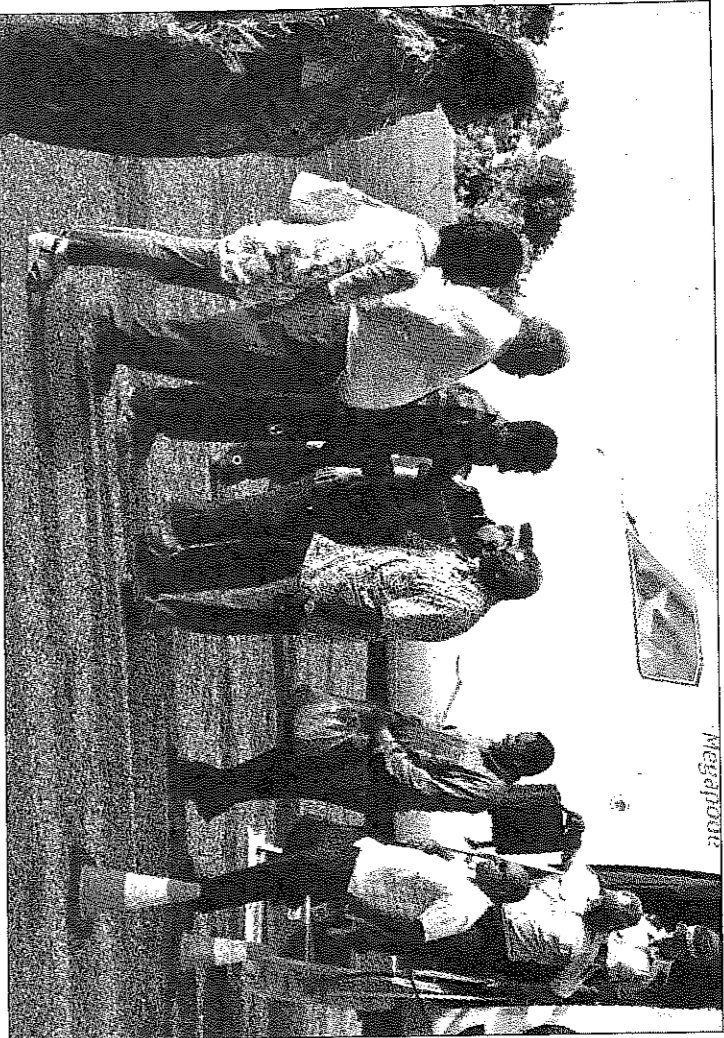


# NEWS LOCAL



Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare and Dignitaries upon arrival late yesterday at Nusatupe Airstrip. Photos by PAGEPTU ALFRED.

## Dialogue on peace & dev't starts today in Gizo

BY ALFRED PAGEPTU  
GIZO

A dialogue on sustaining peace and accelerating development is being held in Gizo starting today.

It is organised by the Western Provincial Government together with the Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace (MNURP) supported from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the United Nations Peace Building Fund (UNPBF).

Western Province hosts this dialogue and international stakeholders have been invited to observe in the province.

The objective of the dialogue is to ascertain local solutions and commitments to sustain peace that are owned by leaders and people of Western Province, and the national government of

Solomon Islands.

Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, Hon Samson Manaka, Minister of MNURP as well as women, youth representatives, church leaders, village, tribal chiefs, provincial members, and Western province Premier Wayne Maepio are in attendance.

Hon Maepio said this is an opportunity to identify, examine and discuss the development challenges and economic potentials of the Western province.

"We will be discussing more issue on tourism, security including on border security, anti-corruption and resourcing peace and development.

"Our main issues emanating from this dialogue will be presented at the National Dialogue to be convened in June 2017 in Honiara," said

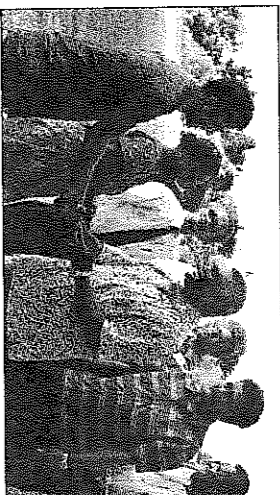
Maepio.

