

PAPUA NEW GUINEA UNITECH SAGA INFORMATION HANDBOOK

1ST EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

Papua New Guinea University of Technology is one and the only technological university in the country (PNG) and as well in the Pacific. However, in the past years this university has been demoralized and brought to no prosperity for its future advancements. Having been said, the solution to all the nightmares and everyday problems faced by the university became history when one individual brought light into the darkness with vision and dreams to change the course of the great institution.

BACKGROUND (HISTORY)

People of Interest in the Unitech Saga and their profiles

DR. ALBERT SCHRAM

Albert Ernst Giovanni Schram (born 2 September 1964 in De Bilt, the Netherlands) is the Vice Chancellor of the Papua New Guinea University of Technology (UNITECH). He took over on 7 February 2012 from Misty Baloiloi, who had been Vice-Chancellor for 17 years. Schram is also Adjunct Professor at James Cook University's Cairns Institute (Australia) and at the University of Turabo Business School.

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

Since 1999, Schram took on managerial and executive positions in academia of increasing responsibility. From 1994 to 2003 he worked in San José, Costa Rica at the Latin American University of Science and Technology ULACIT where he attained the professor's rank in 1999, and supervised 5 PhD theses. From 1999 to 2003, he coordinated an environmental economics program for Central America at the University of Costa Rica. He also worked as advisor and environmental auditor for the Costa Rican Ministry of Environment and the Ecological Flag program for environmental management. For two and half years, he was research fellow at the University of Ghent's Center for Environmental Economics and Management. In 2005, he was Resident Lecturer and briefly Acting Director at the School for Field Studies "Center for Marine Resources Studies" on South Caicos (Turks and Caicos Islands).

In 2006, he became Academic Director at the Zuyd University's Maastricht Hotel Management School (the Netherlands). From 2007 to 2011, he was Research Funding Advisor at the Maastricht University's School of Business and Economics, where he received further training and coaching for executive roles. In this period, he visited Brussels frequently and became an expert in research and academic financing.

Schram also received training in Problem Based Learning for which this university is widely known. Maastricht University in 2013 attained the 6th position in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings for universities under 50 years old and 7th position in the corresponding QS World University Rankings.

ACADEMIC AND POLICY WORK

Schram has published his PhD thesis with Cambridge University Press in 1997 with the title "Railways and the Formation of the Italian State in the Nineteenth Century". Afterwards he published on a wide variety of topics in management and social sciences: corporate social responsibility, environmental and experimental economics, economic valuation, climate change, green economy, time use sociology, health care management and risk assessment.

In 2011, he carried out the policy review on corporate social responsibility for the Directorate General for Research and Innovation (European Commission). In 2011, he was team leader for the scoping study on the green economy for the European External Action Service for the Rio+20 UN summit with case studies on Canada, South Korea, China, Thailand, Brasil, Mexico and Tunisia.

His long term research interests are the role of multi-national companies and emerging large technological systems in social and economic development in the long run. Schram's thinking on development was strongly influenced by the courses by Prof. Nicholas Stern on development economics he followed at the London School of Economics in 1993.

Schram taught university courses in English and Spanish at all levels in environmental economics and policy, corporate social responsibility, international business environment, the history of multi-national companies and on project management and financing for global health care practitioners.

From 1996, he used the internet for his teaching, and employs a student centered approach to teaching through case studies and problem-based learning. He has been invited as guest lecturer in various European and Latin American countries, USA, China, and India.

BIOGRAPHY

Albert Schram is the older of two children. His father Kees Schram is a Dutch theoretical physicist. His mother, Laura Pighi, is a scholar of Italian literature. From a young age he has travelled throughout Italy and Europe.

Schram was educated in the Netherlands until his Masters Degree. He completed the Gymnasium B program at Het Nieuwe Lyceum in Bilthoven with Latin and advanced Mathematics. He did his Masters in European history at the University of Utrecht, for which he obtained a 3 months scholarship from the Netherlands Institute in Rome.

From 1990 to 1993, he received a 3 year PhD scholarship for the European University Institute in Fiesole (Italy). In 1994, Schram obtained his doctorate degree in the field of Economic History from this institute. Since then he has taken up residence in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Belgium, the Netherlands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Italy, and Papua New Guinea. He is married and has no children.

ACHIEVEMENTS AT UNITECH

1. Provided a more strategized approach to academic leadership and created better working relationship on campus.
2. Improved academic quality of teaching and research.
3. Improved learning opportunities and created more activities for students.
4. Upgraded infrastructure and provided better services on campus.

