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Bewani firm executive to testify

February 2nd 2012

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Posted by [rait man](#)

The Executive for the Bewani Palm Oil Development Limited has been summoned before the Commission of Inquiry to give evidence as the SABL holding entity's secretary, reports the Post Courier.

Tom Sirae, who is the Company Secretary, will also be required to inform the Commission as to whether there was any public hearings held to obtain Landowners consensus on whether Portion 106C could be converted into an SABL.

The portion of land is situated in the Oenake Milinch (SW) & (SE) Bewani (NW) & (NE) and Fourmile of Vanimo in the West Sepik Province and covers a total of 139,909 hectares of land.

The SABL was granted on July 11, 2008 and gazetted on July 14, 2008 and was delineated on a Class 4 survey plan.

This SABL is one of several from the West Sepik Province and evidence given by former Lands Secretary Pepi Kimas suggests that due process was not followed before it was granted.

Mr Kimas, appeared last week and gave testimony that he had been 'pressured' by three prominent politicians [believed to include Deputy Prime Minister Belden Namah and Gabriel Kapris] into signing the grant, converting the land into an SABL when he was visited personally by the three men on the date of the gazettal.

He admitted before both commissioners Numapo and Mirou that the politicians had painted such a convincing scenario of the many benefits available for the people of the province through this SABL which had then led him to placing his signature on the SABL grant form.

Mr Kimas also explained during his evidence that a class 4 survey plan was the common form of conducting land surveys, which was done from the desktop of an office onto an electronic map of the SABL.

He said that this was carried out by lands officers and was not as accurate as a class one.

Mr Kimas said this was because a class 1 survey plan would cost millions and would be impossible for landowners to fund and more often the developer met that cost.

"Class three and four are used (to determine the land boundaries and in this case) accuracy is not important but when it comes to the project, that is when class 1 is needed," he said.

The inquiry then argued that it was important as it was the initial stages to be included in the Land Investigation Report to capture the size of the actual SABL before other instrument were put in place to convert it.

Meanwhile, Mr Sirae will also be required to give evidence on the current logging operations that are currently underway in the area.

SABL Blog: [SABL](#)

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