He thanks the Prime Minister and delegates, stakeholders, Provincial Government and the people of Western Province for the occasion.

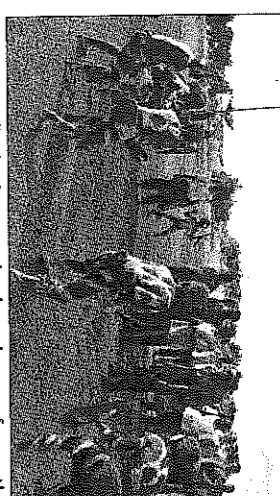
Meanwhile, the UNPBF is supporting the Government of Solomon Islands and national stakeholders during a transitional period in view of the RAMSI drawdown this year.

This is to create an inclusive space for dialogue and reconciliation and to strengthen the national capacity for implementing the national peace building policy, including enhancing the engagement of women and youth in peace building processes.

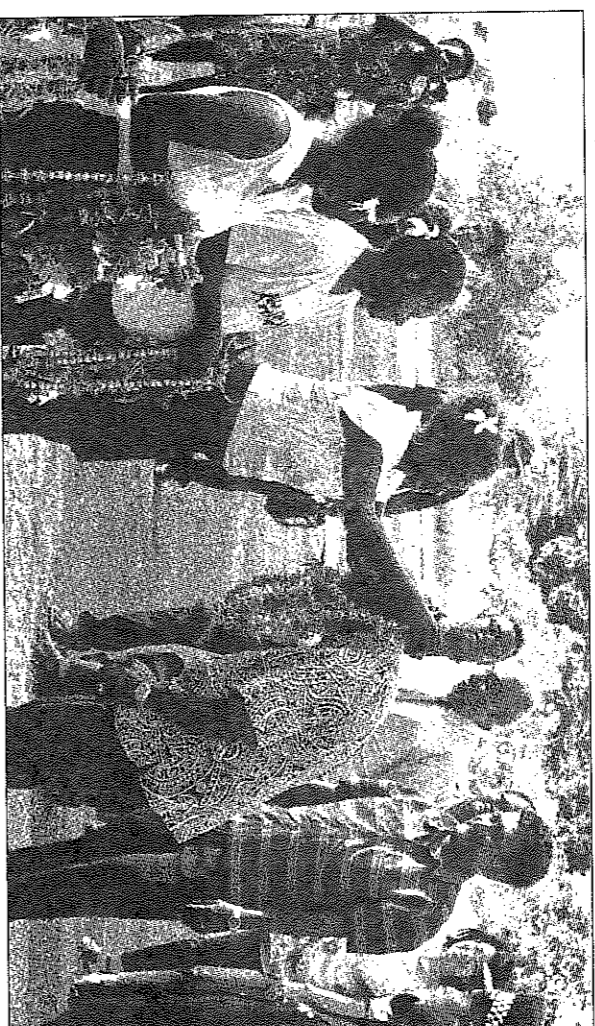
The dialogue concludes on Wednesday May 24, 2017, at the Wesley United Church Rest house hall.



