

## JAPAN QUAKE KILLS 2,000

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# Pope beatifies ToRot

10,000 brave downpour to witness solemn ceremony



The relics of Peter ToRot being carried in a procession to the altar as the Pope (left) meditates during the beatification ceremony yesterday

**By MOHAMMAD BASHIR**  
**PORT MORESBY:** Pope John Paul II yesterday beatified Papua New Guinea and Oceania's first indigenous person, Peter ToRot, at a mass drenched in ceremony and a heavy downpour.

Fewer people attended than expected because of the rain, televised coverage of the event and the public holiday in the capital.

Even then, there were about 10,000 people who braved the downpour, some turning up at the Sir John Guise Stadium as early as 4 am.

Not particularly troubled by the weather, the 74-year-old Holy Father, seen for the first time since arrival in his red robe, his mitre and shepherd's staff in hand, circled the stadium in the popemobile waving to the

cheering crowd.

The Pope surprised people again with his energy and conducted Holy Mass in a firm voice.

He was met on arrival by several traditional dance groups whom he commended later in Pidgin.

"Ol brata na susa. Tenkyu tru long bikpela welkam yupela i givim mi aste long ples balus na nau. Mi lukim bilas bilong ol manmeri ol i welkamim mi, na bel bilong mi i kirap tru. Bilas bilong yupela ol pipel bilong Papua New Guinea i nais moa yet."

(My dear brothers and sisters, thank you for the big welcome you gave me. I saw the colourful decorations of the people and I was very impressed. Your traditional decorations here in PNG are very very nice.)

He later gave permission

for a feast day for July 7 each year to be celebrated as Blessed ToRot's day.

ToRot, who he said shared Jesus Christ's suffering to the point of martyrdom, was officially recognised and went down in the

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books of the Universal Catholic Church as among the truly chosen ones and numbered among the Blessed who are now in heaven.

He performed the ritual of beatification to officially proclaim the late Tolai catechist who was killed by the

Japanese in 1945, just before World War II ended, for his beliefs in Christ and the church.

The ceremony started with a plea from Archbishop of Rabaul Karl Hesse to the Holy Spirit in front of the pontiff and a parade of colourfully-attired bishops.

"Holy Father, I, the Archbishop of Rabaul, humbly request your Holiness that the Venerable servant of God, Peter ToRot, Catechist and Martyr, be proclaimed Blessed," petitioned Archbishop Hesse.

That was followed by a short biography of ToRot read in English, Pidgin and Motu.

The Holy Father replied: "Accepting the wishes of our brother Karl Hesse, Archbishop of Rabaul, his

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## NATION

# Filipino with loaded pistol detained by police

PORT MORESBY: A 40-year-old Filipino was yesterday detained and had a loaded semi-automatic pistol confiscated after he tried to enter the Sir John Guise Stadium during the beatification of Tolai Martyr Peter ToRot by Pope John Paul II.

Southern Region Divisional Commander Assistant Commissioner Philip Taku

said Perfecto Santos, a long-term PNG resident but originally from Suvunuan in the Philippines, was released after questioning but charges were being considered.

Santos was carrying a 9mm Sig-Saur pistol with a loaded 15-round magazine when detected by police using a metal detector at the gate.

Mr Taku said in a statement

late yesterday that Santos is the licenced owner of the gun but it was for "pistol club target shooting purposes."

"He was arrested and charged with an unlicensed firearms offence," he said without elaborating.

Apart from that incident, the second day of the Papal visit here passed without major security hassles.

Mr Taku, who is also the Papal Visit Operation Commander, said security was "pretty good" and again thanked the public for behaving well.

"There hasn't been any major incidents so far and we are quite happy about it," he said.

He said policemen who were providing security around the clock for the Pope

and his party had been trained for the operation.

Yesterday, the stadium was heavily guarded both by uniformed and plain clothes police. During his Popemobile tour of the stadium, he was flanked on both sides by security men.

The measure was undertaken presumably to stop people from getting too close

to the Pope and to prevent a repeat of Monday's incident in which a crowd of youths ran alongside the Popemobile as the Pontiff was making his way to the Don Bosco church at Gabutu.

