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President amends decree on commercial fishing vessels to prevent COVID-19 risk

By *Bill Jaynes*
 The Kaselehlie Press

April 3, 2020

Federated States of Micronesia—FSM President David Panuelo today decreed new actions aimed at lowering the risk of introduction of COVID-19 to the FSM by fishing activities conducted within the FSM’s exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The decree specifies new temporary rules for transshipment of fish by commercial fishing vessels.

The decree additionally bans the public from approaching any commercial fishing vessel. It prohibits both the public and commercial fishers from bartering for, trading, or locally selling fish caught on commercial fishing vessels. The press release on the decree points out that any person who violates the decree, whether they are a commercial fisherman or a local resident is subject to the penalties of Title 11, Chapter 8, Section 803. That section says, “Any person who, during a state of emergency, fails to comply with restrictions imposed by proclamation of the President under section 802 of this chapter (emergency declarations) commits a crime, and upon conviction, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than five years.”



For a reason that is not explained in the decree, purse seine vessels will still be allowed to transship in Kosrae. Nothing precludes FSM flagged vessels from also transshipping in Kosrae but if they did so, they would also still have to return to

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FSM to pay \$9.5 million to Pacific International in Chuuk road construction case

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By *Bill Jaynes*
 The Kaselehlie Press

April 6, 2020

FSM--Arbitrators have directed the government of the Federated States of Micronesia to pay Pacific International, Incorporated (PII), approximately \$9.5 million saying that the FSM terminated its contract with them for the enormously expensive Chuuk road project for “convenience”.

On November 17, 2013, the FSM Project Management Unit terminated the contract with PII claiming that PII had defaulted on the contract. On December 16, 2014 PII filed suit at the FSM Supreme Court claiming over \$14 million in damages against the FSM.

After earlier efforts at mediation, the FSM refused to pay so the court action continued. More than a year ago, the FSM Supreme Court granted PII’s request for the court to order binding arbitration.

A panel of three arbitrators from the International Centre for Dispute Resolution based in Houston, TX determined that the FSM had in fact canceled the contract for convenience. They ordered the FSM to pay PII \$8.5 million, an amount they were due at contract termination adjust to include interest. It added nearly a million dollars more in interest from May 24, 2014.

“This award is final and legally binding on the parties and immediately enforceable by its terms in any court of appropriate jurisdiction,” said the arbitration award.

Jerry Kramer, CEO of PII told the Marshall Island Journal that even though they didn’t get all they originally asked for he considers the award to be a vindication of PII. “We were right,” he told the Marshall Islands Journal. “PII didn’t do anything wrong.”

Arbitrators ordered the FSM to pay the award within thirty days of the final award judgment which was March 20, 2020.

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Private Japanese citizens in Pohnpei donate to the FSM fight against COVID-19

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

March 25, 2020

Palikir, Pohnpei, FSM

This morning representatives of the Pohnpei Japan Club presented a donation of \$1000 from the Japanese community in Pohnpei to Dr. Livingstone Taulung, Secretary of Health and Social Affairs. "Pohnpei Japan Club decided to collect the donations from among Japanese people living in Pohnpei to make their contribution to the FSM's fight against COVID-19," said Japanese Ambassador to the FSM, Sobahshima Hidenobu.



In addition to the Ambassador, Koji Akinaga, Pohnpei Japan Club Vice President represented the club and presented the check to FSM Vice President Yosiwo George. They challenged other groups to do the same. Both the Vice President and Secretary Taulung thanked the members of the club for the gesture.

Ambassador Sobahshima told the Vice President that the Embassy of Japan received the request last month for assistance from the government of the Federated States of Micronesia and has conveyed that request to the government of Japan immediately. He said that it may take some time before his government makes a decision on that request. He said that in the meantime Japan decided to contribute 15.5 billion Yen (approximately \$143.5 million) to relevant international organizations for their work against COVID-19, including 5.5 billion Yen, or 46 million US dollars to the World Health Organization.

"The amount may be smaller than you have expected," the Ambassador said of the donation from the Pohnpei Japan Club. "But I hope you could appreciate the gesture of the Japanese community to express their solidarity to the FSM who kindly hosts them during this difficult time in the FSM. I am proud of this gesture and I am proud of the people who have donated. I hope that this donation, although not big, will be efficiently utilized for the FSM to fight COVID-19."

Swearing in of new Executive Director for Pohnpei Housing Authority:

Enginkehlap news
Office of the Governor, Pohnpei State

A swearing-in ceremony was held on Monday, March 23, 2020 for the new Executive Director of Pohnpei State Housing Authority, Mr. Onlino Lawrence, at the Pohnpei State Housing Authority Office. The ceremony was attended by members of the 10th Pohnpei State Legislature, Kitti traditional leadership, housing authority staff and Public Affairs Office staff.

This was the first government ceremony since the Governor's issuance of the Public Gathering Advisory and in full compliance, attendees maintained social distancing of 3 to 6 feet. Governor Oliver congratulated the new Executive Director and asked that he and his staff look at new ways to help the people of Pohnpei including asurvey to help determine the housing needs of Pohnpei.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

KPress is looking for dedicated correspondents in Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae. We will pay you for articles and collection of ads. Contact us at the numbers or email above.

FSM CITIZENS: Reminder—You are prohibited from outbound travel to COVID-19 affected jurisdictions; FYI—Guam is currently mandating a 14-day quarantine at your personal expense

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On March 30th, 2020, the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) became aware of a newly declared mandatory 14-day quarantine for all travelers into the U.S. Territory of Guam, including citizens from the FSM.

FSM Citizens are reminded that both the original Public Health Emergency Declaration signed on January 31st, 2020, and the subsequent National Declaration Placing the Entire FSM Under a State of National Public Health Emergency in Connection with the COVID-19 Pandemic signed on March 14th, 2020, prohibits FSM citizen travel outbound to COVID-19 affected jurisdictions

until such time that a determination is made that the COVID-19 Pandemic has been contained. Exemptions are made for a traveler returning to a place of employment, returning to a place of education, acquiring urgently needed medical services, or attending to a unique family crisis such as the death of a loved one.

Citizens wishing to remind themselves of the content within the President's declaration may find it here: https://gov.fm/files/Declaration_as_of_March_14.pdf

Guam is a COVID-19 affected jurisdiction, and by extension FSM citizens are prohibited from traveling there unless they meet the criteria

described above.

Per the terms of Guam's mandatory quarantine procedures, all travelers entering Guam must stay at a Government-designated quarantine facility for a minimum of 14 days. The Government of Guam will charge travelers for services rendered, such as the cost of the hotel and transportation to and from these designated facilities. The FSM National Government continues to discourage travel, recommends all citizens practice social distancing, such as maintaining six feet distance from other individuals, and discourages large gatherings.



Compact Funding to Help Build and Repair COVID-19 Quarantine Facilities in the FSM

\$416,918 Infrastructure Maintenance Funding for Chuuk State

Office of the Assistant Secretary Insular and International Affairs

WASHINGTON—Today, U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, Douglas W. Domenech announced the release of Compact of Free Association financial assistance to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). These emergency funds will help support and strengthen hospital and quarantine infrastructure in Chuuk State as the FSM works to contain the spread and impacts of the global coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

“We have redirected \$416,918 in prior-year Compact Infrastructure Maintenance Fund assistance to strengthen FSM's efforts in preparing for this global pandemic,” said Assistant Secretary Domenech. “At the direction of Interior Secretary David Bernhardt, we are moving quickly and decisively to support the FSM, which is critical in these difficult times,” continued Domenech.

