with their 7 goals.

sources. It includes the lack of basic services such as hunger, education, social discrimination exclusion and lack of participation in decision making. Young people plays certain roles in the perpetration of poverty and its risks. They then face potential life threatening risks from early pregnancy and often lost opportunities for education and a better income.

Many age groups in our country are affected differently when struck with poverty; its most devastating effects are on our children to whom it poses a great threat. It affects their education, health, nutrition and security. It also negatively affects their emotional and spiritual development.

The issue directly violate Article 25 of the Universal Human Rights which states that everyone has the right to adequate living standards.

Goal 2: Zero Hunger; End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable development.

This is also a major concern in PNG. Many of our people, children especially are suffering from hunger and lack of proper diet due to political, economic and even social issues.

More emphasis on subsistence farming can improve living standards since 70% of our population depends entirely on agriculture. But there are also Papua New Guineans facing hunger with no place for agriculture, children especially often roam the suburbs and streets corners begging, selling goods and even stealing just to put something in their belly.

Goal 3; Good health and Wellbeing; Ensures healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all ages.

Health problem is a strong concern in our country. According to PNG health statistics, PNG has one doctor per 17,068 people compared to Fiji 20/2000 in Fiji and one/300 in Australia. And also according to the world health organisations, our country has the worst health status in the whole pacific region ranking 157th out of 187 countries on the UN's Human Development Index.

And some of our most troubling statistics include maternal mortality where almost half of all the women giving birth are without the assistance of a midwife, 5.5% of all babies will die before age of 2 and communicable and on-communicable disease on high in-

crease every month.

Therefore there is a great need in health and wellbeing of our people.

Goal 4: Quality Education ; Ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Major progress has been made for education access in the country specifically at primary school level for both boys and girls. However, access does not always mean quality education, or completion of primary school. Currently, many of our formally educated youths still lack basic literacy skills, education is one thing, quality education is another.

Goal 5: Gender Equality – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. This is one of the major social issues in the country with only 30% of our people living in patrilineal society. The majority always win. Many of our women and girls do not have access to education, health care, decent work and representation in political and economic decision making processes. Much of our culture revolves around gender inequality where women are rated as inferior and low class. This often

psychologically instigates gender-based violence.

Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; Ensures availability and Sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. The right word to describe the issues is availability. The availability of clean water and sanitation is extreme low in almost all parts of our country, especially in urban settlements and slums. According to PNG health statistics, only 33% of our rural people have access to clean water; major factor in 2009 cholera outbreak that affected 14,000 people while diarrhoea is the 7th biggest killer.

Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institution.

This is also a pressing issue in our nation. Law and order problem is always on the increase. More often it is caused by those who were called to serve and protect which is the royal constabulary. Even in politics, where in 2014, in retaliation against the role of law and accountability, Prime Minister Peter O'Neill sacked key officials and disbanded the country's main anti-corruption body in response to efforts to arrest him for his alleged involvement in a multi-million dollar corruption case. PNG is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a woman, with estimated 70% of women face either rape or assaults in their lives. Rascalism and vandalism is another problem of its own destroying the images of our cities, towns and urban areas.

This therefore indicates that if we were to adopt a strategy to create a positive change in the nation in the long run, then we must adopt the SDG.

Our country including leaders students, pastors, doctors, teachers, farmers and other citizens need to understand the need for SDG in this nation. Everyone must participate one way or another to eradicate poverty, violence, illiteracy, hunger, sickness and diseases, gender inequality and economical and political injustice.

We cannot wait for our government leaders to move, because some of them don't even know what the SDGs stand for or that they do exist. We have to move now in whatever way we can. Advocacy of the issue of this 7 goals and their problems are the current major issues at hand.

All Papua New Guineans must understand the gravity of the matter and how much we need the Sustainable Development Goals in our lives.

Relations between Vatican and Britain won't be affected by Britain's exit from EU, Ambassador says

By Christopher Lamb of Tablet

The Holy See is capable of using its 2,000-year history to see the bigger picture, according to UK's man in the Vatican

RELATIONS between the Vatican and Britain will be unaffected by the latter's decision to leave the European Union, the UK's ambassador to the Holy See has said.

Nigel Baker explained that the EU has its fair share of critics within the Vatican, including Pope Francis. The Holy See has widely been seen as in favour of Britain remaining within the EU: Archbishop Paul Gallagher, the Vatican's Foreign Minister equivalent,



told ITV news in January "better than out."

Ambassador Baker said that while it was fair to "extrapolate"

from those remarks although there were a range of opinions within the Roman Curia.