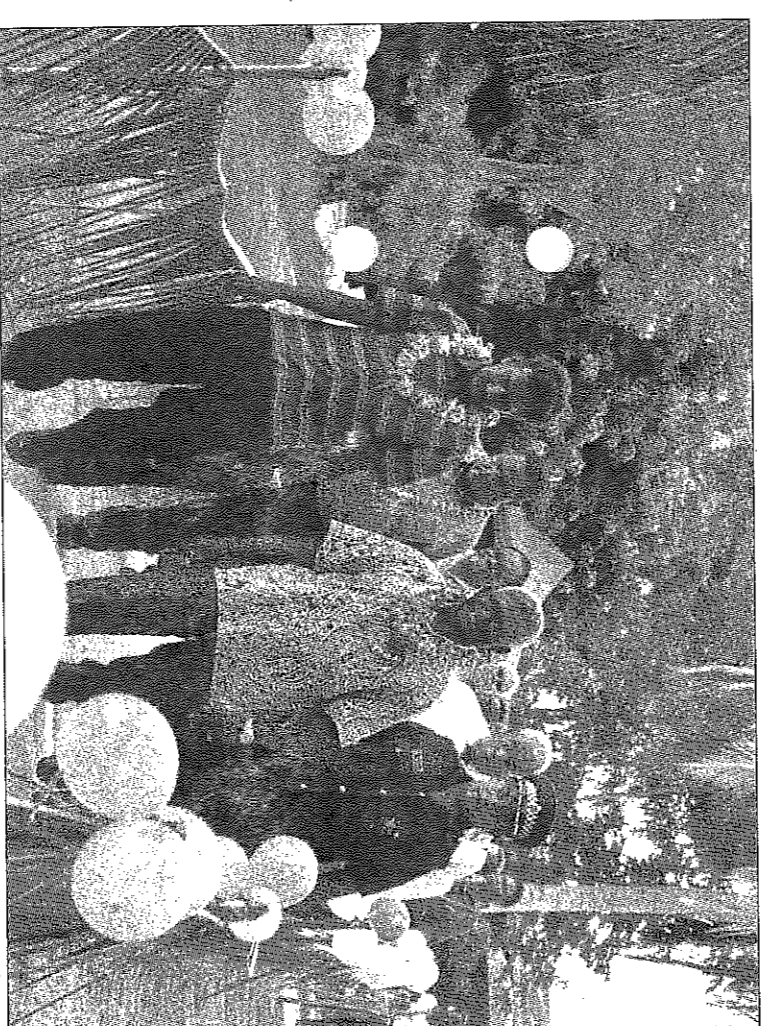
Hon Manasseh Sogavare greets members of the Provincial government and other stakeholders upon his arrival at Nusatupe Airstrip yesterday.



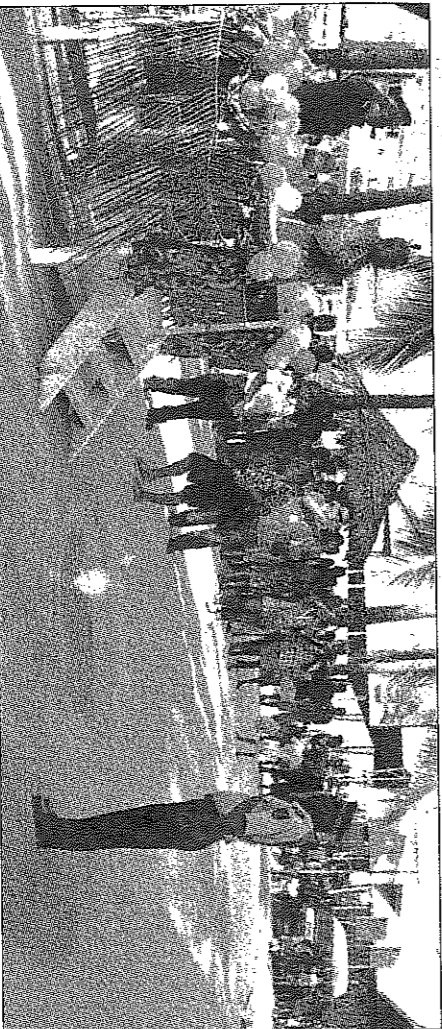
PM and dignitaries received welcome from the traditional warriors with Western traditional welcome upon their arrival.