“The U.S. and the FSM members of the Joint Economic Management Committee (JEMCO) are in favor of this decision to direct Compact funds towards COVID-19 infrastructure maintenance,” said JEMCO Chairman and Office of Insular Affairs Director Nikolao Pula. “We applaud officials, health care workers, and all at the national and state levels as they work

to protect lives in the FSM.”

“The United States and the FSM share a special and unique relationship,” said U.S. Ambassador to the FSM Carmen G. Cantor. “The United States government is committed to working with the FSM to advance their response capabilities to this global pandemic.”

Additional Compact funding requests are being prepared for review by the Office of Insular Affairs as the FSM finalizes its COVID-19 Preparation and Response Plan. The plan will then be submitted to the United States Government to ensure coordination of efforts.

For more information about the work of the Office of Insular Affairs, visit <http://www.doi.gov/oia> or follow on Twitter @ASIADomenech.

The Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, and the Office of Insular Affairs carry out the Secretary of the Interior's responsibilities for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, OIA administers and oversees federal assistance under the Compacts of Free Association to the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

FSM President to provide teleconferencing equipment to state Governors to expand communications

State of Yap Department of Youth & Civic Affairs

Colonia, Yap- Governor Henry Falan of the State of Yap expressed his deep gratitude to FSM President David Panuelo for “all the assistance and support that your Administration has extended to your State of Yap in the midst of this pandemic crisis.” Dated March 26, 2020, the letter followed a meeting via phone conferencing the prior day between the two leaders.

The purpose of the meeting was “to discuss issues concerning Yap State's needs during this crisis and for us to agree on ways to mutually move forward as a nation inclusive of the other three states.”

The outcomes of the meeting included the agreement for Yap to join its sister states, Chuuk and Pohnpei, in prohibiting the disembarkation of aircraft passengers until further notice. In a press release issued by the president's office after the meeting, it was also announced that, “while aircraft may continue to arrive in Yap State for the delivery of cargo—and such continued cargo services are encouraged and welcomed—no individual regardless of origin may disembark from aircraft into the FSM States of Yap (as well as Chuuk and Pohnpei).”

Further, it was confirmed by President Panuelo during the meeting that, “in an effort to ensure the continued supply of essential goods and services, the 14-day delay for cargo and tanker vessels prior to entering the Nation is now rescinded. In lieu of the 14-day delay requirement,

shipping lines must comply with extra health precaution measures supervised by the FSM State Departments of Health and Port Authorities. Fishing vessels licensed in the FSM and arriving into the Nation's borders are still subject to their requirements, including 14-day quarantines.”

Governor Falan commended the president for his steadfastness in holding the nation together “in this very difficult time of combating this novel pandemic, most especially for taking the time to communicate with the four governors of the states to ensure that we all are in this combat together and must pull our efforts and resources concertedly.”

During the meeting, President Panuelo offered additional help to Yap State and the other states in setting up their own teleconferencing capability for use during the covid-19 crisis. The governor recommended using his conference room so that the president and the governors can “videoconference regularly” while also allowing the Health Crisis Task Forces in all four states to use the equipment to coordinate their efforts while travel is temporarily on hold.

Following the meeting, Carlson D. Apis, FSM Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Communication & Infrastructure, communicated via email with Leo Falcam Jr., Chief of Staff to President Panuelo, and Francis Itimai, Chief of Staff to Governor Falan, to put the plan in place for the immediate setup of the teleconferencing equipment.

Governor and Lt. Governor meet with Social Security and lending institutions on COVID-19 response

On Wednesday March 26, 2020 Governor Oliver and Lieutenant Governor Perman met with representatives from Pohnpei's banking and lending institutions and the FSM Social Security Administration. Each representative shared their institution's current measures being implemented in response to COVID-19 including limited services, decreased hours and loan deferments.



Measures being taken are also in accordance with Pohnpei State's Public Gathering Advisory issued on March 16, 2020.

Bank of FSM indicated that they will likely be offering a loan deferment program soon. Bank of Guam is already offering loan deferments for up to 3 months, Mesenieng Credit Union is offering a 30 day loan deferment and FSM Development Bank will be offering deferments to businesses and other customers directly affected by the current COVID-19 crisis. The FSM Social Security Administration informed the Governor and representatives that approximately 300 people will be

receiving their social security checks on Monday, March 30, 2020. SSA is taking measures to comply with the State's Public Gathering Advisory including allowing only three people at a time in their office to receive checks, setting up a tent outside and encouraging the elderly to send their authorized representatives to pick up their check. Given that the elderly population and people with co-morbidities are most vulnerable to the virus, the public is asked to please assist in sharing this information as widely as possible to help safeguard our elderly population. Please note: If you are making loan payments by allotment, it is your responsibility to stop the allotment with your employer, not the bank.

...FSM Transshipment

Continued from front page

their Pohnpei bases for supplies. All other transshipment will be required under yet to be released regulations by NORMA (National Oceanic Resource Management Agency) to transship their fish for market at sea in a designated area in territorial waters beyond the three nautical miles from baselines.

Longline fishing vessels are still allowed to come to port for transshipment purposes subject to additional measures established by NORMA for the avoidance of COVID-19 and also only if they follow additional guidelines established in the decree. Longline vessels that transship at port must have had no contact at any time prior to the transshipment. They must have observed the 14 days quarantine

at sea and no crewmembers will be allowed to disembark at port. The 14 day quarantine is counted from the date of last contact with other humans.

The decree says that domestic fishing vessels are allowed to call port in the FSM States for repair, maintenance and provisioning purposes but all of that must be accomplished at anchorage areas and not at the docks. Domestic fishing vessels are vessels that are flagged in the FSM or that have a base of operation anywhere in the FSM States.

For vessels that are required to transship at sea, Immigration and Customs clearance procedures will be conducted electronically.

Vessels are now required to give 72 hours advanced notice of transshipment to the FSM Department of Justice and to NORMA. Information they must submit in advance must include the body temperatures of each crewmembers taken at 24 hour intervals prior to transshipment.

Governor meets with Mayor of Kolonia town to discuss COVID-19 response efforts

On Thursday, March 26, 2020, Mayor of Kolonia Town Government, TH Peterigo paid a visit to Governor Oliver. The purpose of the visit was to align Kolonia Town Government's actions with the state. Governor Oliver gave a brief overview of Pohnpei's COVID-19 response efforts with input from acting Director of Public Safety, Mr. Patrick Carl, Public Affairs Officer, Mr. Heinrich Stevenson and Local Government Liaison, Ms. Suanrita Ladore.

Mayor Jacob expressed his gratitude to the Governor and his staff and informed them that the Kolonia Town Government would be meeting the following day to prepare a contingency plan that is in alignment with the State's COVID-19 response efforts. Governor Oliver thanked the Mayor and Kolonia Town Government for their cooperation and support.