PHILIP STAGG

Philip Stagg was the former Chancellor of the Papua New Guinea University of Technology before he was sidelined in 2012 in what is known as *the old regime*.

SIR NAGORA BOGAN

Sir Bogan has a Bachelor of Law, University of PNG and was a former Commissioner for PNG Internal Revenue Commission and also PNG's Ambassador to the USA. He is now serving as the Chancellor of the PNG University of Technology since being appointed in 2012. He was the chairman of Nambawan Super Board and is currently the Director for Mapai Transport Ltd.

PROFESSOR JOHN PUMWA

Professor John Pumwa is the current acting Vice-Chancellor of Unitech (2014) and the Deputy Head of the Department of Mechanical Engineering. He holds a Doctorate Degree in Mechanical Engineering awarded at Texas A&M University in 1997.

RALPH SAULEP

Ralph Saulep was the former Deputy Chancellor for Unitech before the appointment of Sir Nagura Bogan. He is a lawyer by profession.

JOE KAOWAI

Joe Kaowai is the former SRC President of Unitech 2012 whilst studying for a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. He is currently studying in Europe.

LIVINGSTONE HOSEA

Livingstone Hosea was the former SRC president of Unitech in 2013 whilst studying for Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He is currently working in Wewak holding the post of Provincial project coordinator.

EDDIE NAGUAL

Eddie Nagual is the current (2014) SRC President of Unitech. He is studying Bachelor of Science in Accounting.

HISTORY

Here is a brief timeline of the events that took place from the day Dr. Albert Schram was employed as the legitimate Vice- Chancellor of PNG Unitech and the current stand.

8 June 2011: As one of the candidates, Dr. Albert Schram gives a speech for the UNITECH community on transformational leadership, promising a professional, transparent and strategized university management. He received a contract offer a few weeks later, initially to take up duty on 1st of October.

7 February 2012: After postponing his arrival twice since October 2011, Dr. Albert Schram takes over as Vice-Chancellor of the Papua New Guinea University of Technology. In January, Standing Committee of Council agrees to transfer two executive vehicles to former Vice-Chancellor at favorable prices and payment conditions, and retain the services of Misty Baloiloi for 3 more months, without specifying his activities. Other vehicles are similarly transferred to former executives.

March: Chancellor Philip Stagg and Pro-Chancellor Ralph Saulep order a biased inquiry into Pro Vice-Chancellors Academic objections appointing Narayan Gehlot as head of department and professor. The VC refuses and instead launches an inquiry into Gehlot's appointment. It turns out 5 out of 9 members of the search committee refused to sign the interview report, including the external reviewer an Australian professor. The Vice-Chancellor discontinues the contract with Misty Baloiloi for non-performance.

12 April: Vice-Chancellor (VC) presents the current state of the university based on:

1. external audit reports by Kapi & Clarke since 2006;
2. assessment by the Engineers Australia from 2010;
3. analysis of personnel policies and staffing in the University administration by Pacific Management Consulting from 2010; and
4. Namaliu-Garnaut report from 2010 to reduce University Council size from over 30 to 7 or 9 members.

The VC raises concern that these documents have not been sufficiently discussed in Council, and that for years the Council has not held management accountable for following up on the recommendations. A strategy is presented to address the issues raised in these reports.

17 April: Former Chancellor Philip Stagg tells the Vice-Chancellor he has been dismissed by 4.06 pm for "arrogance and disclosing confidential information". These are not reasons for dismissal as per contract. The reports were circulated in Council before and no specific examples of the VC's transgressions are given. Unrest breaks out on campus, student and staff organizations demand among other things re-instatement of VC. All staff organizations come out in

support of the students' demands. By email, the Chancellor threatens to come down with 300 of his tribesmen.

26 April: Council meeting re-instating the Vice-Chancellor. Saulep and Stagg refuse to stand down, though they are running in the elections, hiding behind a stay order, which later proves to have been set aside much earlier. Mediation team starts at UNITECH according to Terms of Reference needs to produce report within 21 days. The draft report is circulated in May, but the recommendations are written later, and not released until the 12th of November. Some recommendations bear little relationship with the report.

May: Chancellor Phillip Stagg files outrageous complaints with the police in Lae accusing the Vice-Chancellor and members of the senior management team in being accessory to an attempt to murder him by the students. The police do not act on the complaint, since there is no evidence for the alleged crime, and therefore the possibility of a conviction for being accessory to it is remote.

14 September: All departments organize an open day, for the first time in 12 years. UNITECH's pride rises.

16 September: The SRC organizes the first cultural day in 6 years with the support of the Chief Secretary's office. No significant incidents and morale rises enormously.

