

# Masalai i tokaut

*Number Thirty Five: 24 January 2005*

## The Police Commissioner and RH - Drug smuggling and gun running?

*New documents obtained by Masalai point to a sinister new twist in the relationship between Rimbunan Hijau and officers of the PNG police.*

*While Police Commissioner Sam Inguba has been busy trying to defend Rimbunan Hijau against a mountain of evidence of human rights atrocities committed by police officers on behalf of the logging giant in their remote camps, Masalai has been provided with hard evidence of drug smuggling and gun running.*

*While it is common knowledge that the Minister of Forests, Mr Patrick Pruaitch is in the pocket of the logging giant Rimbunan Hijau, it was not so clear that the Police Commissioner was an RH man as well.*



***The Police have been smuggling drugs on behalf of RH!***

*The Police Commissioner went to remarkable lengths to protect his officers when the Australian SBS made it clear for all that his officers were panel-beating villagers at the request of RH. "No proof" he claimed ([Masalai 34](#)). Masalai is wondering how the Police Commissioner will explain the documents in this edition that show clearly clandestine working relationship between Southern Command and Rimbunan Hijau.*

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Rumours about the involvement of logging companies in smuggling and illegal trafficking have been circulating in PNG for many years with snippets of evidence appearing occasionally in the media.

Logging operations provide the perfect cover for any number of illegal activities with log ships coming and going from remote logging camps far from the gaze of the

media and any government officials.

These ships travel between PNG and Asian countries like Malaysia, China, Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand; countries notorious for their illegal gangs, smuggling links, prostitution, people trafficking and violent criminal underworld.

Rimbunan Hijau is the largest logging company operating in PNG. The company is a Malaysian multinational based in Sarawak and is owned by a family of immigrants from the Fujian Province of China.

Rimbunan Hijau's logging camps in Western and Gulf Provinces are as remote as any in PNG and they provide direct access into the heart of the Central Highlands – an area notorious for both drugs and guns.



Rimbunan Hijau log camp in Western Province

In this newspaper story from January 2002, a police officer explained how drugs are brought down from the Highlands to logging camps in Gulf and Western Provinces where they are traded for guns that are brought in on the log ships

## Drugs for guns trade links found between SHP and North Fly

NORTH Fly police in the Western province are concerned about drug trade links between the Komo area of the Southern Highlands province (SHP) and a logging camp near Kiunga.

Acting North Fly police commander Senior Inspector Hariba Mamaea said that people are travelling from Komo through Nomad River to the logging camp to trade marijuana for high powered firearms brought in from Australia via Daru. The logging camp is about 150 kilometres down the Fly River from Kiunga.

Mr Mamaea said the police believe that firearms are smuggled in from Australia via Daru on the empty barges returning to the Binge river camp.

He said that about a month ago Kiunga police arrested a man from Komo who had travelled all the way from Southern Highlands to sell drugs for money or firearms but the man had escaped from police custody and is now believed to be in Tabubil.

Mr Mamaea also said that earlier this year, the police arrested a Central province man who was a sailor on one of the barges on drug possession charges.

The man served a five-month jail sentence and was recently released. The senior inspector said because the river camp is right on the Papua New Guinea-Indonesian border and because of smuggling activities carried by some of the people residing there, Kiunga police call the camp a "free trade zone".

What Senior Inspector Hariba Mamaea probably didn't know, was that his fellow police officers are used by Rimbunan Hijau to traffic drugs and guns on the company's behalf.

This is revealed in a stunning document obtained by *Masalai* from a secret source – a signed letter, from the now infamous Sergeant Biamaga, to the senior manager of one Rimbunan Hijau company (Straits Marine) and copied to Mr Ling of Wawoi Guavi Timber (another RH company). In the letter Sergeant is Biamaga requesting further funds for a drug buying expedition to the Highlands.

As well as airfares, a cash advance and money for food and accommodation to send a named police constable to Tari in the Southern Highlands, Sergeant Biamaga openly requests from Rimbunan Hijau, K500 to buy 10 kilograms of "drugs". The only drug sold in 10kg bags in Tari is Marajuana

# ROYAL PAPUA NEW GUINEA CONSTABULARY

KAMUSIE POLICE DETACHMENT  
BALIMO DISTRICT, WESTERN PROVINCE

TELEPHONE: 6408069

FACSIMILE: 6403863

OUR REF:

29th March, 2000

TO : MR. WONG KEH YEE  
Straits Marine Manager

From : Sgt. Jerry Biamaga  
Task Force Commander - Southern

CC : Mr. Ling Kuok Poh/Michael Pythias/File

**SUBJECT : REQUEST FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR TARI TRIP.**

The above caption is brought to your attention for financial assistance to send a member to Tari as our first trip was unsuccessful due to transportation and financial problem.