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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

NAME OF PROJECT – FSM Adaptation Fund Project

Assignment Title: Four years External Financial Annual Audit Services of the Adaptation Fund Project: Enhancing the Climate Change Resilience of Vulnerable Island Communities in FSM

The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has received financing in the amount of nine million United States Dollars (\$9,000,000) from the Adaptation Fund (AF) Board to support the climate change project “Enhancing the Climate Change Resilience of Vulnerable Island Communities in FSM”.

As agreed between the Government of FSM and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the project’s Executing Agency (the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM)), is required to engage an external auditor to conduct an independent financial audit of the funds disbursed to the Government of FSM based on International Financial Reports Standards (IFRS).

Objective of the Consultancy Assignment

The overall objective of this engagement is to allow the auditor to express a professional opinion on the financial position of the project’s annual (Calendar Year) financial expenditures for the years 2019 to 2023 focusing on the eligibility of expenditures and to report on the adequacy of the internal controls as detailed in the Terms of Reference for the consultancy.

Brief Scope of Audit:

- The selected auditor will engaged on a four year term contract. The selected auditor will ensure that:
- All project funds have been used in accordance with the conditions of the signed agreements for the project, with due attention to economy and efficiency, and only for the purposes for which the financing was provided.
- Goods, Works and Services financed by the project have been procured in accordance with the signed agreements for the project.
- Executing agency have kept all necessary supporting documents, records, and accounts in respect of all project ventures including expenditures reported via Designated Accounts.
- Where Designated Accounts have been used, they should be maintained in accordance with the provisions of the project’s signed agreements.
- The project accounts have been prepared in accordance with financial reporting provisions outlined in the project’s signed agreements and is consistently applied, and give a true and fair view of the financial situation of the project at the end of each financial year period and of the resources and expenditures for the year ended on that date.

Request of Expression of Interest (EOI)

The FSM Department of Environment Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM) now invites eligible and qualified auditing firms to express interest indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (CV, Brochures, Description of similar assignments, experience in similar assignments and availability of appropriate skills set etc.).

The shortlisting criteria are:

- Interested bidders must be certified auditors with extensive experience in auditing work under the International Standards on Auditing (ISA) and other accepted international practices in audits for public organizations, inter-governmental and regional organizations.
- Have any other relevant audit experience of either large public or private organizations of high reputation with reporting requirements of a similar magnitude and intensity.
- Include references of relevant previous or current audit clients.
- Include CVs of key personnel to be used on the audit

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the least-cost-based selection method set out in the FSM Finance Management Regulations.

Expressions of interest includes a Cover Letter and a detailed Resume and must be submitted by **Friday, April 17, 2020** by e-mail to the following address: **richard.moufa@gov.fm**

To obtain a copy of the Terms of Reference for the assignment or to submit questions or to obtain further information, please contact the person below or visit the following website:

decem.gov.fm

Mr. Richard Moufa

Adaptation Fund

Project Management Unit

Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management

FSM National Government

Email: richard.moufa@gov.fm

Telephone: (691)320-8814/8815

**Interior Provides
\$858,924 to procure
GeneXpert COVID-19
testing kits and machine
for the U.S. Pacific
Territories and Freely
Associated States**

*Office of the Assistant Secretary
Insular and International Affairs*

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, Douglas W. Domenech announced \$858,924 in Technical Assistance Program (TAP) emergency grant funding to the Pacific Island Health Officers Association (PIHOA) to procure GeneXpert testing kits and a machine for the U.S. Pacific territories and freely associated states so that they may now conduct on-island testing during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Funding will be used to purchase newly developed COVID-19 testing kits for American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands as well as the freely associated states of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. Funds will also be used to purchase one GeneXpert back-up machine for the region.

“Secretary Bernhardt and I are pleased to support the purchase of testing materials and the machine in facilitating island health officials to conduct on-site testing for COVID-19 cases during this pandemic,” said Assistant Secretary Domenech. “Travel restrictions imposed to protect island communities from COVID-19 have delayed and restricted options for centralized lab testing services, but recent Emergency Use Authorization announcements made by President Trump and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration have opened other opportunities for on-site testing. This is critical for island area health officials as they work to protect their communities,” concluded Domenech.

The PIHOA has confirmed that all health departments in the Pacific territories and the freely associated states currently have the testing equipment, lab infrastructure, skills, and practical knowledge base to set up and run localized COVID-19 testing using the GeneXpert platform as they currently run similar tests on the same platform for other diseases, such as tuberculosis. PIHOA is working with regional and local health authorities to assess needs and will conduct a regional bulk procurement of newly developed COVID-19 testing kits and a back-up GeneXpert machine for the island areas.

JICA Alumni Association (JAA) promotes waste segregation to Talent Search Program Seniors

JICA Micronesia

The Pohnpei Chapter of the JICA Alumnae Association hosted another Waste Survey for Educational Talent Search Program seniors on February 8, 2020 at the Pohnpei Campus grounds from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The activity brought together approximately 80 participants (students, JICA Volunteers, JICA Representatives, JAA Officers, and TSP Representatives) to take part

in a waste collection activity that started from Pohnpei Campus entrance to around the campus and on to Kolonia Elementary School grounds, Taini road, Small Business grounds, Pohnpei State Government grounds, and back to the Pohnpei Campus grounds.

Mr. Shinji Shibata, Resident Representative of the JICA Micronesia Office welcomed everyone and expressed his support to the JAA-Pohnpei Chapter



Grant contract signing ceremony for the project for construction of new recycling center, Pohnpei State

On March 19, 2020, the signing ceremony for the Project for Construction of New Recycling Center, Pohnpei State was held at the Embassy of Japan to provide Environmental Protection Agency, Pohnpei State with the funds up to US\$87,609 under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects by the Government of Japan.

its continues support for the people of Pohnpei.

Ambassador Sobashima Hidenobu stated that Japan decided to finance the construction of a new recycling center, as the current recycling center was not collecting a large number of cans properly, causing traffic and environmental problems and hoped that the new recycling center would improve the traffic and environmental problems and nurture the culture against littering.

Mr. Henry Susana, Executive Officer of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) expressed his appreciation for the cooperation from the Embassy of Japan and a JICA volunteer and looked forward to the completion of the project.

The ceremony was also attended by Mr. Stuart Penias, Secretary Board of Directors of EPA, Ms. Shirley Ligohr, Overseas Development Assistance, Mr. Patrick Pedrus, Public Information Officer, Mr. Brad Soram, Specialist, EPA, and Mr. Josep Victor, Specialist, EPA, ; all from Pohnpei State Government, as well as Mr. Okiguchi Ryota, JICA Volunteer and members of the Embassy of Japan in the FSM.

This project will construct a new recycling center for efficient recycling activities, contributing to improved traffic and hygiene environment in Pohnpei State. The new recycling center will be able to collect and pressure 4 million additional cans compared to the current recycling center.

