

Bougainville may be the world's next country

13th December, 2019



The process is under way for the possible introduction of a new member to the global family of nations. The people of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea have voted overwhelmingly for independence in a referendum. The vote was held on the island between the 23rd of November and the 7th of December. The vote was a non-binding referendum, which means the Papua New Guinea (PNG) government does not have to pass it into law. However, PNG gave the vote its full consent and should now consider acting on the result of the vote. Voters had two options - greater autonomy or full independence. Over 181,000 people cast their ballot and nearly 98 per cent of them voted in favour of independence.

Bougainville is the largest island of the PNG chain of islands. It is geographically part of the Solomon Islands archipelago and used to be known as the Republic of North Solomons. It has a population of around 250,000 people. Bougainvilleans started a fight to achieve their independence in the 1960s. This was a decade before Papua New Guinea was granted independence in 1975. Bougainville was declared part of PNG in 1976. This sparked the Bougainville Civil War between 1988–1998. Over 20,000 people lost their lives in that conflict. The Prime Minister of PNG said: "I ask for some time for the people of PNG to absorb and process this result." He said his government was committed to adhering to the poll's result.

Sources: abc.net.au / bbc.com / smh.com.au

Writing

More regions in the world should get their independence. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

process / member / global family / nations / independence / referendum / vote / law / chain / archipelago / population / decade / civil war / conflict / government / result

True / False

- a) The article said Bougainville would become a country next year. T / F
- b) The referendum was two days long. T / F
- c) PNG must now pass Bougainville's independence into law. T / F
- d) In the vote, 98% of people voted for independence. T / F
- e) Bougainville is part of the Solomon Islands archipelago. T / F
- f) Bougainville has a population of a quarter of a million people. T / F
- g) Bougainville suffered a decade-long civil war. T / F
- h) PNG's prime minister said he would stick to the result of the poll. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. under way | a. island chain |
| 2. held | b. think about |
| 3. consent | c. ignited |
| 4. consider | d. conducted |
| 5. ballot | e. sticking |
| 6. part | f. given |
| 7. archipelago | g. in progress |
| 8. granted | h. vote |
| 9. sparked | i. region |
| 10. adhering | j. agreement |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about Papua New Guinea?
- b) What do you know about your country's independence?
- c) What regions of the world should get their independence?
- d) Why do countries not want to grant independence to their regions?
- e) Can the world have too many countries?
- f) Would independence for more regions bring peace?
- g) Should Papua New Guinea give independence to Bougainville?
- h) What advice do you have for the people of Bougainville?

Phrase Match

1. The process is under
 2. voted overwhelmingly for
 3. pass it into
 4. Over 181,000 people cast
 5. 98 per cent of them voted in
 6. part of the Solomon Islands
 7. Papua New Guinea was
 8. This sparked the
 9. 20,000 people lost
 10. committed to adhering to the
- a. granted independence
 - b. favour
 - c. poll's result
 - d. their lives
 - e. independence
 - f. Bougainville Civil War
 - g. way
 - h. law
 - i. archipelago
 - j. their ballot

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you know about Bougainville?
- c) What regions are fighting for independence today?
- d) What are the reasons for not giving a region independence?
- e) Which is better - independence or greater autonomy?
- f) Would you fight for independence?
- g) What was the biggest struggle for independence in history?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Bougainville's leader?

Spelling

1. voted mnhlwryloveeg for independence
2. a non-binding reeuefndrm
3. PNG gave the vote its full cntseon
4. greater motyouan
5. Over 181,000 people cast their ollbat
6. voted in vafuro of independence
7. part of the Solomon Islands erioaglpcha
8. This was a edcade before
9. Bougainville was aeldcedr part of PNG
10. sroabb and process this result
11. He said his government was mdemcotti
12. agdehinr to the poll's result

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. j	4. b	5. h
6. i	7. a	8. f	9. c	10. e

Role Play

Role A – Passports

You think issuing passports is the most important part of being a country. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a seat at the UN, national sports teams or border control.

Role B – A Seat At The UN

You think a seat at the UN is the most important part of being a country. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): passports, national sports teams or border control.

Role C – National Sports Teams

You think having national sports teams is the most important part of being a country. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a seat at the UN, passports or border control.

Role D – Border Control

You think border control is the most important part of being a country. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a seat at the UN, national sports teams or passports.

Speaking –

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things about nationhood at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- national anthem
- border control
- international sports teams
- a seat at the UN
- passports
- currency
- foreign policy
- armed forces

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.