I urgently request to send Constable Bani back for the second trip to complete the mission and require the following assistance:

1.	Airfares from Mendi - Tari - Panakawa	-	K325.00
2.	Cash advance from People assisted at Tari	-	K360.00
3.	For purchase of drugs (K100.00) for 10 kgs	-	K500.00
4.	Excess Baggage	-	K100.00
5.	Accommodation, food and land transport	-	K200.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>K1485.00</b> =====

This recommendation is submitted for your consideration and approval. Should there be any complication, please advise so that other arrangement could be done.

Respectfully yours,



Sgt. J. Biamaga MBE  
Task Force Commander - Southern

The letter is written on the letterhead of the Kamusie Police Detachment of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary. Kamusie is of course a logging camp operated by Rimbunan Hijau inside the Wawoi Guavi logging concession in Western Province.

Sergeant Biamaga has become notorious as the leader of the Southern Task Force that has terrorised local people in Gulf and Western provinces on behalf of Rimbunan Hijau ([Masalai 34](#)).

Other documents obtained by [Masalai](#), also attest to the close relationship between Rimbunan Hijau and senior commanders in the police force. This signed fax shows Chief Superintendent Marru informing Rimbunan Hijau that a total of fourteen police officers were being deployed at the company's request.



# ROYAL PAPUA NEW GUINEA CONSTABULARY

Unit: SOUTHERN DIVISIONAL HQs, KONE DOBU  
Phone: 321 3132  
Fax: 321 3431

# FAX

Precedence:

To: Mr. Alex TEO  
Senior Manager  
Rimbunan Hijau (PNG) Group

Fax No:

Attention:

Our ref:

From: J.Y. MARRU QPM  
Chief Superintendent  
a/Divisional Commander - Southern

No of pages:  
(including this page)

Date: 21 July 2003

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Subject: TASK FORCE AND CID DEPLOYMENT TO KAMUSIE

Approval has been given to deploy members of the SDPHQ Task Force totaling ten (10) plus four (4) Detectives.

Please find attached list for your information and attention necessary.

  
J.Y. MARRU QPM  
Chief Superintendent  
a/Divisional Commander - Southern

The role of Rimbunan Hijau in importing guns into PNG was revealed in the recent Independent Review Committee investigation into the Operations of the Constabulary set up by the Minister for Internal Security.

According to documents filed in that inquiry, Rimbunan Hijau brings guns into PNG on log ships, stores them in its logging camps and then transfers them to the Highlands on its own Tropic Air Cessna jet.

The guns are disguised as bags of saksak (sago) and the Southern Command Task Force provide the security for the operations.

Guns and Drugs	<p>Names of people accused of gun and drug smuggling and involvement of police eg Gerry Biamaga (letter requesting assistance from Mr Ling also sighted). Mode of operations appears to be that when the cessna 206 flies to Mendi for service, it carries bags of guns disguised as saksak and returns with marijuana which is then sent to Balimo and overseas. (Nb at Kamusie [REDACTED] does not check cargo but is suspicious of large amounts of saksak being consumed by highlanders). Guns come in on logships and offloaded and stored in a workshop opposite sawmill, under curfew imposed at the camp by Task Force police. Names of suspects available.</p> <p>RH planes arriving at Kamusie are often seen to taxi to the end of the airstrip where it is assumed tha contriband goods are being unloaded.</p> <p>Name of person profiting from selling drugs at Kamusie given to RT (same person "disciplined" for insubordination by Theaddeus see * below)</p>
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Just a few months ago police seized a large cache of guns from a logging camp manager in West New Britain Province. West New Britain was the heartland of Rimbunan Hijau's logging operations throughout the 1990's and they still maintain a number of camps on he island.



Of course, the involvement of politicians in funding gun purchases and arms smuggling is widely acknowledged. This was admitted by the then Prime Minister, Mekere Morauta, in 2002.



## HOME NEWS

# MPs in gun trade - PM

PRIME Minister Sir Mekere Morauta yesterday said "it was an open secret" that guns were smuggled freely by politicians in the Highlands and other provinces.

He said it was an open secret that many people talked about and he had no evidence to deny it.

It was common knowledge among the people, he said.

By ALEX RHEENEY

"I think it is an open secret and many people talk about it and I have no evidence to deny it. But people do say that guns run freely," Sir Mekere said.

He said it would be a massive and costly exercise to stop the flow of weapons into the country. Guns were been run in

other provinces and in the Highlands.

Sir Mekere said the army would not be called out to quell the violence in the Southern Highlands Province.

He said the SHP violence started as a tribal fight.

Peoples Democratic Movement president Thomas Negints, who was with Sir Mekere at the press conference, said

tribal fights for Highlanders was a "way of life".

"We, Highlanders, we fight for our lives 30 hundred years. I mean this is our life. It is our way of life," Mr Negints said.

He said the recent violence involving hostage taking was election-related.

This explains some of the protection that Rimbunan Hijau now enjoys at the highest political levels – including it seems – that of the Police Commissioner.

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