Police yesterday also said that the two Iranians they were looking for had departed for the Philippines on Dec 9.

## PNG Catholic Church 'becoming indigenous'

PORT MORESBY: The Catholic Church here was passing from being a missionary church to an indigenous church and must meet and overcome the challenges of new religions in the region, Pope John Paul II said.

He told Bishops of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands "to be ever more steadfast in proclaiming and living the faith" because there was now an influx of religions and sects and these provided a pastoral challenge to them.

"I am aware that in recent years there has been an influx of new religious movements and sects in this region.

"They thrive, at least in part, because some aspects of their activities fill the void left by the loss of traditional values and ways of living, a loss accompanying the massive changes in economic, political and social life.

"I urge you to continue

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your pastoral efforts to meet this challenge," he told the bishops at a meeting with them before dinner last night.

The Pope, a campaigner against abortion and the use of the pill in birth control, said the strengthening of family life was a "pastoral priority".

The Pontiff, who beatified Tolai martyr Peter ToRot at a mass at the Sir John Guise Stadium which rain could not dampen, winds up his three-day visit today with Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan calling on him at the Apostolic Nunciature where he has been in residence.

The Pope will bid farewell to personnel at the Nunciature before proceeding to St Joseph's Cathedral where he will bless the sick.

He then leaves for the airport where he will give a farewell speech before flying off to Sydney for the next leg of his four-nation tour.

# Improve the country, Pope tells PNG youth

By HARRY MOMOS

PORT MORESBY: Pope John Paul II has called on PNG youth to do more in improving the country and carry out their duty with love.

He made the call at the beatification of Peter ToRot when he also said that the Tolai martyr was also an example to married couples in defending the Church's teaching on the unity of marriage even in the face of great personal danger and opposition.

To young people, the pontiff said they should not be concerned only about themselves but place themselves generously at the service of others.

"As citizens, you should feel the need to work to improve your country and to ensure that society develops in honesty and justice, harmony and solidarity.

"Do not be afraid to commit yourselves to the task of making Christ known and loved, especially among the many people of your age group," he said.

To married couples he said Blessed Peter is also a model for them in having the "highest esteem for marriage."

"If families are good, your vil-



Popemobile flanked on both sides by security men during drive around the Sir John Guise Stadium.

lages will be peaceful and good. Hold on to the traditions that defend and strengthen your family life," he said.

He acknowledged the contributions made by lay catechists in the spreading the Christian faith and of the Church in Papua New Guinea.

To the intercession of the new Blessed, the Pope commended the people of Bougainville and made a special appeal to all sides in the dispute to negotiate a settlement "in a spirit of goodwill and constructive openness."

He extended a special word of encouragement to Bishop Gre-

gory Singkai and the Church in Bougainville now suffering both physically and spiritually.

"I pray that discussions which have recently been initiated will soon lead to a just and lasting peace, with respect for the legitimate aspirations and rights of all those concerned."

## Beatification opponents: We made the rain

PORT MORESBY: A group of Tolais, who had wanted the beatification of Peter ToRot to be done in Rabaul and not Port Moresby, claimed responsibility for yesterday's heavy early morning showers here that kept many city residents indoors.

The rain which started as early as five o'clock did not however stop thousands of others, mainly Catholics, going to the Sir John Guise Stadium for the mass and the beatification ceremony.

A spokesman for the group who did not want to be named said "the black magic to make rain worked".

"We believe even Peter ToRot's spirit was with the group since the fund raising activities for the ceremony started last year," he said.

He said that an indication of this was that during the Tolai cultural display at the stadium last year to raise funds there were light showers.

"It is no coincidence that there was rain today," he said, adding that the group believed Peter ToRot's spirit

was against his beatification in Port Moresby.

He claimed Tolai rainmakers known as "Tenabakut" in Kuanua language had been working hard for the past three weeks.

"The mission has been done despite what the weather experts may say," he said.

He was responding to weather forecasts that the rainy season had begun in the southern part of PNG which included Port Moresby.

