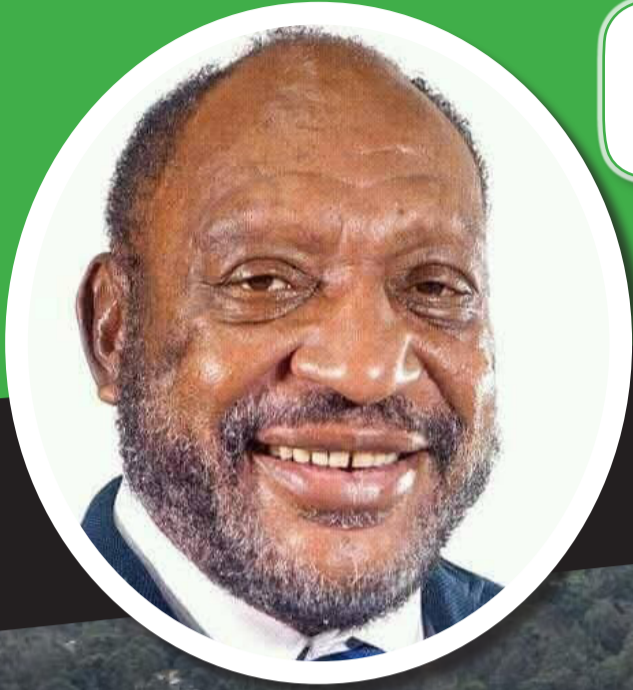


# ENGA DELIVERS WORLD CLASS HOSPITAL



*From Vision to Reality*



# OFFICIAL OPENING

Monday 31<sup>st</sup>, March 2025



# Sir Peter Ipatas: A legacy of leadership in Enga Province



Sir Peter Ipatas, GCL, KBE, MP  
Governor of Enga Province

However, I understood that we needed to think beyond temporary solutions to truly serve our people—our mothers, children, and elders. We required lasting institutions capable of uplifting the health, dignity, and hope of every Engan. This meant striving for excellence and accepting nothing less.

The Enga Provincial Hospital is the first purpose-built public hospital since our nation's independence in 1975. Getting to this point has taken decades of planning, commitment, and sacrifice. We have set aside other infrastructure priorities in the province—reallocating funds, shifting district agendas, and delaying convenience for the greater good—because we believe this investment would yield tenfold returns in lives saved, futures restored, and communities strengthened.

This PGK630 million facility is Enga's pride and a national symbol. Built as a modern greenfield hospital, its design embodies international standards while reflecting local identity. The architecture honours our landscape, the services cater to our needs, and the systems equip us for the future.

It will function as a regional specialist centre for the Highlands, providing services that have never before been available in the region—cardiology, nephrology, endocrinology, neonatal intensive care, and physical rehabilitation, to name a few. Our people have had to travel to Port Moresby or even overseas for treatment for far too long. Now, they will receive high-quality care right here in Wabag.

We are bringing in international

doctors to mentor our local health workers, and over 200 jobs have already been allocated to Engans—from support services to clinical operations. The hospital also complies with our National Health Service Standards and aligns with PNG Vision 2050, the National Health Plan 2021–2030, and the Medium-Term Development Plan IV.

This hospital represents more than just a healthcare upgrade—it's a social equaliser, a human right realised, and a promise fulfilled. I am incredibly proud to witness this moment come to life—not as a politician, but as a son of Enga who has always believed in his people.

This achievement would not have been possible without the enduring support and contributions of many. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the past and present members of the Provincial Executive Council and Enga Provincial Assembly, whose collective endorsement and leadership have helped carry this vision forward. I thank the Enga Provincial Administration for tirelessly driving this initiative from concept to reality. In particular, I pay special tribute to the late Dr. Samson Amean, whose early stewardship laid a strong foundation for what we now see before us.

I also express my deep appreciation for the leadership and support of our national government across successive terms. I acknowledge with gratitude the late Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare, whose endorsement of this vision in its early stages gave us the confidence to pursue it. I thank the Peter O'Neill Government for securing the EXIM

Bank loan, which made it possible to break ground on construction and move the project from vision to reality. And I extend my sincere thanks to Prime Minister James Marape and his Government, whose continued support ensured the successful completion of the hospital, including the provision of critical medical equipment, staff accommodation, and operational readiness funding. The result is a fully accredited Level 5 provincial hospital, built to national standards and designed to serve as a regional referral centre for the Highlands and beyond.

I commend the Enga Provincial Health Authority for its oversight and commitment to health service excellence, which will ensure this hospital fulfils its promise to our people. I also thank Dr. Grant R. Muddle ML, whose professional expertise and operational guidance have been instrumental in preparing this hospital for success.

To the people of Enga, I extend my deepest and most sincere thanks. For 28 years, you have placed your trust in me—through both challenging and triumphant times. Your unwavering support and belief in our shared vision have been my greatest motivation. This hospital reflects that trust and stands as a testament to what we can achieve together when we remain united in purpose and resilient in spirit.