October: Chancellor Phillip Stagg and Pro Chancellor Ralph Saulep order VC to fire Pro-Vice-Chancellor academic for no valid reason. The University goes to court against Stagg & Saulep. Manase Lawyers defends them, and therefore can no longer serve the University.

Meeting with the Deputy Auditor General. UNITECH is the only state institution in PNG receiving an "adverse opinion" in its report to Parliament. Financial mismanagement is public now.

2 November: Pro Chancellor Ralph Saulep convenes Council meeting through the newspaper. On the agenda is the dismissal of the Vice-Chancellor, who is asked to show because why he should be kept on. The burden of proof now is reversed, in absence of any contractually valid reason for dismissal.

8 November: Council meeting with a minority of Port Moresby based Council members for the dismissal of the Vice-Chancellor. The alleged reason for dismissal now is doubt on the Vice-Chancellor identity and his academic credentials. The list of Council members present has been deposited in Court by Manase lawyers.

An interim management team is appointed lead by Cletus Gonduan, and with participation of Yaip Telue, Samson Akoitai, and Jephtha Girinde. Dr. Narayan Gehlot is in attendance. The venue of the meeting is changed at the last moment, and the VC is not given this information. In any case, this meeting is restrained by a court order, which is served and mentioned in the minutes of the meeting itself. All the decisions taken are therefore null and void.

12 November: Minister Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, David Arore announces dissolution of Council and appoints a new Chancellor, Sir Nagora Bogan. In addition, 4 external members of an Interim Council are appointed, which is mandated to among other things:

1. a fraud investigation within 24 hours
2. improve internet facilities
3. work towards accreditation of the engineering programs following the Washington Accord

4. salary review for all UNITECH staff

13 November: VC receives a phone call from Director General OHE asking him to produce his original doctoral degree. VC states the original degree is in storage in the Netherlands, and produces instead a legally valid copy, certified by the degree awarding institution. This is the last time he is directly approached by a government official or a member of the government.

19 December: Ralph Saulep gives a press conference with Narayan Gehlot, claiming Dr. Schram is illegally occupying the Vice-Chancellor's office, without showing any proof for such claim. Instead he challenges Dr. Schram to sue him for defamation.

20 November: The National Executive Council supports the Minister HERST decision and confirms through NEC decision 124 the appointment of the Interim Council.

Instability on campus and three attempts in November and December by the so-called interim management to take over the administration building with the help of armed police.

1 December: Dr. Naryan Gehlot is fired for gross incompetence, unauthorized absence, and ignoring instructions from the management team. He takes off with a university vehicle to Goroka where he stays with the former Chancellor Phillip Stagg. The vehicle is retrieved while it is being sold off.

7 December: Former Pro-Chancellor Ralph Saulep circulates a falsified court order as a word document in which the Vice-Chancellor is asked to vacate office. The real verdict states nothing of the sort, in fact the case is not about the VC's dismissal at all.

The disgruntled former employee, Dr. Narayan Gehlot, produces a 32 page document casting doubt on Dr. Schram identity and academic credentials, while at the same time glorifying his own somewhat imaginary achievements. With support of the Minister HERST and Ralph Saulep, Gehlot and his silly and self-serving stories penetrates to the highest levels of government, which take him seriously.

9 December: On Sunday 11 am, Yaip Telue and the interim management come waving the falsified court order with armed police to take the keys of the administration building. Misty Baloiloi is present. Telue's bluff is called by Deputy VC and SRC President, and they withdraw. Until today, no court order for VC to vacate office is ever produced, and he has never been legally dismissed.

5 December: The Academic Board approves the MBA program in principle, after more than 2 decades of discussions. After a great recruitment effort, about 20 offers to academics with a PhD are finalized. With Council approval, a contract with PNG Forestry Products to build house for them as per their employment contracts is signed – the first houses built on campus since 1967.

10 December: Former Pro-Chancellor Ralph Saulep files a complaint with the Port Moresby Police alleging the Vice-Chancellor is committing fraud, since allegedly he has been fired but is still enjoying his salary and is signing off on payments for the university.

19 December: EMTV broadcasts a press conference of Ralph Saulep with Narayan Gehlot, alleging Dr. Schram is illegally occupying the Vice-Chancellor's office, without presenting any proof. He challenges Dr. Schram to sue him for defamation.

20 December: After fact-finding the Interim Council during its first Council meeting re-appoints Vice-Chancellor Dr. Albert Schram with the same conditions as his current contract. The Council and Senior Management Team take some decisions to stabilize the situation on campus.