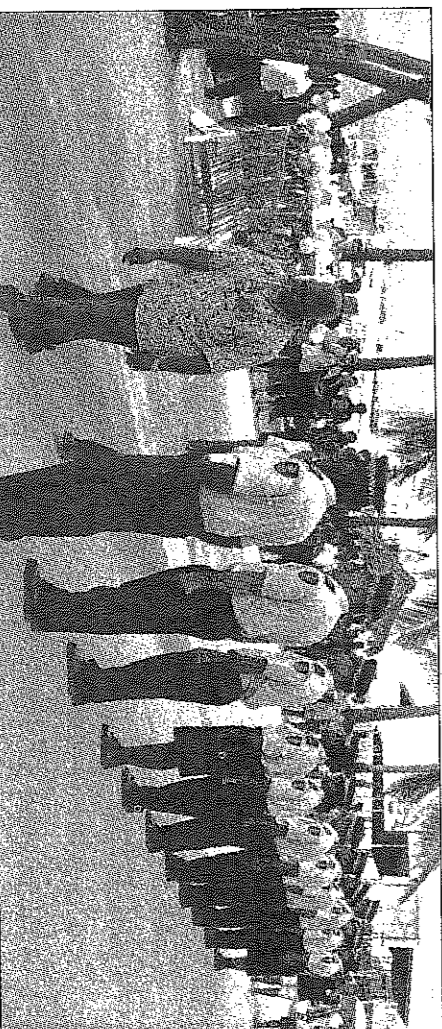
Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare garland with traditional flowers at Nusatupe Airstrip.



Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare and Minister for Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace (MNURP) Hon Samson Manaka being led by Western Province Premier Wayne Maepio and PPC Vincent Eria upon arrival yesterday at Nusatupe Airstrip.



Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare salutes the people of Western Province during his short remarks.



Hon Manasseh Sogavare escorted by Acting Provincial Police Commander (PPC) Vincent Eria for general salute and parade inspection to Gizo Police.



(ABOVE & BELOW) Part of the general public who attended the welcome ceremony in front of the Gizo Hotel yesterday.



Ops Manager - Mr R. Dissanayake

# The Island Sun

RISE WITH THE SUN, NEW LOOK, MORE NEWS

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# MRD MOTEL OFFICE

## Taxpayers to pay \$2.9 million in annual rentals for MRD new offices in refurbished Chinese-owned motel

BY ALFRED SASAKO

IT has emerged that the move to Ranadi by the Ministry of Rural Development will cost taxpayers more than \$2.9 million in annual rentals in a deal involving a hardware proprietor, a former Member of Parliament and the government.

Sources said the new offices are located in a refurbished motel, owned by a hardware proprietor who might have already sold it to the former Member of Parliament. The former MP helped put the rental deal together, the sources said.

The ex-MP was said to be negotiating the purchase of the motel but his ability to repay the loan for the building stood in the way, the sources said.

At the time, the former MP was told that unless he could secure long term rentals for the building, there would be no sale, the sources.

The sources said the former Member of Parliament pounced on the opportunity by negotiating a rental arrangement for the building

with former Permanent Secretary, Selina Boso.

"It was her last act of official duties before she was relieved of her duties last week," one official said.

It is not clear whether the title for the building has been transferred to the new owner.

Under the deal, taxpayers will pay \$245,000 a month or \$2,940,000 a year rental for the building, a statement issued by the Government Communications Unit on 7th May this year, said.

It did not say the duration of the rental arrangement.

The statement quoted the Minister for Rural Development, Jimson Tanangada, as saying the relocation from Town Ground in Central Honiara to Ranadi in East Honiara was made for "a number of genuine reasons".

"The run-down state of the former SMI Building coupled with lack of space to accommodate the 200 staff members of the Ministry are amongst the reasons for their decision to relocate early this year.