This is your hospital, designed with your future in mind. Protect it, utilise it, respect it, and let it remind us all of what we can achieve when we prioritise people.

For over two decades, I have nurtured a vision — a vision for Enga to not only stand at the fringes of national development but to be at the very heart of Papua New Guinea's progress. Today, with the historic opening of the Enga Provincial Hospital, that vision has become a reality. This hospital is more than just a building; it is a legacy, a declaration, and it is for the people.

When I first took office as Governor, the idea of building a world-class hospital in the remote highlands of PNG felt ambitious, even improbable.



## Enga unveils modern provincial hospital

**A**fter nearly two decades of unwavering vision and leadership, Grand Chief Sir Peter Ipatas will officially inaugurate the Enga Provincial Hospital on Monday, heralding a new era of healthcare not only for Enga, but for the Highlands region and all of Papua New Guinea.

Speaking ahead of the launch, Sir Peter reflected on the journey that began in 2008 with a bold vision: to create an educated, healthy, and economically empowered Enga. That vision now proudly stands as a world-class, K600 million greenfield hospital designed to meet the growing medical needs of more than 600,000 people.

"This is more than a hospital—it's a symbol of what we can achieve through long-term commitment and strategic

planning," said Sir Peter. "Enga can now proudly claim to have a brand-new facility built from the ground up, which will offer modern medical services to our people and serve as a model for the country."

### Threefold Purpose: Access, Standards, and Training

Sir Peter emphasized that the hospital was designed with a clear threefold focus: improving healthcare standards, providing essential services closer to communities, and functioning as a training hub for health professionals and medical students.

"Health is an evolving science, and our country must keep pace with international expectations. We required a facility that could meet modern clinical standards, deliver quality care, and train future generations of healthcare

workers," he said.

The facility is equipped with cutting-edge medical equipment. It seeks to alleviate the financial and emotional burden on Papua New Guineans who would otherwise have to travel abroad for specialized care.

### National Commitment, Local Vision

Sir Peter paid tribute to successive national governments—especially the former administration led by Peter O'Neill and the current leadership of Prime Minister James Marape—for preserving bipartisan support for the project.

"This hospital represents continuity and shared commitment among various governments, and that's something we should take pride in," he said.

He also recognized the numerous individuals and organizations that contributed to bringing the project to life, including the landowners whose collaboration made the greenfield development possible.

### A Platform for Sustainable Growth

As ownership of the facility transfers to the Enga Provincial Health Authority, the Department of Health, and the national government, Sir Peter urged for responsible stewardship and ongoing investment to sustain operations and deliver impact.

"We have the necessary infrastructure and equipment; the challenge lies in how we utilize it," he noted.

He said the hospital serves not only as a healthcare solution but also as a catalyst for broader

development by providing employment, stimulating the local economy, and creating opportunities for Engan youth to return and contribute to the province.

"For years, we have supported the education of our young people. Now they can return and contribute to the hospitals and schools we have built together."

### A Milestone for the People

As the plaque is unveiled on Monday, Sir Peter believes it will signify the beginning—not the end—of a journey toward healthcare excellence in Enga.

"The people of Enga will benefit the most. This moment is a source of pride, but also a call to action. Let us make sure this hospital becomes a beacon of health, hope, and opportunity."



# Prime Minister James Marape's Message on the New Enga Provincial Hospital

Dear Citizens of Papua New Guinea,

**T**oday, I am honoured to share with you a significant milestone in our nation's journey towards building a better and healthier Papua New Guinea. As we approach the official opening of the Enga Provincial Hospital, I wish to convey the importance of this facility and what it represents for our country.

The Enga Provincial Hospital, located in Wabag, Enga Province, is a landmark achievement. This modern health facility is a 100% Papua New Guinea Government-initiated and funded project. Since 2019, my government has invested over K400 million to deliver this world-class healthcare facility. The aim was to replace the old Wabag General Hospital, which had long struggled to meet the healthcare demands of the province's growing population. This hospital will also address specialist care needs for a population range of over 3 million people, all within one hour's reach by air or land.

This is the first project 100% financed by the Papua New Guinea Government, demonstrating our government's ability to fund large-scale projects when we focus on big-ticket items instead of small, fragmented projects that consume millions of kina. This project is part of our government's commitment to deliver 22 Level 5 hospitals across the country, ensuring that each province, including the special region of Bougainville, has access to modern, world-class healthcare facilities.

We are determined to make modern hospital services accessible to our people within one hour's reach. Whether it is specialist care or general healthcare, everyone must have access to high-quality medical facilities. The completion of the Enga Provincial Hospital is a testament to what we can achieve and reflects our vision of delivering modern healthcare services within our provinces.

Our government remains committed to building 22 Level 5 and Level 6

hospitals across the country. The Enga Provincial Hospital is a significant milestone, marking our progress toward this goal. The previous government completed Boram and Goroka hospitals, with my government providing the necessary counterpart funding. We also acknowledge and thank the Australian Government for its support in delivering the Angau Hospital.

