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PRESS RELEASE

PM Clears Air on K700m IDG Funds

Prime Minister Hon James Marape, has provided clarification on the K700 million commitment from the National Government to the Porgera Special Mining Lease (SML) landowners, that it is an Infrastructure Development Grant (IDG), and not cash benefit.

The PM made this statement this week in Wabag, in response to the SML landowners' query on where the funds were. The SML landowners and other parties to the Porgera project Community Development Agreement (CDA) are in Wabag to negotiate benefits sharing arrangements from the mine. The PM briefly called in at the meeting, where he made this statement. He was accompanied by the Governor for Enga Province, Grand Chief Hon Sir Peter Ipatas, Minister for Works & Highways and Member for Parliament for Telefomin, Hon Solan Mirisim, Member of Parliament for Wapenamanda Hon Miki Kaeok, Managing Director of the Mineral Resources Authority (MRA) Jerry Garry, and the Secretary for Works, David Wereh.

PM Marape said resettlement of SML landowners had been an issue for the last 30 years, and was one of the major reasons for the government's refusal to grant the SML to Barrick initially. He said it was therefore the government's priority to ensure that the K700m IDG funds were spent on infrastructural development, relating to the resettlement of the SML landowners, amongst other infrastructural development projects.

Hon Marape appealed to the landowners to be considerate and to fairly distribute benefits to all impacted communities, for the sake of project security. He said all landowners and impacted communities would sacrifice their land and resources to enable the mine to operate. Hence it would be fair and sensible to at least share some benefits with communities that would be affected. He said the country has had experiences from the past resulting in forced project closure due to inequitable distribution of benefits, noting the Bougainville experience.

Photos:



Photo: PM delivering his speech during the CDA negotiations in Wabag



Photo: Enga traditional dancers welcoming the PM to the Innovative University of Enga, where the CDA meeting is being held



Photo: State Team members welcoming the PM



Photo: PM arriving at the meeting venue