"The Holy See is capable of taking a far broader view which fits in with its 2,000 year history, with its historical perspective," the Ambassador told The Tablet. "It's seen Europe pre-EU and it can contemplate Europe with Britain not in the EU."

He stressed, however, that the Vatican view the EU has a peace project and will be looking for assurances "that the British people's decision won't threaten Europe's peace and stability."

Ambassador Baker, who is leaving his post this summer, pointed to the Pope's speech on Europe given after receiving the Charlemagne prize in May where Francis called on the continent's leaders to rediscover the values of its founders.

"He [the Pope] too has been quite critical of aspects of the EU," the ambassador explained. "But he's also made the point that Europe, and what Europe stands for is not confined to the EU and its institutions. There are European countries that are not members of the EU: there's European history, its values, the history of faith in Europe which is not encapsulated

wholly or even partially within the EU and its institutions."

On the plane coming back from Armenia recently, the Pope said that "Brexit" shows that Europe had to look for a new union because there is something wrong with the current set-up.

"There is something that's not working in this massive, heavy union," Francis said. "But let's not throw the baby out with the bath water."

On the plane out to Armenia, he told reporters that the decision to exit the European Union was the will of the (British) people that would require "a great responsibility" to ensure the well being of people and European co-operation.

Catholic and Anglican Churches celebrate 50 years of co-operation

From Zenit news agency- Vatican

A ring has long been seen as a sign of a bond, of a promise to be honoured, and sometimes as a sign of authority. So when Pope Paul VI took off his papal ring and gave it to Michael Ramsey, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, during his visit to Rome in 1966, it was rich with meaning. With that gesture the successor to Peter reached out to the Church of England, helping to overcome centuries of tension and suspicion that had begun with Henry VIII's break with Rome.

Ever since, archbishops of Canterbury have worn that same ring whenever they visit Rome and meet the Pope.

THE Anglican Centre in Rome celebrates its fiftieth anniversary recently with a visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, to the city and to Pope Francis. The centre's work, says its director, is driven by the impulse to unity implored by Christ.

In the church where in the 6th century, Pope St. Gregory the Great sent St. Augustine of Canterbury to evangelize England, Pope Francis celebrated vespers Wednesday evening with the participation of the archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace Justin Welby in celebrating 50 years of co-operation, and the institution of the Anglican Centre in Rome.

The rite at St. Andrew and St. Gregory on Rome's Caelian Hill formed part of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the encounter between Blessed Paul VI and the then-archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, and the institution of the Anglican Centre in Rome.

Fifty years ago Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Ramsey took as their inspiration the words of the apos-



Time of joy but hard work remains premium

tle: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". Today, "those things which are behind" – the painful centuries of separation – have been partially healed by fifty years of friendship. We give thanks for the fifty years of the Anglican Centre in Rome dedicated to being a place of encounter and friendship. We have become partners and companions on our pilgrim journey, facing the same difficulties, and strengthening each other by learning to value the gifts which God has given to the other, and to receive them as our own in humility and gratitude.

We are impatient for progress that we might be fully united in proclaiming, in word and deed, the saving and healing gospel of Christ to all people. For this reason we take great encouragement from the meeting during these days of so many Catholic and Anglican

bishops of the International Anglican - Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARC-CUM) who, on the basis of all that they have in common, which generations of ARCIC scholars have painstakingly unveiled, are eager to go forward in collaborative mission and witness to the "ends of the earth". Today we rejoice to commission them and send them forth in pairs as the Lord

sent out the seventy-two disciples. Let their ecumenical mission to those on the margins of society be a witness to all of us, and let the message go out from this holy place, as the Good News was sent out so many centuries ago, that Catholics and Anglicans will work together to give voice to our common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to bring relief to the suffering, to bring peace where there is conflict, to bring dignity where it is denied and trampled upon.

Fifty years ago our predecessors recognised the "serious obstacles" that stood in the way of a restoration of complete faith and sacramental life between us. Nevertheless, they set out undeterred, not knowing what steps could be taken along the way, but in fidelity to the Lord's prayer that his disciples be one. Much progress has been made concerning many areas that have kept us apart. Yet new circumstances have presented new disagreements

among us, particularly regarding the ordination of women and more recent questions regarding human sexuality. Behind these differences lies a perennial question about how authority is exercised in the Christian community.

These are today some of the concerns that constitute serious obstacles to our full unity. While, like our predecessors, we ourselves do not yet see solutions to the obstacles before us, we are undeterred. In our trust and joy in the Holy Spirit we are confident that dialogue and engagement with one another will deepen our understanding and help us to discern the mind of Christ for his Church. We trust in God's grace and providence, knowing that the Holy Spirit will open new doors and lead us into all truth.