However, I have been disappointed with the Department of Health for not making adequate progress on the other hospitals. Despite this, these projects remain a key priority for us. We are determined to deliver all 22 Level 5 and Level 6 hospitals, one for each province and the special region of Bougainville.

The successful completion of the Enga Provincial Hospital is a step in the right direction, and we will continue working towards completing the others. As we celebrate our 50th anniversary of Independence, the commissioning of the Enga Provincial Hospital reaffirms our commitment to delivering world-class healthcare facilities staffed with highly skilled doctors and healthcare workers.

COVID-19 exposed our nation's vulnerability, highlighting that we did not have sufficient hospital infrastructure to handle pandemics or other serious health challenges. We are now taking decisive steps to address this gap. Very soon, before September 16th, our Cancer Facility and Heart Facility in Port Moresby, designated as Level 7 Special Hospitals, will be completed.

These developments prove that our government is working diligently to provide better healthcare for all Papua New Guineans. While we may not always broadcast our progress, work is happening. The completion of this hospital is one of our government's major achievements. Although the previous government initiated the contract, it was my government that financed this project to completion.

With a capacity of 300 beds, this state-of-the-art facility is designed to offer a wide range of essential health services,

including ambulatory care, emergency services, operating theatres, inpatient wards, diagnostic imaging, maternity care, and specialised treatment units. Its resilient and sustainable infrastructure has been designed to integrate harmoniously with the natural landscape of Enga Province, providing a healing environment for patients and an inspiring workplace for our medical professionals.

This hospital is not just a building; it is a beacon of hope and a commitment to improving the lives of our people. This hospital is not just for Enga. We intend to make it a regional specialist hospital for over 1.5 million people who will all be within one hour's reach by air and who may also benefit from training and learning opportunities within the periphery of the hospital. It represents a powerful step towards reducing the financial and emotional burdens of seeking treatment abroad. The Enga Provincial Hospital will serve as a regional referral centre, providing specialised services previously unavailable within our borders, and ensuring that our people have access to the quality healthcare they deserve.

I wish to acknowledge the leadership of Enga Provincial Governor, Hon. Sir Peter Ipatas, whose vision and tireless dedication have been instrumental in making this dream a reality. His unwavering commitment to the welfare of his people has brought this extraordinary project to life. This achievement is a testament to his dedication spanning decades of hard work.

Moreover, this hospital will not only deliver healthcare services but will also serve as a critical training ground for our doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers. It will be a centre for research, skill development, and the continuous enhancement of medical services. By empowering our healthcare professionals, we are investing in the future of our country's health and prosperity.

Projections show that the Enga

Provincial Hospital will cater to over 200,000 people annually, providing essential medical services that were once only available outside of the province. Its establishment will reduce patient referrals to other provinces by at least 50% and improve healthcare accessibility for the rural population. This will have a direct impact on reducing mortality rates and enhancing overall health outcomes for our people.

Ladies and gentlemen, this achievement comes at a time of profound significance for Papua New Guinea. As we prepare to celebrate our nation's 50th anniversary of Independence, the opening of the Enga Provincial Hospital serves as a powerful reminder of how far we have come. It demonstrates our determination to build a healthier and more prosperous nation, united by a common purpose.

The establishment of this hospital is not just about providing healthcare services; it is about fulfilling the dreams and aspirations of a nation committed to progress. It reflects our unwavering dedication to ensuring that the next 50 years of our independence are marked by sustainable development, inclusivity, and genuine improvements in the quality of life for all Papua New Guineans.

As we prepare to open the doors of this magnificent facility, I urge everyone to take pride in this national achievement. This hospital is our collective responsibility. Let us work together to preserve it, maintain it, and ensure that it continues to serve our people for generations to come.

The Enga Provincial Hospital is a testament to what we can accomplish when we unite for a common purpose. It is proof that we are capable of building a healthier, stronger, and more prosperous Papua New Guinea.

Thank you, and may God bless Papua New Guinea.

— **Hon. James Marape, MP**  
**Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea**

# Steady leadership hailed as cornerstone in hospital's success story

**T**he successful completion of the Enga Provincial Hospital is attributed to nearly three decades of political stability and consistent leadership under Governor Sir Peter Ipatas.

According to Charles Bannah, Director of Enga Provincial Works and Technical Services, the hospital—set to be officially opened this coming Monday—would not have become a reality without Sir Peter's steadfast leadership and the long-term trust of the people of Enga Province.

"This achievement is a direct result of consistent leadership. Sir Peter's vision and determination have brought this to fruition after 18 years of planning and perseverance," Mr. Bannah stated in an interview in Wabag on Monday.

He praised the people of Enga for electing Sir Peter for five consecutive terms. "The credit goes to the people for supporting their action governor. Without that unity and support, we would not be celebrating this milestone today," Bannah added.

## A VISION SET IN 2007

The idea for a provincial hospital emerged in 2007 when Sir Peter recognized the necessity of a modern, purpose-built healthcare facility for Enga—one that would adhere to national standards and benefit future generations.