28 December: Minister HERST reverses himself and instructs Chancellor (sic!) to unconditionally reinstate Narayan Gehlot, members of the interim management, and some others. Chancellor is chairman of the council, and has no executive powers to do so. So far, only Gehlot had been fired, the others had been merely suspended and asked to resign.

At this point, the Vice-Chancellor decides to go on duty travel to take himself out of the situation until these silly and baseless charges are withdrawn. The purpose of the travel is to make arrangements for PhD studies for PNGeans in Australia, obtain cheaper textbooks for the students from India, and better internet connection from provider in Singapore.

14 January 2013: After his staff has been briefed by Ralph Saulep and Narayan Gehlot, Prime Minister decides to visit UNITECH campus, while VC is on duty travel. DVC and Chancellor advices against the visit, but their advice is ignored. VC is suspended with full salary and privileges until 14th of March. An official enquiry is announced, later to become another "investigation".

The University lawyer, without asking clearance from the VC's office, makes a press statement pointing out the PM has not powers to suspend the VC, only Council has. The VC makes apologizes for the most unfortunate timing.

23 January: NEC confirms decision on the UNITECH investigation in principle, reserving K500,000 for the purpose. Terms of reference are being worked out by Minister HERST David Arore.

8 February: VC tries to return to PNG after being told the PM would be displeased if he were not present at the opening of the academic year to welcome the first year students. The VC is not allowed to come into the country, refused access to his lawyers, and forcibly put on a plane to Brisbane. His work permit and visa however is not cancelled, and no reasons for his deportation are given. One migration official insistently states the deportation is cleared by the PM's office, and says he can be quoted on it.

February: The Terms of Reference for the enquiry are produced by the Minister of HERST with interference from Ralph Saulep.

4 March: The VC receives copies of the ToR indirectly, and immediately denounces them publicly for being biased. He proposes a more balanced set, but receives no answer.

9 March: After intervention by the Chancellor with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and receiving their assurances, the VC makes a second attempt to return to work, but is again deported. His work permit and visa however is not cancelled, and no reason for his deportation is given.

This constitutes a systematic breach of the VC's human right of freedom of movement. Due to administrative silence on the part of the state, this can be brought to an international court. The territoriality principle does not hold in case of human rights violations.

11 March: The SRC presidency is no longer able to hold back a boycott of classes and announces an indefinite boycott. All staff organizations come out in support of the students. The Vice-Chancellor's office consistently encourages the students to go back to classes publicly and privately, and find other manners to voice their concerns.

16 March: Minister HERST David Arore arrested in Popondetta for alleged bribery.

18 March: Start of investigation announced into UNITECH standoff. Vice-Chancellor objects to highly biased terms of reference. Team members are:

- Chairman: Judge Mark Sevua Retired - former Supreme Court Judge;
- Mathew Tamutai – Assistant Investigator and a senior lawyer in private practice;

- Peter Aigilo, senior lawyer and former Police Commissioner;
- Reddy Kuama, senior educationist and lecturer at the University of Papua New Guinea (PNG);
- Kino Feo, consultant and businessman and;
- Janelle Wai, policewoman and experienced fraud investigator.

21 March 2013: Boycott ends prematurely after SRC president flies to Port Moresby for behind door meeting with the government.

May 2013: Sevua report completed and submitted. Contents not made public.

12 December 2013: Unitech Council unanimously endorses Vice Chancellor's return, noting that Sevua report finds out that the VC did nothing wrong. However sets a late March 2014c deadline for Vice Chancellor to return to PNG and resume his post.

Late December 2013: Minister David Arore says Sevua report will be released after holidays, terminate Schram without authority.

February 2014: Minister Arore says decision will be made in two weeks whether or not to release the Sevua report.

February 2014: Prime Minister Peter O'Neil sacks Minister Arore for incompetence.

March 2014: Students begin boycott to force government to follow principles of truth and justice and let the innocent Vice Chancellor resume his job.

In sum, we are defending the legal principle that in a state of law, no one can be fired without a reason, or deported from the country while having a valid work visa and employment contract. If these principles cannot be upheld, it becomes very difficult to manage an organization with an international work force. We defend them for the good of Papua New Guinea.

SRC STANCE

No Schram, No School.

APPEAL

We the students of this great institution appeal to the provincial government; Governors, MPs, parents, sponsors and other stakeholders for their hands in supporting us to fight a battle that have last for so many years. We believe that the truth will always take its course and hence we will not give up until we see victory at hand.

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Compilers note:

When more information becomes available, newer editions will be released.