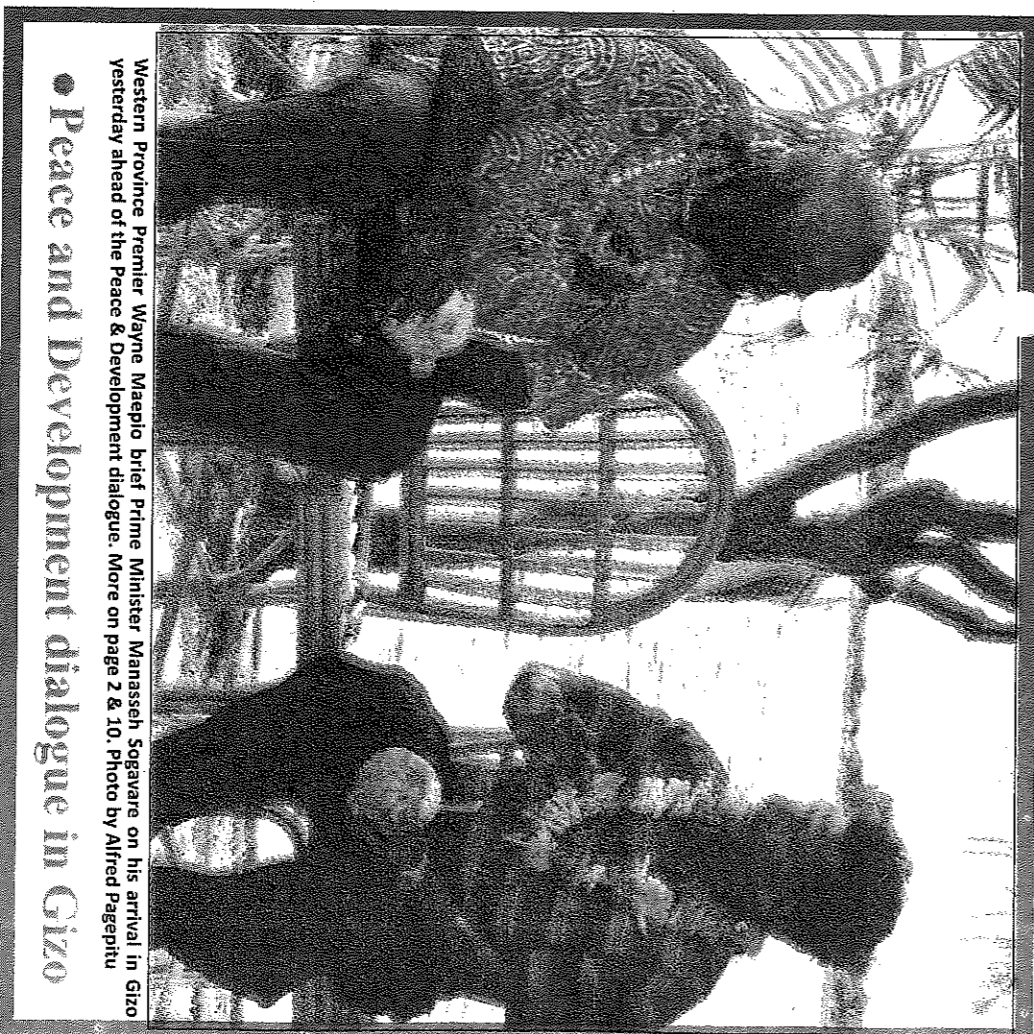
"...the former SMI Building is very old and heavily infested with termites with continued leeches during wet seasons which have caused ongoing damages to office equipment, files and other properties.

"Furthermore, as a result of the old state of the SMI building, there were threats of fire hazards due to electrical defects which have caused a fire incident during the 2016 Christmas period," Mr Tanangada said.

But the Minister never disclosed anything about the fact that the building was once a motel.

Instead, Mr Tanangada described it as "the newly-built Office building at Ranadi, identified by a specially selected Ministerial Committee based on its suitability to accommodate the entire MRD staff, proper parking spaces, proper storage space for materials and equipment for constituency projects, its closeness to major project suppliers and service providers and its modern setting and safety standards."