At the ceremony, the Hon. Feliciano Perman, Lieutenant Governor of Pohnpei State expressed his gratitude to Japan for



and the students, and encouraged everyone to take heed of waste. Likewise, the Director of the Talent Search Program, Mrs. Rita Hadley thanked everyone for coming and for the opportunity to engage students in the work to keep Pohnpei beautiful. Furthermore, Mrs. Masako Johnny-Boy, President of the Pohnpei Chapter of the JICA ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION thanked everyone for coming and added that the activity was made possible to promote cleanliness and cooperation among participants. The participants were divided into several groups and were led by a guide who handed out protective gloves, trash bags and a t-shirt with a JAA logo on it. After the collection of the various types of wastes, participants placed their trash bags on the ground and were engaged in a segregation activity. Participants separated what they collected and counted each type before weighing them in kg. A total of 60 trash bags were utilized, and out of that number 3 were analyzed for demonstration. JAA Officer Mr. Francisco Celestine conducted a presentation on the purpose of the survey in relation to segregation and proper disposal.

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Pohnpei Cultural Day – A photographic retrospective from happier days

An opinion by Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

March 31, 2020

Pohnpei—Due to the insidious threat of COVID-19 that has engulfed the world, official Pohnpei and FSM Cultural Day events were canceled this year. While it is vital that we all remain safe as the threat looms over the nation, one can't help but feel a sense of nostalgia at what was temporarily lost.

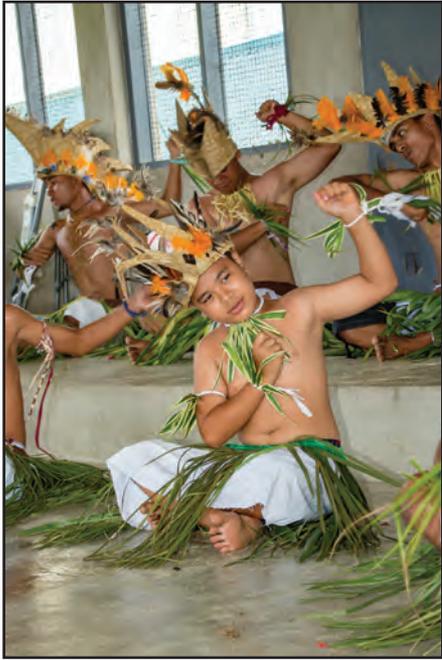
All too many people seem not to be taking the threat seriously and are stridently continuing to gather in large groups such as at church services, sakau markets, and in other places. With school canceled, many students are still assembling in large groups of their friends, roaming from place to place. People are still sharing betel nut and are still spitting in the streets. But it is vital to everyone that we ALL realize the seriousness of the threat and take directed precautions such as diligent hand washing. You may be young and healthy and you may think that you are invulnerable but not all of us are. To date 69,309 people have died from this terrible virus. Nearly 1.3 million people have been diagnosed with a certainty as having the disease but no one knows how many millions of people have either not yet showed symptoms who will eventually get the disease or who are carriers who will never display symptoms.

We just don't know, and perhaps, the not knowing is the scariest part of all. I have seen written opinions saying that we are perfectly safe since the government has shut down the borders. But we can't know that and to assume that is true is to throw caution to the wind like so much confetti.

If you don't care about yourself, please show care for the other people on your island by heeding what is for now only a strong recommendation from the government rather than a directive. Don't count on someone else. Do it yourself. There may yet come a day when the government will be forced to lock down by directive.

There WILL come a day when we can once again gather together, and that will be a joyful day. For now, we have our memories and anticipation of things that will one day come again. Meanwhile, enjoy some photos of happier days and smile.





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New digital project to connect FSM to global economic opportunities US\$30.8 million project will provide access for FSM to world-class broadband and digital services

The World Bank

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 27, 2020

– The World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors today approved a US\$30.8 million grant to improve the digital connectivity of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

The Digital Federated States of Micronesia project will support the rollout of terrestrial fiber infrastructure, connect outer islands to basic broadband services, establish the critical foundations for digital government services, and strengthen the legal and regulatory enabling environment for the digital economy to thrive in FSM.

One of the most remote and geographically-dispersed countries in the world, FSM is highly dependent on digital technologies to connect people across its 600 islands, which are scattered over 2.6 million square kilometers of ocean. To date, there has been no competition in the country’s telecommunications sector, and internet and mobile data prices remain high, services constrained and options available to users limited. The mobile penetration rate – of 21 percent – is the lowest in the Pacific region.

However, FSM’s National Government has recognized that reliable and cost-effective digital connectivity services are essential to deliver public services and create new income-generating opportunities for the country’s 112,000 citizens. At least 41 percent of FSM’s population struggles to meet basic needs and 10 percent live below the food poverty line. Digital connectivity is especially important for people living on outer islands where reliable communications and remote access to essential services is a critical lifeline.

The Hon. Eugene Amor, Secretary of the FSM Department of Finance & Administration, reinforced the nation’s commitment to telecommunication sector reform. “The FSM is deeply excited about this opportunity and we look forward to inviting operators to be part of the movement that the FSM is doing, and that is to get our citizens connected to the rest of the world.”

“Reliable and secure digital services are vital for everyday life in FSM – particularly for extremely vulnerable communities on the outer islands before, during and after disasters,” said Michel Kerf, Country Director for the World Bank in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. “We

know that typhoons are happening with increasing frequency and intensity due to the changing climate. We are seeing movements across the world restricted in efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19. These developments show just how critical digital connectivity is for FSM and the wider Pacific region.”

The Digital Federated States of Micronesia project builds on the existing World Bank FSM Connectivity Project that financed submarine fiber optic cable systems for FSM’s Yap State (mid-2018), Chuuk State (mid-2019) and the East Micronesia Cable system, which will connect Kosrae State, Kiribati and Nauru by mid-2021. The project will ensure fiber optic cabling is rolled out nationwide, delivering access to world-class broadband for the people of FSM. For the first time, remote outer islands communities will also be connected to basic broadband services using wireless technology.

“The true beneficiaries of this project will be the people of the FSM,” said the Hon. Carlson Apis, Secretary of the FSM Department of Transportation, Communication & Infrastructure. “As cheaper, faster, and more reliable internet will connect them to global resources that will significantly improve public

services such as health and education.”

However, the project is not just about infrastructure. It also includes support for legal and regulatory reforms that will bolster the rollout of digital government services and help to build trust in the digital economy. New policies will also be developed to ensure women can better access, engage and benefit from digital connectivity opportunities, and that online safety – particularly for women and underage girls – is given priority. Other priority focus areas will include data protection, privacy, cybercrime, cybersecurity and the regulation of harmful digital communications.

The Digital Federated States of Micronesia project is funded through the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank’s fund for the world’s most in-need countries. The World Bank works in partnership with 12 countries across the Pacific Islands and Papua New Guinea, supporting 83 projects totaling US\$1.8 billion in commitments in sectors including agriculture, aviation and transport, climate resilience and adaptation, economic policy, education and employment, energy, fisheries, health, rural development, telecommunications and tourism.

Chiefs of Airport Operation successfully complete Safety Management System (SMS) training

Pohnpei Port Authority (PPA) congratulate four of its management staffs Mr. Zorro Donre, Human Resources Manager, Mr. Baron Mendiola, Seaport Manager Mr. Bronson Sam FM&ID Manager and Mr. Jayson Ringlen, Chief of Airport Operation for successfully completing the Safety Management System (SMS) training workshop under the auspices of the esteemed Airports Council International (ACI) Global Training Program.