The weather office yesterday recorded 25.6 millimetres of rain for the city.

A weather forecaster said on Monday that a shower or two were expected with chances of thunderstorm on Monday night, yesterday and today.

He said this was because the normal low pressure system was right above the area.

The weather forecaster also said satellite pictures showed a lot of clouds with chances of thunderstorms.



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# NATION

## 23 traditional gifts presented to pontiff

By CYRIL GARE

PORT MORESBY: At least 23 different, mostly traditional, items from around Papua New Guinea were presented as gifts of the eucharist to the Pope yesterday during the historic beatification of PNG's first martyr Peter ToRot.

Among them was the Pope's paten, the sacred vessel for the holy sacrament, borne by Rufina la Mama, daughter of the Blessed Peter ToRot.

The gifts were presented during the

beatification mass at Sir John Guise Stadium yesterday which was attended by over 10,000 people.

Leading in the offerings was Isidore Moses from Daru/Kiunga diocese (Western) who presented a kundu drum.

He was followed by Michaeline Torowansi from the North Solomons who made the offering of a basket and a tray traditionally made from wild vines.

Two carvings depicting the bird of

Paradise, the National symbol, were presented by Sister Celine Yakasere from Wewak diocese (ESP) and Peter Men Kui from Aitape diocese (WSP).

Pig's teeth, a medium of traditional exchange and payments was offered by Sister Claire Wipa of Mendi diocese (Southern Highlands).

The traditional tapa cloth was presented by Xavier Ofio from Northern Province. The cloth is worn by both men and women and is made from tree bark.

A ring of Tolai "tabu" - traditional shell money - was presented by Jennifer Kaumu.

A family tree representing the country of PNG was presented by Aloysius Taune from Bereina diocese (Central).

A Dukduk mask, representing the Tolai people and their different tribes, was presented by Joe Tomarian from Rabaul diocese (ENBP).

A PNG laplap was presented by Mark Tomara also from the Rabaul

diocese (ENBP).

Other gifts: a bilum by James Sabi, clay pots by Sister Herberta, a chief platform with an axe by George Pudu Monise, lime pot (container) by Elizabeth Frongai, a lakatoi by James Oi, a spiritual bouquet by Casparia Mond, a West New Britain Province carving by John and Christine Namono, a bunch of flowers by Sister Lenaghan, loaves of bread by Anton Pe-ue and Anna Mel and by Rosa Mathew and Nora Nelson.

### Sir Wiwa invited to Vatican

By PATRICK LEVO

PORT MORESBY: Governor General Sir Wiwa Korowi was yesterday invited to visit the Vatican.

Pope John Paul II who concludes his three-day visit here today extended the invitation at a private meeting with Sir Wiwa at Government House in Konedobu yesterday.

Sir Wiwa said he accepted the invitation and had instructed Foreign Affairs Secretary Gabriel Dusava to look into the organisation of the trip if funds were available.

The 74-year old pontiff's visit to Government House lasted 20 minutes during the two men chatted on world issues and exchanged gifts.

Sir Wiwa said the Pope showed great concern for the conflict on Bougainville and supported government moves to bring the fighting to a quick end.

He said the Pope, just like everyone else, wanted to see the situation on Bougainville return to normal.

He said the Pope told him he applauded the work of the Catholic Church in PNG, especially in the rural areas through education, health and social services.

He also said the Pope had told him there was a price to pay to be a Christian and Catholics only had to look to Tolai martyr Peter ToRot to know what it is like to be a Christian.

He said the Pope believed the future of the country lies in the youth and urged leaders to harness youth through church activities.

By ELIZABETH TAMI

PORT MORESBY: Seated quietly beside the small coffin bearing the remains of martyr Peter ToRot during the beatification ceremony yesterday was Rufina la Mama, the new Blessed's only surviving child.

Rufina, the second of ToRot's three children, was the happiest person yesterday.

"I am very, very happy today because my father has been recognised by the Catholic church for the work that he did which cost him his life," she said. "He has been blessed a martyr, and that gives me pride and joy."

