

Caretaker Malvatumauri President blames 'foreign cultures' for high crime rates

By Godwin Ligo

THE CARETAKER PRESIDENT of the Malvatumauri Council of Chiefs, Chief Senimao Tirsupe, has blamed 'imported foreign cultures' into Vanuatu for the high crime rates.

"If we weigh many foreign cultures that have been allowed into Vanuatu since independence in 1980, we will find that they probably contribute to the majority of social problems arising throughout Port Vila and Vanuatu today," said chief Tirsupe.

"This includes movies, pornographic materials, access to internet, Facebook and more.

"While parents make an effort to teach their children good cultural and Christian principles, to a certain extent the young people are faced with daily temptations of these foreign cultures as soon as

they step out of their homes.

"In fact, they come directly to face with these.

"For example, shops after shops are granted licenses to sell alcoholic beverages right at the doorsteps of homes either in towns and or in the villages. They are confronted also with internet, cigarettes, marijuana, night clubs and bars."

Chief Tirsupe said Vanuatu's cultural values are diminishing in the name of development and the so-called modern ways of life.

He said the custom chiefs are doing their outmost best to convey the importance of walking in Christian principles and adopting to good cultural ways of life, but these are not easy because modernization is overtaking and almost overriding Christianity and Vanuatu and Melanesian cultural values, not only in Vanuatu but across Melanesia.

"It us up to the leaders of this nation as to do what we believe is best for the country and the people," said chief Tirsupe.

"This is the same in all spheres of life, including physical and spiritual life of the people and the nation of Vanuatu."

He also blames freedom of movement, saying the Government and all authorities must find ways to control the influx of their people into towns.

"We have to question why crimes such as murder, incest, rape, theft, marijuana usage and more are taking place in Port Vila and Vanuatu are happening everywhere and all the time.

"We also have to ask why such crimes cannot be reduced or eliminated.

"We also have to ask what are the government solutions to such problems in our

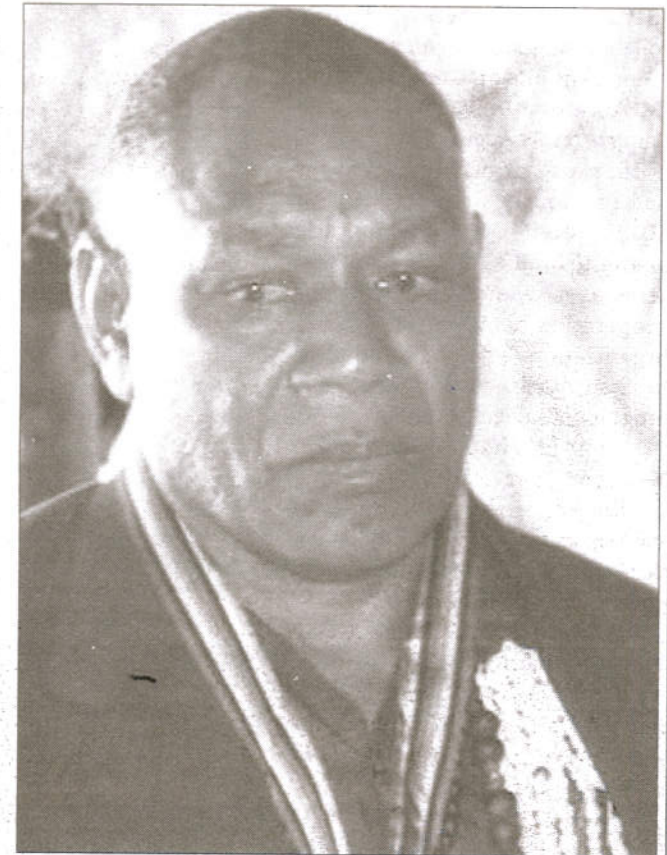
country today," he said.

Chief Tirsupe believes the government, the churches, chiefs along with the women and youth leaders must spend time to identify the cores of the problems, in order to come up with short and long-term solutions.

"If the leaders of this nation have to come out with hard decisions and answers that will lead to reducing and eliminating crimes in Vanuatu today, then it must be done before it is too late.

"Already, the foreign influences are damaging and destroying family relationships, the lives of our children, and risks to the safety of every communities at large.

"We all want to live in peace and harmony, and enjoy good fruits of our independence while maintaining strong Christian and cultural principles," he concluded.



Chief Tirsupe