CONT PAGE 2



Western Province Premier Wayne Maepia brief Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare on his arrival in Gizo yesterday ahead of the Peace & Development dialogue. More on page 2 & 10. Photo by Alfred Pageptu

• Peace and Development dialogue in Gizo

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# PM speaks of importance of peace to development and vice-versa at western provincial dialogue

PRIME Minister Hon Manasseh Sogavare opened the Western Provincial Dialogue in Gizo, emphasising the importance of peace to development and vice-versa.

The dialogue is part of the 'Supporting Inclusive and Peaceful Transition in Solomon Islands Project' launched by the Prime Minister in July last year.

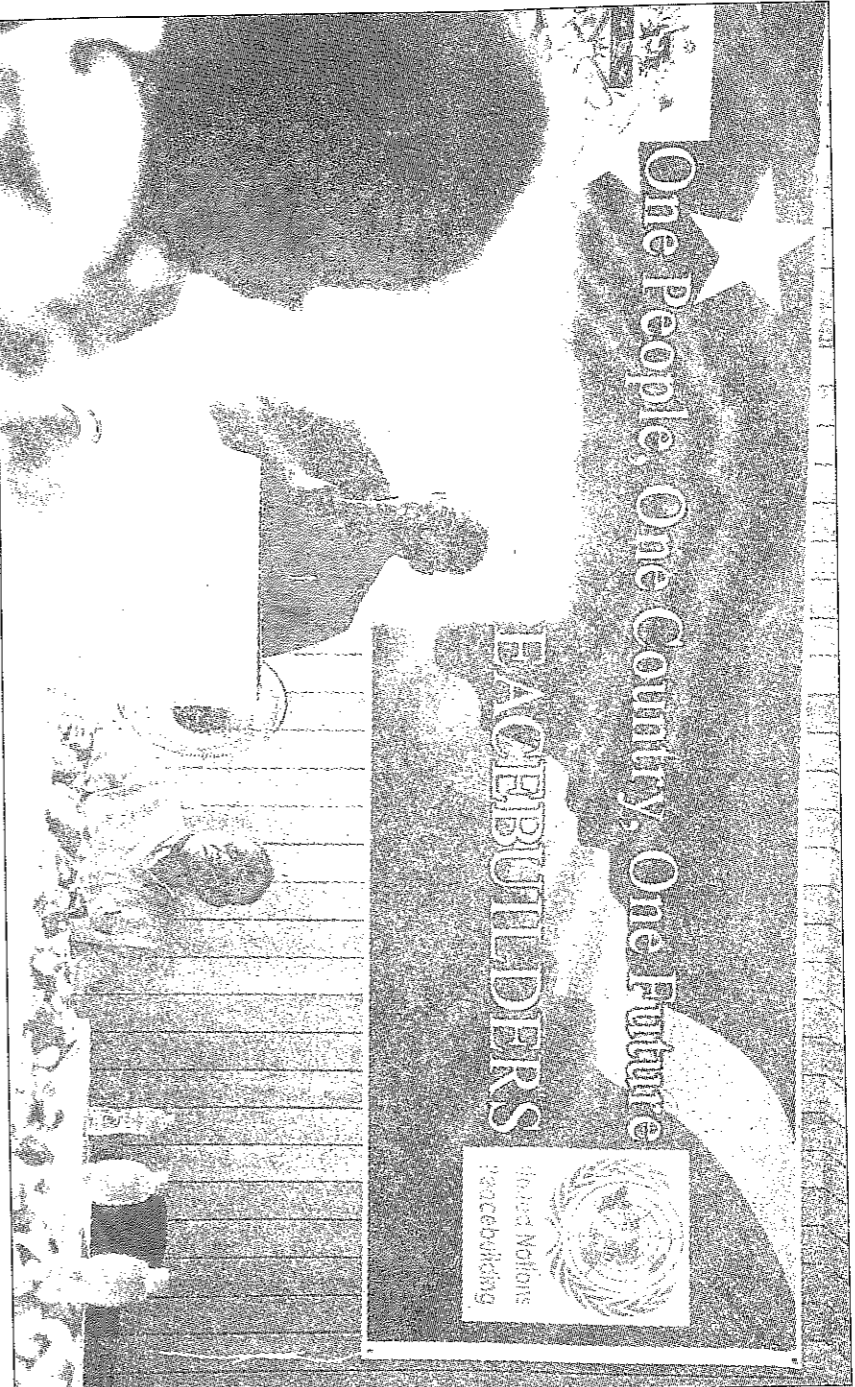
The project targets the three provinces that were heavily affected by the ethnic tension- Western, Guadalcanal and Malaita Provinces. Provincial Dialogues for Guadalcanal and Malaita Provinces were convened in November last year.