"This province has not had a dedicated provincial hospital since PNG gained its independence in 1975," said Mr. Bannah. "Sir Peter's vision was endorsed by the Provincial Executive Council and supported by public servants and development partners alike."

The result is a world-class facility, the culmination of 18 years of coordinated effort, now valued at over K600 million.

## TRIBUTE TO PARTNERS AND PAST LEADERS

Mr. Bannah also recognized the contributions of Late Dr. Samson Amean, former Provincial Administrator of Enga, in the planning and execution of the project. "His leadership and commitment helped propel this project from concept to implementation," he stated.

He expressed his gratitude to the national leadership over the years, acknowledging the contributions of three Prime Ministers who supported the hospital through various phases of its development.

"I want to particularly acknowledge the late Sir Michael Somare, our founding father, who supported the initial stages of the hospital in 2009. His successors, Peter O'Neill and current Prime Minister James Marape, have all continued to invest in this project," said Bannah.

## INTERNATIONAL DESIGN, LOCAL COMMITMENT

Mr. Bannah also emphasized the collaboration with international partners, including West by Southwest Worldwide Limited lead consultant with their partners like U.S.-based hospital architectural firm Shepley Bulfinch and Kramer Ausenco of PNG including many others who designed the facility. The hospital was built by China's Guangdong Foreign Construction Company (GDFC), reflecting a multinational partnership supported by local governance. The project management and contract administration were provided by Department of National Works through Hausman Designs Limited ably guided and supported by National Department of Health (NDoH).

"As someone who has been involved from the beginning, I can say this is a moment of great pride—not just for me, but for every local Papua New Guinean individual and companies who contributed towards this project are too many to mention," Bannah said.



He concluded by referring to the Enga Provincial Hospital as a model for what is achievable when leadership, vision, and long-term commitment unite in service of the people.

And finally, Mr. Bannah said, this project is a direct result of divine intervention and trust in God.

# Enga province unveils K600 million state-of-the-art hospital

**A**fter 18 years of planning and construction, Enga Province will proudly open its new K600 million state-of-the-art Level 5 provincial hospital next Monday, March 31. This facility represents a significant milestone in healthcare delivery for both the region and the country overall.

Equipped with the latest medical technology and featuring 150 inpatient beds, the modern hospital is designed to meet international standards and provides comprehensive services that were previously unavailable in the province.

"This is a game-changer for our people," said Kenneth Andrew, Chairman of the Enga Provincial Health Authority, during an interview at the new hospital site.

"With this facility now operational, there is no longer a need for Engans to travel outside the province for medical care."

One-Stop Health Facility for the Highlands The hospital is designed to meet the healthcare needs of Enga's

population and will include specialist services typically found only in major national or international medical centers.

This development positions Enga as a regional hub for advanced medical care. "Specialist treatments that were once unavailable will now be accessible right here in Wabag," Andrew said.

## A Vision Realized

Andrew credited Governor Sir Peter Ipatas for envisioning the hospital nearly two decades ago and seeing it through to completion. "This is one of the greatest achievements for the province since Independence," Andrew remarked. "The journey has not been easy - we've encountered economic challenges, political shifts, and logistical barriers - but we never lost sight of the goal."

He emphasised that the hospital's opening would improve healthcare and boost economic activity across the province. Acknowledging Past Healthcare Providers Andrew expressed gratitude to the Wabag General Hospital, which has previously served as the province's primary medical facility, as

well as to the faithbased hospitals in Sopas, Mambisanda, and Kompam for their steadfast contributions to Enga's healthcare landscape.

"Their services have established the foundation for where we stand today," he stated. "With the new provincial hospital, these church-run and districtlevel health centers will improve their capabilities."

## Employment and Economic Boost

With over 600 healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals, set to be employed at the facility, the new hospital will also make a significant contribution to the local economy. Andrew encouraged residents to take responsibility for the facility and protect it as an essential public asset.

"This is more than just a medical facility. It serves as an economic engine, a training center, and a symbol of progress for the people of Enga," he said.

## Looking Ahead

The second phase of the hospital is already on the horizon. Andrew revealed that in three years, an additional 150 beds will be added, increasing capacity



to 300 and further enhancing the hospital's role in national healthcare delivery. "All six districts in Enga will benefit, and the celebrations next week will showcase how proud our people are," he stated.

# Enga's new hospital symbolizes transformation, says health chief

According to Dr. Vincent Pyakalyia, Chief Executive Officer of the Enga Provincial Health Authority (EPHA), the opening of the Enga Provincial Hospital represents a significant milestone in healthcare delivery and a pivotal moment in the province's broader development journey. Speaking ahead of the grand opening scheduled for Monday, Dr. Pyakalyia described the hospital as a "greenfield facility," indicating that it is the first modern provincial hospital in PNG built entirely from scratch, following the introduction of the Provincial Health Authority Act in 2007. "This hospital stands as a testament to political will, resilience, and a long-term vision for Enga to advance—not only in health but also in education, infrastructure, and social progress," Dr. Pyakalyia

