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People stuck with 'pennies' in rural areas



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Round-up from Parliament and election reports

National shame

Govt House repairs left to foreigners

By ALEX RHEENEY

THE Government yesterday came under fire over maintenance work on the Government House – the Governor-General's official residence – by a foreign country.

Without naming the country in Parliament, Opposition Leader Peter O'Neill asked why the Treasury Department could not take over the maintenance program and foot the bill.

"Are you aware there is renovation work carried out at the Government House where the Head of State of this country resides, by a foreign country?"

"Are we not able to fund the maintenance program at the highest institution of our country through our Treasury (Department), do we not have any more money left to fund this maintenance program," Mr O'Neill said, in questions directed at Deputy Prime Minister Don Polye.

In reply, Mr Polye said he did not have details on the work and asked Mr O'Neill to put the questions on notice paper to enable him to respond at a later date.

Government House sources say the renovation work is being done by an Asian company contracted by the government of the People's Republic of China. It is not the first time the Chinese government has funded the building and renovation of state-owned infrastructure.

Port Moresby's Sir John Guise Stadium and indoor complex and Lae's Sir Ignatius Kilage stadium are examples of public infrastructure built with Chinese funding. Even state institutions considered vital to PNG's security and sovereignty such as the Defence Force, has an eye-catching Chinese pagoda built within the walls of Murray Barracks.

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Chief launches K335m bio-fuel project in Rigo



PLANTERS: A K335 million cassava bio-fuel project was launched at Launakalana, in Rigo, Central Province yesterday by the Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare. Pictured are Agriculture Minister Sasa Zibe, Lands and Physical Planning Minister Dr Puka Temu, Sir Michael, South Korean Ambassador Yang Yoon Park and chairman of Changhae International Sung Woo Lim drive cassava sticks into the soil to launch the cassava bio-fuel project. DETAILS ON PAGE 5. Picture: STEPHANIE WAIDE.

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