These differences we have named cannot prevent us from recognising one another as brothers and sisters in Christ by reason of our common baptism.

Nor should they ever hold us back from discovering and rejoicing in the deep Christian faith and holiness we find within each other's traditions. These differences must not lead to a lessening of our ecumenical endeavours. Christ's prayer at the Last Supper that all might be one is as imperative for His disciples today as it was at that moment of His impending passion, death and resurrection, and consequent birth of His Church. Nor should our differences come in the way of our common prayer: not only can we pray together, we must pray together, giving voice to our shared faith and joy in the Gospel of Christ, the ancient Creeds, and the power of God's love, made present in the Holy Spirit, to overcome all sin and division. And so, with our prede-

cessors, we urge our clergy and faithful not to neglect or undervalue that certain yet imperfect communion that we already share.

Wider and deeper than our differences are the faith that we share and our common joy in the Gospel.

Christ prayed that His disciples may all be one, "so that the world might believe".

The longing for unity that we express in this Common Declaration is closely tied to the desire we share that men and women come to believe that God sent his Son, Jesus, into the world to save the world from the evil that oppresses and diminishes the entire creation. Jesus gave His life in love, and rising from the dead overcame even death itself.

Christians who have come to this faith, have encountered Jesus and the victory of His love in their own lives, and are impelled to share the joy of this Good News with others. Our ability to come together in praise and prayer to God and witness to the world rests on the confidence that we share a common faith and a substantial measure of agreement in faith.

In this Church of Saint Gregory the Great, we earnestly invoke the blessings of the Most Holy Trinity on the continuing work of ARCIC and IARCCUM, and on all those who pray for and contribute to the restoration of unity between us.

Before the ceremony the Pope and the archbishop signed a common declaration.

In his homily, the Pope quoted the prophet Ezekiel who describes God as a shepherd herding his scattered sheep, separated from each other "in the day of clouds and thick darkness.

'AITAPE'S ONLY WAWEN'

A feature article about a man who had nothing at all as a youth but with loyalty, commitment and a positive focus in life, he has made a name for himself in the small township of Aitape and is known to all as the popular 'Wawen Mark'. The word 'Wawen' means uncle from the Arapesh language of Dagua, East Sepik Province where he is from.

By Peter LARRY
Freelance Journalist

IN Papua New Guinea, it is always a challenge for each of us to at least make a name for ourselves in our society.

There are fortunate and unfortunate ones. Those who were born with a silver spoon, whose parents have set a foundation for them, and those who have to struggle through the tussles of life to make a name for themselves.

It is noticeable that many youths of today, both working class and non working class, educated and uneducated, want a change to happen in their lives.

But they lack inspiration, encouragement, support and a positive drive they need to stand firm and push them forward to reach their goal, or pursue their dreams for success and a better.

As the wise man King Solomon said in his proverb in the bible, 'whatever seed you plant today, your children will reap or benefit from it tomorrow', is in actual fact a reality in our society.

We can see and learn from this proverb in terms of financial context.

If we encourage and exercise money saving habit among our youths of today, they can be financially secured in the future and their children and family will have nothing to worry about.

While pondering on this proverb, someone's name popped up in my head. It was as if my subconscious wanted me to write something about this person and to tell his story, to use him as an example and an encouragement to all those unfortunate ones who have dreams of becoming somebody in the future.

This person came through a very hard way to get to where he is now. He has faced and experienced the torments of hard life in the big city of Port Moresby in terms of making ends meet to survive. Mark Didiwik, just like any other youth, had a dream in life which he was determined to pursue.

Although equipped with a Certificate in Sales and Marketing, it was always bad luck for him in terms of getting employment in the city and earning money to survive.

And so as the saying goes,



Bertha (mark's wife), Mark Didiwik and their first born son Geraldo at their residence, unfortunately the two of Marks son's Hilary-Suamba and James were asleep at that time and were unavailable for the photo.

'wherever your luck runs dry, try another place', and that was what he did.

With an eagle's focus and a positive mind, knowing that there was light at the end of the tunnel, a young, 36 year old, Mark Didiwik, left the big city of Port Moresby to come and look for greener pastures and settle on the northern tip of Papua New Guinea in the small district of Aitape, Sundaun Province in 1996.

"I was a young man that time I first arrived in Aitape. I was new so I didn't know much about the place, the people, their ways and their culture. I was what you may call a 'newbie', or as we say in tok pidgin 'nupela pes'," he said.