stated. A Dream Realised Through Education and Vision Dr. Pyakalyia's connection to this vision is profound. He was one of the many beneficiaries of Governor Sir Peter Ipatas's groundbreaking tuition fee program launched in 1997. In 1998, Pyakalyia commenced his medical training at the University of Papua New Guinea, later returning to serve his province in the health sector—a journey that culminated in his appointment as CEO of EPHA last year. "It's a privilege to help lead the system that shaped my path," he said. "We are part of a team reshaping the healthcare landscape in Enga." A National First in Healthcare Delivery The hospital is the first of its kind under a Provincial Health Authority to achieve



full national health service compliance. With support from the Department of Health's clinical chiefs, this facility has been certified to operate according to National Health Standards. Costing over K600 million, the project was a long-term endeavour, starting with land acquisition in 2008 and

culminating in a world-class hospital 17 years later. "This opening marks the start of a new era for Enga," said Dr. Pyakalyia. "We're aiming high and thinking big. This is just phase one." Specialized Services and International Expertise Initially offering basic healthcare, the hospital will soon introduce an additional layer of specialist services in its second phase. Nineteen specialist doctors from the Philippines are expected to arrive soon, bringing expertise in minimally invasive surgery, orthopaedics, obstetrics and gynaecology, endocrinology, nephrology, psychiatry, and more. "These overseas clinicians will not only treat patients—they will also help train our local workforce," Dr. Pyakalyia said. "We are establishing long-term

capability." Serving the Entire Province As a Level 5 referral facility, the hospital will function as the central hub for six district hospitals: Kompiam, Laiagam, Wapenamanda, Porgera, Kandep, and Sopas. "The real challenge now lies with us, the healthcare workers," said Dr. Pyakalyia. "We must align the quality of our services with the world-class infrastructure we've been provided." With momentum building, he stated that the hospital is already attracting interest in reinvestment and inspiring a renewed sense of purpose among healthcare professionals. "This isn't just about a building; it's about transforming how we serve our community," he concluded.

## Enga's healthcare revolution: New hospital to deliver specialist services and transform provincial care

A new chapter in Papua New Guinea's healthcare history will begin this Monday, March 31, with the official opening of the Enga Provincial Hospital—a K600 million state-of-the-art facility designed to provide specialist health services and raise the province's medical care to national standards.

Eighteen years in the making, the project embodies a shared vision for "a healthy and wealthy Enga," championed by Governor Sir Peter Ipatas and backed by the national government, development partners, and the Chinese contractor, Guangdong Foreign Construction Company (GDFC).

"This isn't just a hospital—it's a national statement," said Dr. Grant Muddle, the hospital's consulting administrator and a seasoned health executive with decades of experience across the Pacific, South Asia, and the Middle East. "Enga Provincial Hospital aligns directly with PNG Vision 2050, the National Health Plan 2021–2030, and the Government's commitment to universal health coverage."

Dr. Muddle, who previously managed both Port Moresby General Hospital and ANGAU Memorial Hospital, emphasized that the facility is not merely about delivering health services. "We are restoring trust in the healthcare system—especially for rural

communities that have waited far too long for quality and accessible care," he said.

From Level 5 to Level 6: A Strategic Transition

Currently opening as a Level 5 hospital, the Enga facility will initially offer outpatient, diagnostic, and allied health services. As it moves toward Level 6 accreditation, the hospital will incorporate emergency, surgical, maternity, and intensive care capabilities—ultimately becoming a full provincial referral centre capable of handling complex medical cases.

Dr. Muddle confirmed that this month's Clinical Operational Readiness Assessment evaluated everything from infection control protocols to digital health systems, ensuring the facility meets National Health Service Standards. "This is PNG's first new public hospital since independence in 1975, and we're doing it right," he said.

A New Era of Specialist Services

The rollout of specialist services will transform healthcare delivery in the highlands. Planned services include cardiology, nephrology, endocrinology, neonatal intensive care, and physical medicine—many of which were previously unavailable in the region.



Sixteen specialized outpatient clinics will be established and staffed by clinicians from Papua New Guinea and international experts from the Philippines, India, Fiji, and Australia. Recruitment for 72 specialist positions commenced in 2024.

"This isn't just about importing talent—it's about sharing knowledge, mentoring local clinicians, and building sustainable systems," Dr. Muddle said. "We've established on-site accommodations and support programs to integrate professionals into our teams."

Economic Impact and Workforce Development

In addition to health services, the hospital will emerge as one of Enga Province's largest employers. The initial operational phase is expected to employ 400 staff, increasing to a workforce of 700 at full capacity. More than 200

positions in cleaning, catering, administration, and patient services are designated for local Engans.

The annual operational budget is projected to be K60 million, primarily sourced from the national health budget through the Enga Provincial Health Authority. Dr. Muddle stated that the hospital is exploring partnerships with donors and NGOs, along with performance-based funding models.

"We are committed to sustainability—not only in services, but also in financial stewardship and workforce development," he said.