After numerous conversations to bring critical training for aerodrome professionals closer to our region and to make travel to and from training venues less expensive for all our airports, Guam International Airport Authority or GIAA established the Micronesia Aerodrome Regional Training Center (MARTC) last October to serve as a training venue here in Micronesian region. GIAA committed to host four (4) ACI courses in safety management in 2020. The first

training held January was for executive managers and the three (3) subsequent courses were slated for technical staff to participate.

The ACI Global Safety Network (GSN) Diploma Program is a six (6) certificate program designed to provide participants with a broad and detailed understanding of safety in all areas of airport operations to meet the needs of airside operators and safety managers in developing, implementing and operating effective Safety Management Systems (SMS) in line with standards from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

GIAA welcomed 6 staff from two off-island airports; four (4) from Pohnpei Port Authority and (2) from Palau International Airport awho joined 12 GIAA staff for the five-day intense training course.



U.S. Navy supports FSM COVID-19 preparations



Lt. Brad Garrigues, deployed with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5's Detail Yap, Henry Falan (right), Yap Governor, and William Domingo (center), Yap Civil Engineer, attend the grand opening of Tamilang Elementary School's new cafeteria. U.S. Navy Seabees are deployed to Yap to plan potential projects and strengthen and build relationships and partnerships. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Construction Electrician Kevin Appleby/Released)



Officer in Charge Lt. Brian Wood, NMCB5, testing the handwashing station with students from Awak Elementary School.

Embassy of the United States of America Kolonia

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 preparations in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the U.S. Navy is assisting in the construction of a quarantine facility in Pohnpei, which includes the installation of shower stalls, doors and windows. The facility will serve as a quarantine station, if needed for COVID-19 related cases.

In the state of Yap, The Seabees from the Naval Mobile Construction Five (NMCB5) are anticipating construction of 13 handwashing stations throughout the island. Lt. Bradford Garrigues described the enduring presence of the U.S. Seabees, who first arrived in 1969: "Over the last ten years, Seabees have only deployed for short visits and projects. But the people of Yap have a long memory and are quick to tell us stories of projects and community events that took place decades ago when they were children. Today, we are reestablishing a presence with our FSM partners in a way not seen since the 1990's. It is very exciting to play such a key role in establishing Detail Yap and continuing the Seabees-in-Yap story."

Currently, NMCB5 is also building a library/computer lab at the Sokehs Pah Elementary School. This building will serve 140 students from kindergarten to eighth grade. "The best part has been working around and getting to know the students of Sokehs Pah Elementary School. Every day when we pull in, we're welcomed with smiles and friendly

waves. The community has been extremely welcoming of us and everyone we interact with is happy to see what this once-old school building is becoming with our help," said Builder Second Class Petty Officer (BU2) Christian Carlson, NMCB5 Crew Leader.

In addition to the Sokehs Pah Elementary School library/computer lab, NMCB5 is also constructing handwashing stations throughout Pohnpei. This project is in partnership with UNICEF, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Pohnpei Environmental Protection Agency, Pohnpei Department of Health, Pohnpei Department of Education, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). "Nothing that I have ever done in my life compares to this deployment in Pohnpei. My hometown near Chicago is thousands of miles away, and I've been away from home for a long time now. But the people and communities of U, Kitt, and Sokehs have made me feel like I'm back home working in my cousins' back yards.

It's been a wonderful experience to work supporting kids looking to grow up and become leaders in these same communities, as well as the rest of the world. It's also just great fun, and Pohnpei is a beautiful place to be" said Officer in Charge Lt. Brian Wood, NMCB5.

The U.S. Navy is deployed across the Indo-Pacific region, conducting high-quality construction projects, in order to bolster U.S. and FSM bilateral relations, deter foreign aggression, and enable expeditionary logistics and naval power projection.

Royal Australian Navy celebrates 119th birthday

The Maritime Surveillance Adviser to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), LCDR David Perry RAN took time out from his visit schedule to the State of Yap to celebrate the Royal Australian Navy's 119th birthday on 01 March. The crew of FSS Palikir, LCDR Paulino Yangitesmal, US Defence Attaché to FSM, LTCOL Erin Richter as well as members of the US Navy Seabee Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 5 were in attendance for the birthday celebration held at the National Police base wharf in Yap.



Crew from the United States Coast Guard Cutter Kiska were also planning to attend but the vessel was required to depart early to commence SAR activities for a local fisherman and his son reported missing off Chuuk. On completion of the birthday celebrations FSS Palikir also departed for SAR duties off Chuuk.

Whilst in Yap LCDR Perry met with the LT Governor, HON Jesse Salalu and the assembled Legislature to provide a brief on the Pacific Maritime Security Program

as well as details of the two new Guardian class Patrol Boats that will be gifted to FSM in 2022. Briefs were also provided to the traditional Chiefs of Yap during meetings with the Council of Tamol (Yap Outer Island traditional Chiefs) and the Council of Pilung (Yap outer islands traditional Chiefs).

On completion of the formal meetings LCDR Perry joined the Governor, LT Governor, Traditional Chiefs and other dignitaries at the traditional Yap Day celebrations. This celebration is held annually on the 1st of March and is recognised as one of the worlds leading traditional cultural festivals.

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Message from FSM President

My fellow Micronesians: Through peace, friendship, cooperation, & love in our common humanity we will emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic as a stronger nation & a stronger world

FSM Information Services Message from the President

My fellow Micronesians, Mogethin, Ran annim, Len wo, and Kaselehlie.

As I near the end of my 14-day quarantine period and reflect upon today being the two-month anniversary of our original Public Health Emergency Declaration on January 31st, and as our Nation witnesses ever-changing daily norms at home and abroad, it strikes me as appropriate that we review where our canoe is today and where we imagine our canoe might be going in the near future over the course of these challenging times during this COVID-19 coronavirus Pandemic.

Let us firstly review our accomplishments immediately followed by our intentions, for the former are many and the latter are plentiful still. As of today, March 31st 2020, the Federated States of Micronesia remains COVID-19 free. Nor do we have any Persons Under Investigation at present. This is at least partly the result of dedicated stewardship across all levels of our society, from the Executive and Legislative Branches of the National Government to the respective State Governments and even at the municipal level. In particular, our Department of Health & Social Affairs and the FSM COVID-19 Task Force, along with the respective State Departments of Health & State COVID-19 Task Forces, have shown exemplary professionalism and a patriotic sense of duty in carrying out their solemn mission to protect the health and wellbeing of our Nation's citizens and residents.

Our collective Task Forces have been working in coordination and around the clock to ensure our Nation's safety. In the coming weeks, I look forward to illuminating you all on what this looks like in terms of financial support from our friends, allies, and development partners. In the meantime, I have consented to our States' requests to largely prohibit the disembarkation of aircraft passengers from international commercial carriers until additional quarantine facilities and isolation facilities are adequately developed.

Further, I am proud to tell you that I

have very reliable information that in the coming weeks our Nation will acquire the capacity to test for COVID-19 within our Nation's borders. I have demanded this, and we are committed to taking every action necessary to ensure its occurrence.