Originally from Dagua in the East Sepik Province, Mark's accent and his built along with his character and behaviour made him out from the locals there, rumours began to float around who this person really was.

He told me he didn't bother to let anything or anyone distract him or let him loose focus on what he wanted to achieve and so, equipped with his sales and marketing certificate, he found a job as a security guard for Aitape Traders.

"When I was offered that job, I gave in a hundred and ten percent of my time and commitment to as well as my loyalty to my employers," said Mark.

"I was now getting paid and I had money but I didn't know what to do with all these monies I had and so I use to spend unwisely by going out and buying beer for my friends and become a 'one day bigshot'," he said.

It was then that Mark realised that his drinking habits and ways of socialising was getting worse and he couldn't save money.

"My self esteem was very low, but apart from all these, I still had the thought of making a name for myself here at the back of my mind," said Mark.

As the years passed on, and with his loyalty and commitment to the company, he earned the trust from his employers, Aitape Traders.

They offered him a place to stay at the company's compound in town and gave him another responsibility of managing their shipments coming in and going out of Aitape wharf.

But as a single young man, alone and by himself, he kept on repeating the same habits over and over and couldn't save up money. He realised that there was something missing in his life.

"One day I was sitting under the hauswin and I realised that I could have saved more money if I had spend money left, right and centre on beer," Mark said.

Then it occurred to him that he needed someone who would give him support, provide him guidance, and give him that strength and determination to further his journey in achieving his dream. And so, in the year 2000, Mark got married to his wife, Bertha Wanduo.

"When I tied the knot with Bertha in Madang and then brought her over to Aitape to stay with me as my wife, it was on that same year that we decided to go into informal marketing and wanted to run our own business,"

Mark said.

And so Bertha and Mark started their informal marketing with K300.

"We bought kerosene drums and resold them in bottles, my wife went to the border of PNG and Indonesia at Batas to buy biscuits, chocolates, lollies and juice which she brought back and we resold the item with our own mark-up price," said Mark.

He said that while they were

doing this they had excess money, because he was still working and earning fortnightly wages and at the same time, his wife was doing informal marketing and earning extra coins from the side.

"It was like every week we had some extra cash, so we decided to bank the money," he said.

Mark and his wife started to build up from there, where they went to the bank every week to deposit money into their small business account.

Soon they became regulars at the small BSP Bank Branch in Aitape town and their relationship with the bank grew as well as their business.

They were now able to get loan from the bank and to build a trade store and packed it with store goods as well as a bottle shop, selling liquor.

With the money received from the trade store and liquor shop as well as from informal marketing done by Bertha every day, their wealth increased.

Now they were able to buy a Toyota Land Cruiser to use for their personal rounds as well as carrying cargoes for their business from Wewak to Aitape whenever stock ran out.

Their trade store and liquor shop became popular amongst the youths as well as those people who loved drinking beer and with frequent visits, his customers started calling him 'uncle' when they wanted to buy beers, or want something from the store, and so

he changed it and told them to call him, 'Wawen Mark'.

The word 'wawen' means uncle from the Arapesh Language of Dagua, East Sepik Province where Mark comes from. And so his popularity grew in the area where he became known around Aitape town as Wawen Mark.

You could ask anyone around town who Wawen Mark is, and they would reply "yu tok long big bel ah?" with his tall big built he was never to be unnoticed by anyone around town.

This is now his 23rd year of living here in Aitape, which he recalls as a 'nupela pes' back in 1996 to now a 'bikpela save pes' and Aitape's only Wawen.

Mark Didiwik has become a popular figure in the small township of Aitape and he mentors, the youths in the area to get into informal sector business and save whatever little profit they make for a better tomorrow, just like himself.

Mark and his wife Bertha have 4 children, one girl and three boys. However the first born daughter named Agatha died leaving them with only three sons, namely Geraldo, Hilary-Suamba and James.

His word of advice to youths of Aitape as well as youths around the country is, "to keep your heads up, think positive and never let yourself down."

"If you think you are a failure, you will be a failure. If you think you cannot save money because you like to spend, spend and spend, you will never save up for tomorrow," said Mark.

"We must always know that when we get money through hard work and we sweat for it, it's a blessing given to us from God. We must not misuse this blessing, we must try to put it to good use in which it can bring back more blessing to us," he said.

"I want to encourage the youths out there struggling doing market sales and informal business, that with the little profit you make every day at least put aside K2 or K5. Keep on doing this everyday and you will see how your money and your small marketing will grow," said Mark.

"Trust me, I've been there and done that and now I'm enjoying the benefits of it," he said.

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