Phased Commissioning and Patient Safety

Initial services after opening will include outpatient care, radiology, pathology, pharmacy, dentistry, physiotherapy, ENT, and internal medicine. Surgical and inpatient services will follow in phase two, with specialised equipment—such as ICU ventilators and laparoscopic surgical towers—arriving by June.

"All transitions have been carefully planned," said Dr. Muddle. "From patient record migration to dry-run simulations, we've created a Transition Readiness Strategy to ensure clinical safety and community awareness as services shift from Wabag

General Hospital to the new site."

Built From Scratch: A Greenfield Dream

Built on a pristine greenfield site, the hospital was designed from the ground up without the limitations of legacy infrastructure. "Every plug, every hallway, every software module was created for 21st-century care," said Dr. Muddle. "This is the clean slate PNG's health system needed."

He urged the people of Enga to take pride in and protect their hospital. "Political leaders and technical teams have provided the infrastructure. Now, it's up to the community to shape the hospital's legacy through ownership, respect, and responsible use."

A National Model

As the country looks toward its healthcare future, Dr. Muddle believes the Enga Provincial Hospital is a model. "This is what's possible when policy meets purpose—when infrastructure is driven by empathy, and leadership is focused on outcomes," he said.

"For the people of Enga, this hospital is a long-overdue lifeline. For Papua New Guinea, it represents the future. And for the world, it serves as proof that world-class healthcare can be established in the most remote corners—if we possess the will.



# Chinese contractor happy for Enga Provincial Hospital

BY PEARSON KOLO

The Chinese construction company, Guangdong Foreign Construction Company (GDFC), has acknowledged the support from the National Government, the Enga Provincial Government and the Chinese Embassy for opening the World class Enga Provincial Hospital next week Monday, March 31, 2025.

The new hospital will also start receiving patients on the same day.

Conveniently situated near Wabag town and adjacent to the Highlands Highway and Wapenemanda Airport, the hospital can also be easily accessed from major cities and airports in the country.

Funded through a partnership between the Exim Bank of China (the Preferential Buyer's Credit Facility, 85%) and Government of PNG (counterpart funding, 15%), aims at serving up to 600,000 people of Enga and transforming the medical services in the province and region.

The 34-hectares hospital features medical buildings, staff accommodation, external works and sewerage treatment plants, of which 14 are medical facilities including an Emergency and Outpatient, four specialist clinics, six wards, a morgue, administration and service unit while the staff accommodation are made up of 32 blocks including 16 duplex townhouses, 42

apartment units and 50 dormitory units.

Following the mountainous terrain, the hospital, with state-of-the-art design, was built to exhibit a unique and elegant appearance.

Aside from the complete set of medical equipment to meet the demand of a typical provincial hospital, the clinical structure is also furnished with high-power generators, high-volts transformation and transmission, water storages, fire alarms and suppression systems, wireless network, VoIP phones, security access, nurse call system and many more.

Being one of the major initiatives by Governor Ipatas and the Enga Provincial Administration to enhance medical infrastructures within the province, the new Enga Provincial Hospital, with its complete structures, functions and high-level design, will greatly improve medical treatment conditions in Enga and the broader Highlands region.

As the first brand-new provincial hospital to be built independently (on a green field) since Independence and the first modernized provincial hospital, the new Enga Provincial Hospital will establish a successful benchmark for reconstruction and renovation of other provincial hospitals.

The Chinese

Construction company said it is happy to have successfully delivered the hospital and proud to be part of this legacy in Enga Province.



# Land legacy: Retired public servant reflects on role in delivering new Enga Provincial Hospital



As the Enga Provincial Hospital prepares to open its doors this Monday, one man quietly reflects on the vital role he played behind the scenes—securing the land on which the state-of-the-art facility now stands. Sixty-nine-year-old Mela Yakili, a retired land officer who served the Enga Provincial Government for 39 years, stated that his work acquiring traditional land for the hospital was one of the most rewarding—and challenging—achievements of his career. “I served with a clear purpose,” Yakili said. “To help realise Governor Sir Peter Ipatas’s vision by securing land for

essential development projects, including this hospital.” Originally hailing from the Imbonggu District in the Southern Highlands, Yakili played a significant role in Enga’s transformation, contributing not just to healthcare but also to education. He helped secure land for the Enga Polytechnic Institute, Enga Innovative University, and Kopen School of Excellence. **A Shared Vision** Yakili credited Sir Peter Ipatas for his bold development agenda as his personal inspiration. “When I saw Sir Peter’s vision—to create a healthy and educated province—I knew I had to contribute,” he said. “A healthy and educated population is the foundation for transformation.” He recalled that acquiring land at Pawas, just outside Wabag town, was not an easy task. However, by simplifying the government’s message and engaging openly with customary landowners, Yakili earned their trust. “The process was not focused solely on policy; it also involved communication. Once

landowners understood the purpose, they were willing to partner with us,” he said. Through his efforts, the land was successfully registered as state land—Allotment 50, Section 19—clearing the way for the construction of the K600 million Enga Provincial Hospital. **A Decade of Diligence** The land acquisition process began in 2008 and was finalised in 2016, requiring patience, accountability, and extensive negotiation. Yakili stated that the key was to maintain transparency and adhere to proper procedures. “I have always fulfilled my duties with diligence,” he stated. “It’s not just about securing land—it’s about fostering trust between the government and the people.” He noted that landowners in Enga are often supportive of development but require respectful engagement and lawful processes. “If government officials manage land acquisition with professionalism, many landowners are willing to contribute to development,” he said.