I recognize and appreciate that there are some who would seek to criticize the efforts of our travel restriction and quarantine processes. I would suggest to those critics to be mindful that every expert was once a beginner, and that if we measure success as the prevention of COVID-19 in reaching our shores, and the development of contingency plans for its arrival, that we have met, and continue to meet, these metrics. Pessimism, like misery, is fond of company—but it wins no friends just as it wins no battles. Our collective leadership across the Nation is committed to winning this battle against COVID-19 for you, your family, and your country. But we cannot do it alone: we need you to join us.

Your Government, far from being a single entity that is separate from you, is all around you—for we are you, just as you are us. We are your brothers, your sisters, and your neighbors. So too, then, do we need you just as you need us. I call upon your continued participation in endeavors such as social distancing and superior hygiene practices to ensure our Nation's long-term success against the COVID-19 Pandemic. Wash your hands; avoid large social gatherings; and, above all, maintain your Micronesian sense of empathy and compassion for your fellows. You are I as I am you. To be good, and to do good, is all we have to do.

I am a personal witness to our States' quarantine and health protection programming, as have been many members of my Cabinet and my personal staff. We are unanimous in our consensus that their diligent work and leadership are worthy of note and worthy of merit, and so I say: Thank You—Thank You So Much, to all of our State Governments and their many hardworking public servants for their vigilance during this uncertain time.

My fellow Micronesians—particularly those abroad,

I am increasingly aware that many of you in Guam, Hawaii, and the U.S. Mainland

are finding your life's circumstances altered by the COVID-19 Pandemic. In the interest of the collective good, I have requests for your behavior—but I also have news to share, and promises to make.

I call upon all of you abroad to heed the advice of your host Governments and their medical professionals as if their commentary were from the Bible itself. This coronavirus has no agenda; it is apolitical, and it is amoral, for it simply IS. Yet, the danger it poses—if not to you, then to a member of your family or your community—is real.

I have received reports of Micronesians continuing to gather in large groups in locales such as Guam, Portland, Utah, and Cincinnati, for feasts and for funerals. I urge you to consider abstaining from such gatherings until such a time when the COVID-19 Pandemic has been effectively contained. That day WILL come, but the longer we expose ourselves and our families the farther away that day will be. Have confidence in your host Governments and their medical professionals, and have confidence in following their advice, because the circulation of confidence is stronger than the circulation of money.

On that subject, if you are a citizen abroad and you have recently lost your job due to the COVID-19 Pandemic you should be informed that you are entitled to seek unemployment benefits. Further, on Friday March 27th, 2020, His Excellency Donald J. Trump signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, & Economic Security (CARES) Act. A key component of this Act is that individuals who filed U.S. taxes in Calendar Years 2018 and/or 2019, including citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, are eligible to receive up to \$1,200.00 depending on your income level. This would not happen immediately but sometime later during 2020. I encourage those of you in the United States to consult with your nearest Consulate or our Embassy to determine what benefits you might be able to access.

Earlier this morning I held a videoconference with our Chief of Staff & Cabinet to, among other matters, seek the latest information on the development of our economic recovery plan. In due course, we are presenting this economic recovery package to the leadership at Congress so that the Nation can jointly roll it out to our private sector and citizens who are affected throughout the course of this Pandemic. I intend to call a Special Session prior to the Regular Session in May to work with the leadership in Congress on this economic recovery package for our Nation.

I am aware that a number of you wish to return home but, through our travel restrictions, are unable to do so. While I will never sacrifice the safety of our citizens here at home, I give you my word that the Panuelo-George Administration is continuously seeking all available pathways towards ensuring that citizens wishing to return home may do so. This may take time as our States improve their quarantine and isolation facility capacity, but we are resolved to finding a solution.

My fellow Micronesians—as well as our Nation's friends, allies, and development partners,

It is okay to be humbled by this situation: lives are at risk, and many livelihoods are in turmoil. Undoubtedly we will all feel grief, feel sorrow, or feel scared—it's OKAY to feel how you are feeling during these challenging or uncertain times. This is to be expected. I would suggest to you that we be as upbeat and optimistic as we possibly can be, and remain vigilant in practicing measures that will minimize health and safety risks.

However!—I wish to share with you all a thing that I find to be rather beautiful. This Pandemic may be the first time for most of us alive today that we have a truly shared experience. For the first time in living memory, what is true and real for you is also true and real for me. What is true and real today for a Micronesian in Weno is as true and real for an American in New York, a Japanese in Tokyo, a Chinese in Beijing, or an Australian in Sydney.

If we allow it to, this Pandemic can bring us all a sense of sympathy and empathy for one another. We can emerge from this Pandemic not only as a stronger Nation, but as a stronger World—united against adversity, whether it take the form of a public health emergency, an injustice such as human trafficking, or an existential threat such as Climate Change.

My fellow Micronesians,

We cannot say what the future will bring—but know that our collective actions will shape it. I promise to continue faithfully serving as your Public Servant committed to the public good, committed to steering our canoe in calm and in storm until we reach our destination, to ensure that we overcome COVID-19 and, once overtaken, that we strike in solidarity against all other threats to human life.

I humbly ask that you all join me in taking actions today for our Nation's prosperity tomorrow.

Opinion Editorial

Building a community with a shared future for humanity by joining hands in combating COVID-19

by H.E. Huang Zheng, Chinese Ambassador to the FSM

The COVID-19 outbreak poses both a great threat to the life and health of the Chinese people and people around the world, as well as a formidable challenge to global public health security. In the face of this major test, with the personal commitment of Chinese President Xi Jinping and strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee, the Chinese people have put up a tenacious fight against the outbreak, which have resulted in a growing positive momentum in epidemic control across the country.

Together with the rest of the global community, the FSM Government and people and many overseas Chinese have made important contributions to the efforts in China in fighting the virus, to whom we'd like to extend our sincerest gratitude. Nowadays, there are no newly reported local cases in China, which vividly showcases the institutional strength of socialism with Chinese characteristics in pooling resources for major undertakings. Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the WHO, noted that China is setting a new standard for global public health security response. However, global situation deteriorates rapidly, with outbreaks simultaneously spotted in various countries and cities. The pandemic is even approaching Pacific island countries including the FSM, which is indeed worrying. At the moment, the global community needs to hurry up in carrying out international cooperation and conforming a strong synergy in combating the pandemic.

China has always been upholding the vision of building a community with a shared future for humanity initiated by Chinese President Xi Jinping. We attached high importance to international health cooperation from the very beginning and China's efforts have bought precious time and earned important experience for the whole world. In responding to its domestic outbreak, China has provided timely updates on the epidemic in a spirit of openness, transparency and accountability. We shared the genetic sequencing of the virus, worked closely with the WHO, neighboring countries and other countries concerned, and

invited international experts to join this fight. Now, the Knowledge Center for China's Experiences in response to COVID-19 (website: <https://covid19.alliancebrh.com/>) is officially online. All countries are welcome to share China's experiences.

China will continue to expand cooperation at bilateral and multilateral levels against the epidemic and keep up good communication with the WHO. We will explore transnational epidemic prevention and control by China and countries concerned by better coordinating competent departments responsible for health, quarantine, transportation and border control, promptly sharing epidemic updates, containment measures and research findings, and intensifying joint R&D of antiviral drugs and vaccines. China has donated 20 million US dollars to the WHO, in support of its global action in fighting the virus. China will also assist countries and regions undergoing a spread of infections as much as we can and live up to our role as a responsible major country.

