Election '97 PNG

EH! MASKI KOMPLEN TUMAS LONG NA OPDA! YI ENROL NA VOT!

I'LL VOTE FOR BETTER VISIBLE YOUTH BENEFITS!

MY MEMBER DIDN'T GIVE MY BUCKS FOR FLAT FARE TO GO HOME!

I MUST VOTE FOR QUALITY, NOT FOR THE HANDOUTS!

MY VOTE IS PRECIOUS, I MUST CAST IT WISELY!

ENROL NA VOT!

HAVE A SAY!
Winning the race

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

Campaigns based on ethnicity are dangerous to their potential in promoting discrimination and violence — and in their tendency to erode national unity. Persons battling our national sovereignty and unity must be made to face the full force of the law.

National unity cannot be achieved to remain fragile. The Constitution works best when its primary goals are supported by persons who make inflammatory statements from time to time. It is very clearly stated in the Constitution that we must promote solidarity among citizens and between the provinces and ethnic groups and not otherwise.

Said Mr. Kairo, Electoral Commissioner:

"We're doing the job ourselves to avoid delays, waiting for the job to be done by outside parties — and it's working well," Electrical Commissioner Mr. John Litororde explained.

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

Indeed, the Commission is happy about the printing equipment. 'We acquired $50,000 worth of equipment paid for by a very important donor who is to be a very important donor," Deputy Electoral Commissioner Mr. Andrew Mavo said.

Enrolments of voters will continue until the end of March but permission Common Roll is expected to be ready by the beginning of May for public inspection and objections of any registered voter who is not satisfied with.

Eligible voters are Papua New Guinea citizens aged 18 and above. They must be resident as such for an election for more than six months. Those who cannot vote are:

- Prisoners serving all terms of more than nine months.
- Anybody who has been convicted of an election crime within three years of the election day in Ireland, and
- People who were not born in an electorate where they have not been living for at least five years at any one time.

Power to the sisters

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

No, they are active equal opportunities. Mrs. Keela Kilak, pictured at right in front of a sign that says, 'My Electoral Commission,' is the Electoral Commissioner for the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission.

Back in 1966, Mrs. Kilak started as a clerical assistant. Now she is the Commission's accountant — and it is her job to manage the $2.5 million for the Election '97 campaign.

A mother of three, Mrs. Kilak is respected and keeps an open mind of communications with her staff which respect her for always being there when the going gets tough.

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

Mrs. Kilak has worked in all elections since independence.

I concur that public prospective candidates as well as political parties must be given adequate time to prepare themselves for this important national democratic event.

the Governor-General, Sir Wiwa Korowi, to Electoral Commissioner Mr. Kairo.

A job for teacher(s)

IT'S a case of teacher working with school on the move — with the shoe on the other foot — the student now in charge.

Back in 1966 to 1972, Mr. Gari Gamoga, pictured right, was studying Electrical Engineering at Mr. Kikin, at Apia High School in the Central Province.

Now Mr. Gamoga is the principal teacher of Mr. Kikin in Election '97.

And if it's not important to all of us, in the country, it's a Government decision that teachers and students throughout the country be used as polling officials during voting from June 16 to June 17.

The schools will be on holidays so school will not suffer.
Vote in poll or shut up

Real power with people Electoral Commissioner

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

For whether the political leadership is good or bad, the line to between when close gets is in elections. Whether politicians feeding the country we good then is because the voters — the people — choose wisely.

Commonwealth Elections are held by the country determines them for operating them. That is the bottom line in the meaning of elections. They are a fundamental part of the electoral system.

New June the nation goes to the polls in the 1997 General elections to choose which one Papua New Guinea will have in the year 2000, the beginning of the 21st Century. The people have the opportunity to choose either a good or bad Government.

Election Commissioner Mr Richard Kua said today in Port Moresby.

"Real power is in the hands of the people the people who have the power to play this. So it will people make one of this important opportunity is to do their duty to the country we good then is because the voters — the people — choose wisely.

In past elections, many of the so-called middleclass and upper-middleclass Papua New Guineans have realised the importance of voting. Yet, this in the very group that we always critical of political leadership when something is wrong.

Finally, these people should not complain about the political leadership they get if they do not vote to change it. A sustained political campaign said Mr Kua.

"For example, the quiet and steady support to the people from the military and police force in Port Moresby, Mr Kua said, noting that the police have been checking on eligible voters and heard.

Census not necessary

ELECTION '97 can be held without a census.

Election Commissioner Mr Kua said this about the census. "If there is no law saying we have to wait for a census to be done before an election can be held," he said.

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

For its part, the National Statistical Office believes the Electoral Commission has been doing a thorough job in registering electors for elections.

"We trust that the Electoral Commission has been doing a thorough job in registering electors for the 1997 General elections," Mr Kua said. "We have been working on the preparations for the census."

No question for Rabaul, Bougainville

When the Rabaul people were angered by the 1994 volcanic eruption, some said the Rabaul Provincial Assembly was an extra parliament. But the people in Rabaul have never been so enthusiastic.

The constitutional crisis, the people grew tired of the lack of action from the government.

For its part, the people of Rabaul were angry that the government had not acted on the community's needs.

"The Rabaul people were angry that their government was not doing anything about the volcanic eruption," Mr Kua said. "The government was slow to act on the people's demands."

Even the sick are voting

Security on the move

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

"A total of $15 million is to be spent during the election campaign for security purposes," Mr Kua said. "The government has allocated this money to the security forces to ensure the safety of the electors."

"The security forces will be deployed throughout the country to ensure the safety of the electorate."

An election is not an ordinary cause, and it is a very serious thing. It is basic and fundamental that elections are decided by voters who have free and fair opportunity of electing the candidate that the majority prefer. This is a sacred right and legislature has accordingly laid down very strict provisions before there can be any challenge to the expression of the will of the majority — the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea.
ELECTION 97 TIMETABLE

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