Computed Tomography (CT) Scan machine, one of the modern equipment for treating cancer patients ready for use after opening of the state of the art provincial hospital.

## A Lasting Legacy

Yakili, who retired in May 2023, believes that the new hospital—and the numerous educational institutions that followed—represents a legacy that belongs to the people. “These facilities belong to the people of Enga. It is now their

responsibility to protect and care for them,” he stated. Reflecting on his nearly four decades of service, Yakili expressed pride in having helped to lay the foundation—literally—for Enga’s transformation.

## New Enga hospital is hailed as a beacon of hope for underprivileged communities

The newly completed Enga Provincial Hospital has been celebrated as a beacon of hope for thousands of underprivileged citizens in Enga and throughout the Highlands who have long struggled to access quality healthcare.

Margreth Potane, the Director of Commerce for Enga Province and President of the Enga Endanda Women’s Association, praised the opening of the state-of-the-art facility, which will officially begin operations on Monday, March 31.

“This is a great day not only for Enga but for the whole Highlands region and the country,” said Potane. “For those who cannot afford costly overseas medical treatment, this hospital is a game-changer.”

### A Testament to Visionary Leadership

Potane praised Governor Sir Peter Ipatas for bringing to fruition a long-standing dream that has now become a reality.

“Governor Ipatas deserves full credit. This is not just another upgrade; this is a greenfield hospital built from the ground up. Everything inside is brand new and designed to meet the highest standards. It sets a new record for what visionary leadership can achieve,” she said.

She attributed the hospital’s success to the province’s political stability, crediting the people of Enga for their consistent support of strong leadership that prioritizes meaningful service

delivery.

“When leadership is stable, people benefit. That’s what we’ve seen here,” Potane added.

### A Lifeline for Women and Families

As the head of a women’s organization representing over 35,000 members, Potane emphasized the hospital’s significance for women’s health—especially in addressing conditions like cervical and breast cancer.

“For too long, women have suffered in silence because of the unavailability of accessible and reliable healthcare. This hospital offers them a genuine opportunity for early detection and treatment,” she said.

### Economic and Social Impact

Beyond its medical benefits, Potane stressed that the hospital would also provide significant economic advantages to the province.

“With over 600 people expected to be employed, the hospital will stimulate cash flow and create new livelihood opportunities for our community,” she said.

She urged the public to celebrate the achievement and share the responsibility for safeguarding the hospital’s future.

“This is a life-saving facility. It’s time we move away from destructive behavior and start taking care of what we’ve built. This hospital is not just about health—it’s about dignity, development, and long-term prosperity,” Potane said.



# Sir Paul Kurai hails Sir Peter Ipatas for delivering Enga's new provincial hospital



leadership. "This hospital didn't come without challenges," Sir Paul stated. "There were disputes with landowners, political critics, and many who doubted whether such a project could be finished. However, Sir Peter remained resolute, navigated rough waters, and delivered for his community. I thank God, and I thank Sir Peter."

## A Vision Realised Through Partnership

Sir Paul acknowledged that the project was initially launched under the leadership of former Prime Minister Peter O'Neill and completed under the current Prime Minister, James Marape.

"This is a milestone moment for Enga. We must also thank our national leaders—former Prime Minister Peter O'Neill for initiating the project and Prime Minister James Marape for providing the support and funding to bring it to completion," he said.

He stressed the importance of the facility, which will serve over 600,000 people in Enga and neighbouring provinces, offering essential referral and specialist medical services that

were previously unavailable in the region.

## Community Call to Action

Sir Paul, who has served as a ward councillor for over 40 years and founded the Kurai Foundation to tackle law and order issues in Enga, urged citizens to take pride in the hospital and safeguard it as a national asset.

"Enga is uniquely blessed. We speak a single language throughout the entire province—this unity should be reflected in our care for services like this hospital," he said.

He encouraged residents, particularly those in and around Wabag town, to foster peace and create a safe, welcoming environment for healthcare workers, many of whom will arrive from across PNG and overseas to serve in the hospital.

"The tribes and communities in Wabag have always shown respect for government services. I urge them to uphold this tradition and protect this facility and its staff for future generations," Sir Paul said.

## Honouring Legacy and Leadership

Sir Paul also paid tribute to the



Preparing the plaque to be unveiled during the official opening next week Monday.

late Dr. Samson Amean, former Provincial Administrator, for his instrumental role in the early implementation of Governor Ipatas' vision and acknowledged current Provincial Administrator

Sandis Tsaka for bringing the project to completion. "This hospital represents a legacy of many hands and many hearts working together for the benefit of our community," he said.