The history of human civilization is a history of fighting diseases. COVID-19 is yet another sobering reminder that in this age of globalization, the future of countries are closely connected and building a community with a shared future for humanity is the right way to go. No country can spare itself from the global community in the face of major infectious diseases among other non-traditional security challenges. We must join hands in promoting global public health governance. China will put into practice its concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and respond to global public health challenges together with the international community collectively. Meanwhile, China firmly opposes any conduct of politicization or stigmatization of diseases. China supports the central role of the UN and WHO in responding to health emergencies and in improving the global public health governance system, where public health issues should be moved up on the international agenda, major international health projects be implemented, and a Silk Road of Health be taken forward.

Building a community with a shared future for humanity is the core of Xi Jinping Thoughts on Diplomacy, which has become a major guidance to China's major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, and been written into several UN resolutions. This vision is winning growing support from a large number of countries and is gradually becoming a global consensus shared by the international community. In response to this pandemic, the Chinese people have made important contributions to the world public health security with its own efforts and sacrifice, which depicts a vivid image of building a community with a shared future for humanity.

As Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasized, those communicating with hearts, their friendships last. In response to the ongoing global COVID-19 spread, China will neither flinch nor stand aside. Severe as the situation may be, confidence is most valuable; tough as the job may seem, hope lies ahead. The Chinese people will stand, unite, and communicate with hearts with the people of the FSM, on the basis of One China principle, mutual respect and common development. By standing together, we will surely seek greatness from difficulties, continue to deepen China-FSM Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and our Great Friendship and win the final success in combating the COVID-19 pandemic together.

ADB announces \$1.53 Million in grants to help Pacific combat COVID-19

1 April 2020

MANILA, PHILIPPINES — The Asian Development Bank (ADB) today announced \$1.53 million in grants from its Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund to help finance the response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Tuvalu.

The countries will receive the following grant amounts, which will enable them to kickstart their disaster response plans: \$470,000 for FSM; \$370,000 for the Marshall Islands; \$320,000 for Nauru; and \$370,000 for Tuvalu.

A state of emergency was declared in each of these countries—on 7 February in the Marshall Islands, on 14 March in FSM, on 16 March in Nauru, and on 20 March in Tuvalu. The scale of the emergency declared in each country is beyond the capacity of each government and health sector to meet the immediate expenses needed for adequate public health services.

“ADB will leverage off the good working relationships with the Ministries of Health and development partners in these countries to help address their immediate needs and coordinate the emergency response,” said ADB Health Specialist for the Pacific Ki Fung Kelvin Lam. “ADB will ensure these grants are swiftly disbursed to allow each country to respond as quickly as possible to their emergency situations.”

ADB's support will help alleviate the immediate financial, logistical, and other constraints to meet each country's immediate response needs and deliver appropriate medical services where required. Recognizing the unpredictable nature of the situation and complementing the donations of supplies by other partners, flexibility is required in the design of any support, along with close coordination with supporting partners, including the Government of Australia, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The \$1.53 million in grants is separate from the \$6.5 billion aid package for Asia and the Pacific that ADB announced on 18 March in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. ADB is engaging in discussions with all its developing member countries, including those in the Pacific, on how best to utilize this funding. Visit ADB's website to learn more about our ongoing response.

ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region.



Handover ceremony of the project for improving school environment for Rumuu Elementary School in Yap State

On March 3, 2020, a handover ceremony was held at Rumuu Elementary School of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects, by the Government of Japan for the Project for Improving School Environment for Rumuu Elementary School in Yap State amounting to up to US\$80,320.

The objectives of this project are to build security fences to protect the school's safety from nighttime and weekend intruders and vandalism and to build a drainage system to provide clean sanitary conditions and help prevent the spread of infectious diseases, and thus to create a safe, secure and healthy education environment.

The ceremony attended by Ambassador Sobashima Hidenobu and Ms. Kobayashi Rikako, Grassroots Grant Coordinator from the Japanese side, was also attended

by the Hon. Henry S. Falan, Governor and the Hon. Jesse J. Salalu, Lieutenant Governor of Yap State, Mr. Francis Itamai, Chief of Staff to the Governor, Mr. Arnold Yokbay Ken, Waab Area School Administrator, and Mr. Peter Deffmew, Infrastructure Coordinator, both from the Department of Education, Ms. Lydia Kadugyed, Head Teacher of Rumuu Elementary School, Ms. Nozaki Haruka, JICA volunteer and other teaching staff and students of Rumuu Elementary School.

At the ceremony, Governor Falan, expressed deep appreciation for the continuous support from the Government of Japan to Yap State in various fields, and told the students about the importance of having a pride and of keeping the school clean and free of graffiti and other damages.

Ambassador Sobashima stated that the completed security fences and the drainage facilities at Rumuu Elementary School improved the environment to provide a safe, secure and healthy education and hoped that the improved Rumuu Elementary School would develop to become a symbol of the friendship between Japan and the FSM.

Following the speeches, the students of Rumuu Elementary School sang a Japanese song in English, Japanese and Yapese. The ceremony was concluded by the ribbon cutting by Ambassador Sobashima, Governor Falan, and Lieutenant Governor Salalu.

Grant contract signing ceremony for the project for procuring woodchipper in the Awak Community, Pohnpei State

On March 18, 2020, the signing ceremony for the Project for Procuring Woodchipper in the Awak Community, Pohnpei State was held at the Embassy of Japan to provide Micronesia Conservation Trust with the funds up to US\$ 72,923 under the Grant Assistance for Grass roots Human Security Projects by the Government of Japan.

This project will provide a woodchipper and a small truck, and renovate the storage facility to ensure sufficient and consistent supply of woodchips to the farmers along the Awak River in U Municipality in order for them to operate their Dry Litter Piggery System appropriately, and to keep the Awak River and surrounding areas clean and safe and avoid the spread of infectious diseases which may be caused by excreta of pigs, contributing to the health of the people there.

The Dry Litter Piggery System is a method which can prevent contamination of drinking and washing water by excreta of pigs, and produce inexpensive manures by mixing excreta of pigs with woodchips sterilized in the mixing process.

At the ceremony, Mr. William Kostka, Executive Director of Micronesia Conservation Trust expressed his gratitude for the assistance from the Government of Japan, and stated that this project would ensure a clean and safe environment for the Awak Community.

Ambassador Sobashima Hidenobu stated that this project would benefit about 900 people living along the Awak River, and about 50 farmers who would receive the woodchips, and their family members, as they would avoid hygiene and health problems, and hoped that the project would proceed smoothly to contribute to the sustainable economic and social development of U Municipality, Pohnpei State, as well as the FSM.

The ceremony was attended by Mr. William Kostka, Executive Director of Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), Mr. Pakardy Ramirez, Vice President, and Mr. Loatis Seneres, Secretary and Treasurer, both from Awak Farmer's Association (AFA), Mr. Santiago Joab, Jr., Livelihoods Program Manager of MCT, Ms. Shirley Ann Pelep, Ms. Jo Lynne Mori, Senior Grants Officer of MCT, Ms. Eline Ramirez, Member of AFA, as well as members of the Embassy of Japan in the FSM.



