



DR PETER Maynard speaking at the Legal year opening 2024 in the National Capital District yesterday. - PICTURE: TARAMI LEGEL.

Rule of law is to protect everyone, says law expert



BY MELVYN BAROI
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THE president of the Commonwealth Lawyer's Association, Dr Peter Maynard, paid his first ever visit to the country with interesting insights on poverty and law and order.

This law and order expert from the Bahamas, who graced the opening of the Legal Year 2024 yesterday, has more than 40 years experience in complex civil litigation, asset tracing and recovery, arbitration and mediation.

Dr Maynard shared personal insights on poverty and law and

order, as everyone was reminded of the Black Wednesday mayhem in Port Moresby, and how the Rule of Law shows effect during times of such crisis in a third world. "It takes courage to stand for the Rule of Law and good governance," he said.

"The unrest and looting offered an opportunity to reflect on the principals that govern our society and the importance of upholding the rule of law," Dr Maynard said.

"The presence of the Rule of Law would protect everyone regardless if you are rich or poor, the rule of law is the foundation of a stable society."

He referred to a book he had edited called "Poverty, Justice and the Rule Of Law" saying the Rule of Law establishes a transparent process accessible and equal to all.

"The connection between poverty and the rule of law is deeply intertwined, the rule of law is not just a legal concept but also a critical factor in creating a stable society which is essential for economic development and poverty alleviation," he said.

"The stability and predictability of legal frameworks are fundamental to sustainable economic development," he added.

He said the absence of such a foundation "can disproportionately affect the poorest and the most vulnerable who often lack the resources and or access to legal systems to defend their Rights".

"The absence of justice and the rule of law create poverty but also impede the efforts to decrease poverty and achieve greater economy," he said.

Chief Justice expresses stern concern for Police

BY MELVYN BAROI

CHIEF Justice Sir Gibbs Salika says that the policemen and women across the country have been lacking in their role to protect and serve as mandated by the Constitution laws of this country.

Sir Gibbs urged the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary to perform their roles and be focused on "maintenance of the law and order".

The message was blunt from the Chief Justice who told police officers at the opening of the 2024 legal year in Port Moresby that, "You are supposed to perform your

roles without fear or favour and be omnipotent".

Sir Gibbs emphasised on the word "omnipotent" telling the police force that no matter where trouble came from, whether it was on water or land or on the street side "police should always be present to serve".

The Chief Justice said that these were fundamental reminders and that the Constitution being the Supreme Law should be abided by.

"Your role under section 197 of the Constitution is to maintain and protect lives and property full stop." He added that the police force should be the most

"appropriate" and "approachable" resort when any ordinary citizen finds themselves in trouble.

"You are to provide protection and assistance to every member of the public and including the vulnerable, mentally challenged and, the women and children," he said.

He added that these fair protection and assistance should also apply to prisoners or inmates noting the proper and fair Constitutional role of Police should apply "everywhere".

"Take this role with seriousness and perform it with dignity and pride," he said.



Chief Justice Sir Gibbs Salika. PICTURE: TARAMI LEGEL.

Sir Gibbs: Rule of Law needs to be taught in every level of education

BY MELVYN BAROI

EDUCATION is an essential tool in promoting the rule of law by teaching a culture of lawfulness, says Chief Justice Sir Gibbs Salika.

Sir Gibbs was speaking the dedication ceremony of all law and order officer in the country during the Legal year opening 2024, yesterday.

"Adherence to Rule of Law needs to be taught at home first, the

Schools, Colleges, Universities and at the work places," he said.

"It needs to be promoted at the villages and settlements until everyone starts practicing and living the Rule of Law,"

"I recommend to the Government to commission a team of experts in the field of education to promulgate policies and programs that can support the personal and societal transformations that will promote and uphold the Rule of Law,"

"Perhaps combine the rule of law teaching as part of early child learning curriculum," he added.

Chief Justice referred to Black Wednesday mayhem in Port Moresby as a classic example of showing no respect to the rule of law and most importantly showed the need for more emphasise on Educating everyone about it.

Sir Gibbs elaborated that "Education promotes the principles of Rule of Law by:

■ Encouraging the learners to value, and apply the principles of Rule of Law in their daily lives.

■ Equip learners with appropriate knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours they need to contribute to improvements and regeneration in society more broadly and become more responsible citizens in their communities.

"It needs to be inculcated to our 2-year-olds, 3, 4, 5-year-olds.

"The values of such teaching

adherence to the rule of law, in my view is for the long term and if we can create a society of law respecting and abiding people, we can achieve our dreams of a better PNG."

He further added that such education should also reach the youth who "can be important contributors "to create a culture of lawfulness and the government must provide education support that nurtures positive values and attitudes for future generations".



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Legal year 2024 opens

BY MELVYN BAROI

THE courts are expected to open and run full swing after yesterday's official opening of the legal year for 2024.

The event saw a parade of police officers, correctional service officers, judges, magistrates and lawyers and officers of the National Judicial Staff Services flood the Tokarara/Waigani road and ushered by a police band into the Bethel Tabernacle of Praise.

Speaking at the event was Chief Justice Sir Gibbs Salika and President for the Commonwealth Lawyer's association Peter Maynard who attended the event for the first time.

Chief Justice informed of many great achievements of the judiciary including an approval from the government of increasing the number of judges from 40 to 60 as of January 19, this year.

"I am happy that what I was pushing for has been approved by

the government," he said. "This increment would go to fighting the backlog of cases in court which dates back into the 90's.

"As reported in the 2021 Judges Annual Reports, with the growing population estimated at 10 million people, a ratio of a judge alone serving an estimate 250,000 people demonstrates the need to address this issue as a matter of priority," he said.

"The seriousness of the issue is also highlighted by the growing number of cases being filed and total caseload carried forward every year. To address this issue, the judiciary has begun the process of increasing the number of judges up to 60.

"It has recently appointed four new judges, bringing the total number of substantive judges in the National and Supreme Court to 39, half the proposed total. We are also seeing that the judges are increasing their workload to meet the demands of the matters being brought before them."