The project is a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme, Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace, Ministry of Women, Youth, and Children Affairs and the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The Western Provincial Dialogue, like other two provincial dialogues, provides an opportunity and space for leaders and people of the province to examine and discuss with the national government and stakeholders the nexus between security, sustainable and environmentally-friendly economic development initiatives and sustainable peace.

"Peace is important for development and vice-versa. Without peace, it will be hard for us to achieve our development potential and sustain an optimal economic growth rate over time.

"Peace can be equated with the word Stability. When we have stability, there is a good degree of certainty and predictability about the future. These are, in effect, elements that will increase peoples confidence in an economy and thereby, willing to expand or



PM Manasseh Sogavare opened the Western Provincial Dialogue in Gizo, emphasising the importance of peace to development and vice-versa...OPMC

invest their labour and capital to generate more outputs, contributing therewith to economic development.

"Simply put, amongst other things, peace is about proposed interventions for promoting good governance and institutional strengthening in attempts to avoid the proliferation of violent conflict, which include, but are not limited to market and economic reforms, judicial reforms, anti-corruption interventions, designs of policies for poverty reduction and electoral reforms," the Prime Minister said in his keynote address.

He stressed that the socio-economic and political challenges faced by the country cannot be dealt with

accordingly, if home-grown solutions are not devised to address them.

"There is a need for the country to look back in history to ascertain what we have done and where we have gone wrong, then take into account the present," the Prime Minister said. "In this way, we can make informed decisions about our future."

He told the dialogue participants to make use of their two-day meeting, saying it is an opportunity for them and relevant stakeholders to "analyse and discuss the contribution between security, economic and environmental development that are sustainable and environmentally-friendly.

Prime Minister Sogavare then urged the Western Provincial Government to ensure there is a strong follow up after the dialogue so that the collective commitments and consensus reached will be implemented to improve the welfare of its people.

He reiterated the Democratic Coalition for Change Government's commitment to working closely with the Western Provincial Government to address its development aspirations.

Hon Sam Matea, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children Affairs, Hon Ethel Sigananu, Hon. Minister of the Ministry of Education, Hon. Minister of Health and Tourism, Mr Moses Teapu, Policy Secretary

Fundamental Reforms in the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Warren Para and Technical Adviser in the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Moses Saitalia were present at the opening ceremony and are participating in the dialogue.

UNDP Country Manager, Ms Azusa Kubota, British High Commissioner, His Excellency David Ward, New Zealand High Commissioner, His Excellency Don Higgins and First Secretary of the Australian High Commission, Ms Fiona Hogart were also present at the opening ceremony and are representing their respective institutions/governments during the dialogue.

--OPMC PRESS

## PM hands over wheelchairs to gizo hospital



Prime Minister Sogavare shakes hands with medical officer Jacob Mazini at the presentation ceremony. Looking on from the back are Premier Maepio and Dr Boara.

GIZO Hospital in Western Province was the proud recipient of five new wheelchairs donated by the Solomon Islands Forest Association (SIFA).

Prime Minister Hon Manasseh Sogavare who was in Gizo on Tuesday to open the Western Provincial Dialogue, took the opportunity to also hand over the donation of wheelchairs to the Director of Western Province Health Service, Dr Dickson Boara in the presence of nurses and medical staff.

was pleased to hand over the wheelchairs from the SFA and referred to the donation as a perfect example of how the PPP (Public-Private Partnership), which has been adopted by the National Government works.