Then looking around the Sir John Guise Stadium as a steady heavy drizzle fell, she added: "I am also very happy and pleased with the big number of the people who turned up despite the heavy rain."

She said it was an honour for her to have met the Pope personally since the pontiff's arrival on Monday.

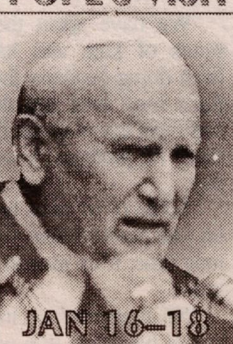
"I am especially thankful to Pope John Paul II, who left his home many miles away to come here to bless the bones of my father."

Asked about her father, Rufina said that she was very small when he died and did not know much about him. However, she spoke of him with great admiration.

"My mother told me about him, about the way he went about doing his

## Proud and joyful day for ToRot's daughter

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work and about the way he wanted my mother to raise us if anything was to happen to him," she said.

She added that her father, according to her mother, was a good husband and a good family man.

Pope John Paul said at the beatification yesterday that the Tolai martyr was a model for married couples in having the "highest esteem for marriage."

Thousands braved the rain yesterday to attend mass at the stadium where her father was beatified.

Asked how she felt about the ceremony being held here and not at his home village of Rakunai as originally



Rufina la Mama sitting besides ToRot's coffin at the ceremony

planned, she said the change did not matter to her.

"When they changed the venue, I just listened to them and came to Port Moresby where we have

just witnessed the blessing by the Pope."

Meanwhile, the people in Rabaul will still celebrate the blessing of Peter ToRot in their own way when Rufina and the

delegates returned with the bones to Rabaul.

According to Rufina, there will be a procession from Tokua airport when they arrive at Rakunai village where the cele-

brations will be held.

"We will then celebrate this day with the many Catholic people in Rabaul who could not attend today's event," she said.

## Follow example of ToRot's life

■ From Page One

brother bishops and many of the faithful and having received the favourable responses of the congregation for the Cause of the Saints, we declare with our Apostolic Authority that the venerable servant of God, Peter ToRot, be named Blessed in posterity and give permission for his feast day to be celebrated on the 7th July annually in places according to the norms established by law.

The relics of ToRot were carried in procession to the altar by a Tolai dance group including daughter Rufina to the accompaniment of hymns attributed to him and the relic was blessed by the Pontiff.

Bishop Hesse then thanked his Holiness and said: 'Most Holy Father, I, the Archbishop of Rabaul join with my brother bishops and the faithful of PNG in giving heart-

felt thanks to your Holiness for granting the title of Blessed to the Venerable Servant of God, Peter ToRot.'

After the liturgy and the procession of a Bible carried by a deacon accompanied by traditional dancers to the pontiff, he kissed it and then delivered the homily.

He reiterated that he would have loved to have had the ceremony in Rabaul but extended his warm greetings to everybody.

He said the first blessed PNG subject begins a new epoch in the history of the people of God in this country and that the volcanic eruption in Rabaul had brought the people closer to ToRot.

The crowd roared into applause when he said: 'Mi laikim yupela i mas tingim Peter ToRot olgeta taim. Yupela i mas tingim oltaim long bilong em, family laip

bilong em na wok bilong em. Bikos ToRot i soim rot long yumi. Em i soim rot long yumi olgeta, tasol moa yet long ol famili bilong Papua New Guinea.

Yupela amamas! Olgeta wari bilong yupela i ken tanim kamap amamas gen.'

(I want you to remember Peter ToRot always. You must think always of his faith, his family life, his work as a catechist. Because ToRot shows us the way. He shows the way to all of us, especially the families in PNG, the youth and everybody who preach the word of God.)

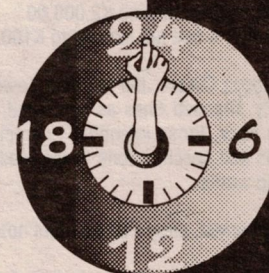
Rejoice! May your soul rest in peace!

People also had the opportunity to pay their last respects to ToRot and perform the Eucharist. About 100 priests then served the holy communion among the crowd.

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