# Enga's remarkable rise: A veteran public servant reflects on leadership, legacy, and transformation

After nearly four decades of public service, Cleopas Roa has witnessed the evolution of Enga Province unfold in real time. He arrived in Enga on May 19, 1985, as a returning officer during a period of political instability. The West New Britain native never imagined that he would spend the rest of his career - and much of his life - helping to shape one of Papua New Guinea's most transformative provinces.

"Enga became my second home," Roa said, smiling. "I came for the elections but ended up staying for the journey." From that moment, Roa immersed himself in Enga's governance, serving under several provincial leaders, including Nete Laina, Danley Tidiwi, Jeffrey Balakau, and later, a young and ambitious local government president named Peter Ipatas.

The Ipatas Era: A Turning Point When Sir Peter Ipatas became the Acting Governor in 1996 and was formally elected in 1997, Roa witnessed firsthand what would become a defining chapter in Enga's development.

"Sir Peter introduced the free education policy - a bold

initiative that significantly enhanced the province's human resource capacity," Roa recalled. "It wasn't merely policy; it was purposedriven leadership."

For more than 15 years, Roa served as Deputy Provincial Administrator for District and Local Level Government. By the time he retired in 2024, Enga had been transformed by intentional investments in education, infrastructure, and healthcare.

"Among all the governors I've served under, none have had a vision as transformative as Sir Peter Ipatas," Roa stated. "He has always been dedicated to his people."

A Hospital That Reflects a Legacy In Roa's view, the soon-to-beopened Enga Provincial Hospital - costing K600 million and featuring modern medical facilities - is a crowning achievement of Ipatas' leadership.

"The hospital is more than just a health facility. It serves as a catalyst for economic growth, creates jobs, and, most importantly, provides dignity through access to quality healthcare," he said.

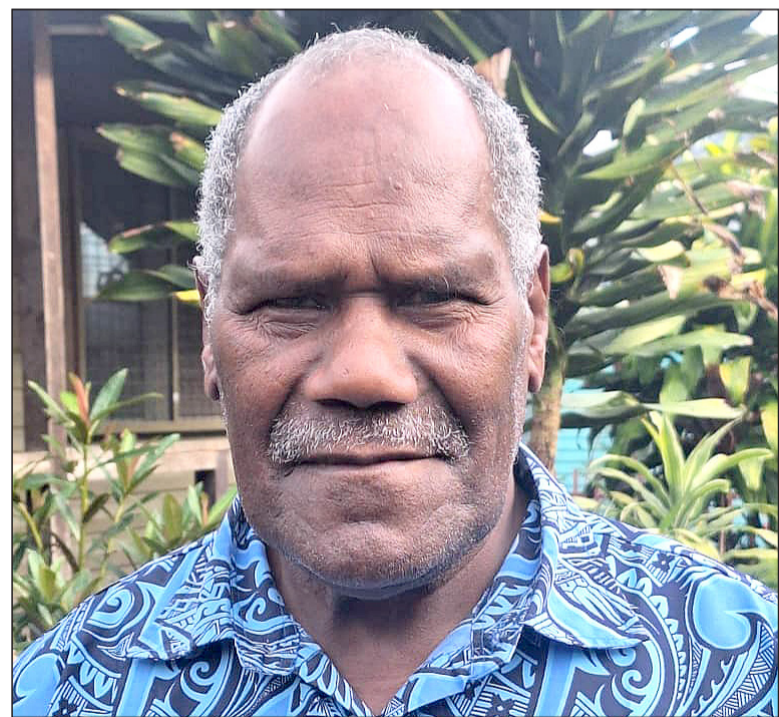
Roa believes the facility will benefit Engans and neighboring

regions, placing Enga on the national map for healthcare excellence. Grounded in Service and Experience Roa's career took him across the province. He served as District Administrator in Kandep under Jimson Sauk, in Laigap-Porgera under the late Opis Papo, in Wabag under Daniel Kapi, and in Kompiam under Sir John Pundari.

Eventually, he returned to the provincial headquarters, where he remained until his retirement. "As someone who comes from outside the province, I can confidently say that Enga has become my home," Roa shared. "The people welcomed me, and I felt proud to serve them."

On Conflict and Community Reflecting on the issue of tribal violence in the province, Roa presented a pragmatic perspective. "These are longstanding cultural issues," he said. "Tribal conflicts are typically confined within the communities involved. It's not something to fear; it's something to manage." He emphasised that such conflicts shouldn't overshadow Enga's incredible progress.

Enga: A Province Ahead Having visited many provinces



throughout his public service career, Roa noted that Enga stands out.

"Most provinces still look and feel as they did in the post-colonial era," he said. "But Enga is different.

It's a step ahead - thanks to one man's vision brought to life."

He added, "Sir Peter Ipatas has served Enga with pride and purpose.

His dreams weren't merely political rhetoric - they became real, tangible outcomes. Engans should take pride in this."

As the province gets ready to open its flagship hospital, Roa believes that the groundwork has been established for a new chapter of growth.

"Enga's transformation is not an accident. It is the result of strong, consistent leadership. The best is still to come."