Prime Minister Sogavare said SFA has a good number of wheelchairs in its warehouse and is donating them to hospitals and health centres in the country through the National Government.

In response, an elated Dr Boara thanked SFA and the

wheelchairs. He said Gizo hospital needed wheelchairs and was grateful that the two parties have intervened.

After handing over the wheelchairs, the Prime Minister took time to greet each of the nurses and medical officers who witnessed the event before departing the hospital.

The Prime Minister and his party were accompanied by Premier, Hon Wayne Maepio.

--OPMC PRESS

## Choiseul businessman calls on BSP to improve its rural banking services

BY ALFRED SASAKO

LACK of adequate banking facilities in rural areas are hampering business growth on Choiseul Province, according to a businessman in north-west Choiseul.

This has prompted the man who wished to remain anonymous to call on Bank South Pacific to establish branches rather than agencies of the bank in the rural area.

"Going to Gizo is ok, but it is costly to our small businesses. First, we have to travel by plane and then you have to stay in Gizo for at least two to three days before you catch another flight back.

"It is very expensive. I think if BSP or any other bank is serious about helping to drive business growth in the rural area, they should establish branches rather than agencies as is the case on Choiseul today," he said.

A spokesperson for BSP told *Island Sun* yesterday there are no immediate plans to establish a branch on Choiseul.

"Banks have to take a whole lot of factors into consideration before establishing a branch. In the case of Choiseul we have agency arrangements in place which should adequately address the concerns the businessman has raised," the spokesperson said.

**TODAY'S WEATHER**  
Weather forecast issued by the Solomon Islands Meteorological Service for the next 18 hours from 6:00pm yesterday for Thursday 25 May 2017

### General Situation

A general easterly trade wind flow persists over the Solomon Islands.

### Warning

NIL.

1. Choiseul Province  
Fine apart from a few showers and isolated thunderstorms. Light to gentle southeast to east winds. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers and isolated thunderstorms.

2. Western Province  
Cloudy periods with showers and isolated thunderstorms. Light to gentle southeast to east winds. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers and isolated thunderstorms.

3. Isabel Province  
Fine apart from a few. Light to gentle southeast to east winds. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers and isolated thunderstorms.

4. Central Province  
Fine apart from a few showers. Gentle to moderate southeast to east winds. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers.

5. Malaita Province  
Fine apart from a few showers. Gentle to moderate southeast to east winds, fresh at times. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers.

6. Makira Province  
Fine apart from a few showers. Gentle to moderate southeast to east winds, fresh at times. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers.

7. Temotu Province  
Mostly fine. Moderate to fresh southeast to east winds. Outlook for Tomorrow: Mostly fine.

8. Rennell/Bellona Province  
Fine apart from a few showers. Moderate to fresh southeast to east winds. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers.

9. Guadalcanal Province  
Fine apart from a few showers. Gentle to moderate southeast to east winds, fresh at times. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers.

10. Forecast for Honiara  
Find apart from a few showers. Light to moderate east to northeasterly winds. Outlook for Tomorrow: Fine apart from a few showers.

Tidal Predictions for Honiara  
High tide will be at 05:36am tomorrow morning (0.95m)  
Low tide will be at 2:20pm tomorrow afternoon (0.27m)

Tidal Predictions for Taro  
High tide will be at 6:55pm this evening (1.02m)  
Low tide will be at 12:13pm after-midday tomorrow (0.62m)

Tidal Predictions for Laia  
High tide will be at 6:55pm this evening (0.94m)  
Low tide will be at 10:44pm tonight (0.58m)

Sunrise and Sunset for Honiara  
Sunrise tomorrow morning will be at 6:26am.  
Sunset tomorrow evening will be a 6:07pm.