



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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# NA in political 'coup'

## Somare gives a ministry to PNC, Opposition MP

By ALEX RHEENEY

THE swearing-in of an Opposition parliamentarian as a Cabinet minister has caught Opposition Leader Peter O'Neill by surprise.

Nick Kuman — Gumine MP and a member of Mr O'Neill's Peoples National Congress Party — was sworn in as Culture and Tourism Minister on Friday with other new ministers, Mendi MP Michael Nali (Commerce and Industry) and Daulo MP Yawa Silupa (Correctional Services).

Speaking to *The Post-Courier* on Friday after the swearing-in ceremony at Government House, Mr O'Neill said Mr Kuman would be asked by the party caucus to explain his actions.

"Nick Kuman is still a member of PNC and the matter has just been brought to my attention. It will be discussed at the next caucus meeting (as to) what sort of action the party will take as a result of this ministerial swearing-in. He still remains a member of the PNC.

"We (PNC) will continue to function as an Opposition grouping. But as I said one man's appointment as minister does not compromise our work, his continued mem-

bership of the party will be discussed at the next caucus meeting," Mr O'Neill said.

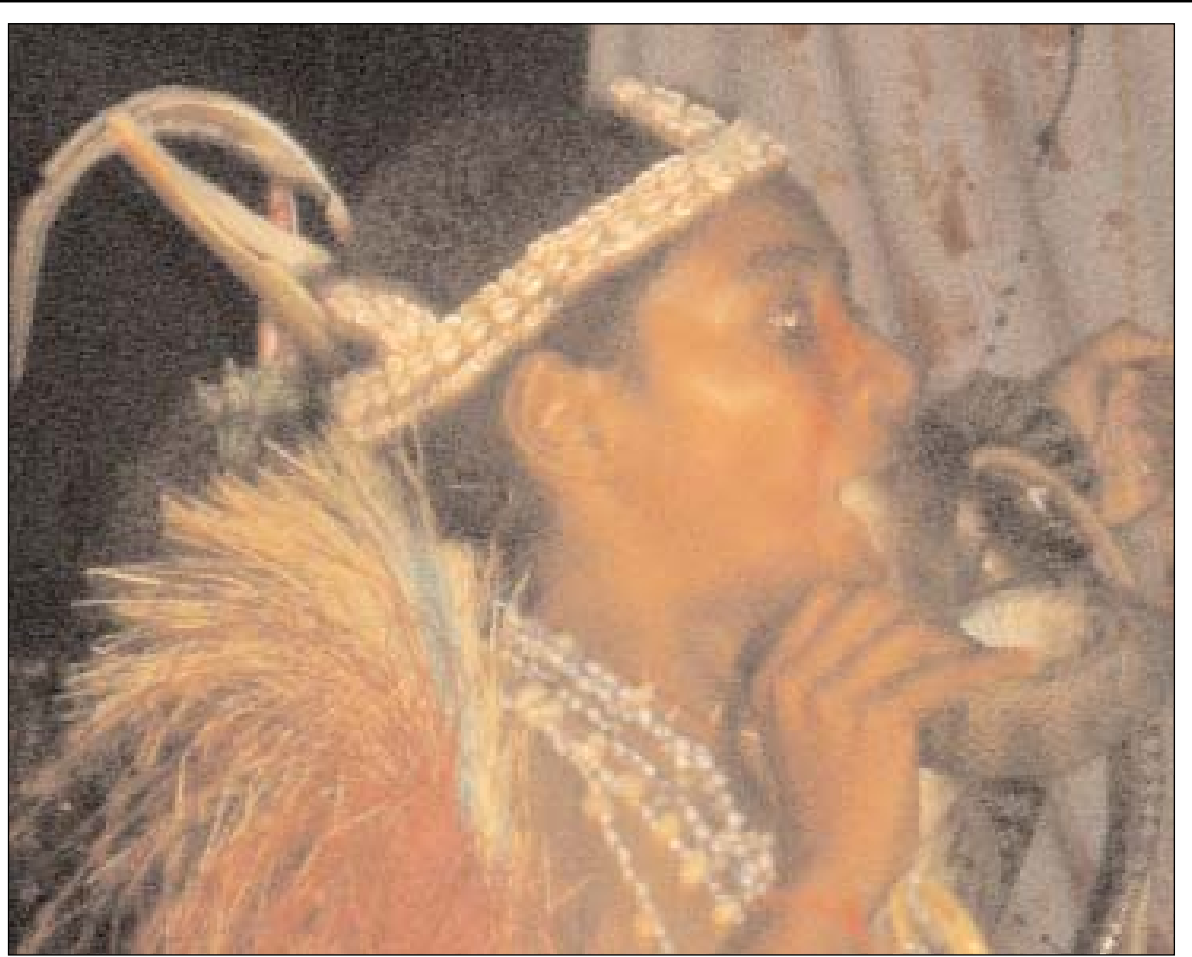
In other moves, former Culture and Tourism Minister David Basua has been moved to the Higher Education, Science, Research and Technology portfolio while the incumbent Minister Mark Maipakai has taken on Internal Security.

Mr Silupa, former Internal Security Minister, returns to Cabinet to take charge of Correctional Service to displace former minister Melchior Pep, who has been stood down following his referral for alleged misconduct in office.

Mr Nali, who was Minister for Trade and Industry on four different occasions, said a lot could be done in his ministry in the lead-up to the general elections.

Asked whether he will defend his seat under the Peoples Progress Party banner, he said: "I am still thinking, I haven't made up my mind yet. There is some talk about it but we don't know yet."

He said PPP was an original member of the coalition that formed the Government and while he was on "the other side" of the House, he always provided constructive criticism to the Government.



## Snake act wows crowd

FIFTEEN-year-old Ngawi Saku (above), a member of the Bongalik Family Theatre Group of Bukawa village, Morobe Province, performed a stunt that scared a few at a fund raising dinner and launch of an international music festival at the Lae International Hotel on Friday night. Miss Saku placed the head of the snake, named "Steady" in her mouth. The theatre group, made up of the Saku family, has 10 snakes, a centipede and wasp as show pets. They will feature at the festival at the Sir Ignatius Kilage Stadium in Lae on March 20-25. **DETAILS PAGE 4.**

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