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The College of the Marshall Islands is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. The College of the Marshall Islands requires pre-employment reference and background screening.

Extraordinary surveillance operation in the Pacific

The crews of FSS Palikir and FSS Independence have completed their participation in the recent Forum Fisheries Agencies Operation RAI BALANG 20. The operation is unprecedented in achieving maritime surveillance across 14.1 million square kilometres, including 108 sightings and 24 boardings, during the heightened global response to coronavirus.

The FFA coordinated air and surface surveillance assets from eight Pacific Island countries and four regional Defence partners for 12 days from 16-27 March, during which time international response to coronavirus was rapidly developing.

“Fishing doesn’t stop, so neither will our surveillance,” said Commander Robert Lewis, at the FFA’s Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre (RFSC) in Honiara. “Fisheries surveillance in the Pacific is imperative to ensure compliance by the fishing fleets, and deter any illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities. Fisheries have a direct benefit for Pacific island countries economies, and that makes surveillance even more important in these unprecedented times.”

The participants of Op Rai Balang were eight FFA member states: Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. This was supported by Quadrilateral defence partners: Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States, and the Pacific Maritime Surveillance Programme aircraft. Due to developing global travel restrictions and recalls of national surveillance assets, not all surveillance assets were utilised as planned.

Some of the aims of this Operation were:

- a. to detect, deter, report and/or apprehend potential illegal, unregulated or unreported (IUU) fishing activity;

- b. to enhance Pacific Island Countries involvement and participation in maritime fisheries surveillance and response operations; and
- c. to test the Niue Treaty Information System and processes supporting the enactment of specific provisions of the Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement through a planned series of table top exercises embedded within the Operation.

FSS Palikir departed Yap 02 March to conduct a Sea Air Rescue to locate a missing fisherman off Satawal Island, Chuuk State. Aircraft from the USCG in Guam as well as USCG Kiska and merchant vessels were also involved in the search. Unfortunately, the search was called off on 11 March with the missing fisherman unable to be located.

FSS Palikir departed Chuuk 15 March to commence OP RAI BALANG 20 and proceeded to conduct a patrol from Chuuk to Pohnpei, during the course of the patrol which lasted 156 hours the vessel covered 1560 nautical miles and investigated 19 merchant / fishing vessels.

FSS Independence departed Pohnpei 18 March to commence OP RAI BALANG 20 and conducted a patrol along the southern Exclusive Economic Zone towards Yap. Her patrol lasted 133 hours and covered 1337 nautical miles and investigated 4 merchant / fishing vessels.

The Commander of the Maritime Wing, Commander Steward Peter stated “I am very proud of the efforts of my crews to ensure the continued safety and economic viability of the FSM’s Exclusive Economic Zone particularly during the current COVID-19 crisis. We must ensure that foreign vessels understand that we will continue to patrol our waters and enforce our National laws”.

Responding to the COVID-19 challenge in the Pacific

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women, Australia.

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic represents a significant challenge for governments and communities across the Pacific. It is a challenge the Australian Government is committed to tackling with our Pacific partners, in the long-term interest of the stability, prosperity and resilience of our region.

Prime Minister Morrison told G20 leaders on 26 March that the Pacific needed to be a focus of international support. As the world’s economies, large and small, grapple with a pandemic that does not recognise national borders, co-operation will be critical.

Australia’s response will build on our existing Pacific Step-up, which has

strengthened our co-operation in helping to grow economies, build resilience, and enhance regional stability through our defence, policing and border security cooperation. We have never faced a challenge of the scale of COVID-19, but we will combat it together as a Pacific family.

The top priority for our governments right now is to keep infection rates as low as possible. As have many Pacific nations, Australia has closed its borders to non-citizens and non-residents, and we have banned Australians from travelling overseas. Pacific islanders transiting Australia to return home are exempt from our travel ban. We have also put in place enhanced health screening for passengers flying to the Pacific.

As a region, we need to enable the movement of a small number of

U.S. assistance to FSM on COVID-19

Embassy of the United States of America Kolonia

The U.S. government and Embassy Kolonia continues to work closely with the government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) to prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. Embassy Kolonia is closely coordinating with U.S. interagency partners including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), USAID, the Department of Interior and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM). The U.S. response in the Pacific Island countries is currently prioritizing the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—with whom we have a uniquely close relationship rooted in the Compacts of Free Association and longstanding public health programs.

Preparedness and Emergency Response: For many years, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has engaged with FSM to develop and continuously refine emergency response plans. Now the lead agency on U.S. COVID-19 response, CDC is in frequent communication with the FSM Department of Health to determine needs and provide guidance and assistance. CDC also leads a weekly call with health care professionals in the U.S. Pacific territories and the FSM. Currently, CDC is collaborating with WHO colleagues and others in the region to help the FSM adapt and apply their existing national response plans for the current COVID-19 threat. CDC is providing technical assistance and developing additional funding options to support established regional mechanisms for infectious disease response.

Testing: The United States through CDC

is supporting COVID-19 testing for the FSM. In addition to CDC’s laboratory in Atlanta, Hawaii’s state public health laboratory and the Guam Public Health Laboratory are now available to serve the COVID-19 testing needs of FSM. CDC is currently acting to supply additional test kits to support increased testing demands in Guam.

Supplemental Funding: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) received a share of the U.S. government’s recent \$8.3 billion supplemental funding package for coronavirus-related research and assistance. The following amounts have been made available to the Pacific territories and FAS to support their response to COVID-19: American Samoa (\$370,246.50), Guam (\$479,431.80), Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (\$369,765.90), RMI (\$367,754.40), FSM (\$420,402.60), and Palau (\$336,793.50).

Personal Protective Equipment: The FSM is eligible to receive allocations of personal protective equipment (PPE) from the strategic national stockpile managed by HHS/Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR).

Donor Coordination: U.S. Embassy Kolonia and U.S. interagency partners are coordinating with like-minded partners including [Australia, New Zealand and Japan], Pacific Islands Health Officers Association (PIHOA), and the World Health Organization (WHO) to address requests for personal protective equipment (PPE), medical supplies, testing, and technical assistance. The U.S. government has provided longstanding public health assistance to the people and government of FSM.

international experts, as well as essential supplies, medicines and food, across the Pacific. Australia is already taking steps, as a transit country to much of the region, to facilitate a humanitarian and essential services corridor to the Pacific, and Timor-Leste.

Australia’s high commissions and embassies across the Pacific remain open. We have also worked quickly to ensure essential Australian advisers – in health and frontline services – have been able to stay and continue their work with Pacific governments.

We have also been strongly engaged with Pacific partners to prepare for, and prevent, the spread of COVID-19, and to manage the broader health and economic impacts. Australia is assisting Pacific Island governments with laboratories,

medical equipment, health expertise, public information campaigns and support for national preparedness plans and the World Health Organisation’s regional plan. Our regional institutions are critical to this response, and we are working closely with the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific Community.

In this unprecedented situation, we have moved quickly to reorient our development partnerships to bring forward funding for critical health services and to mitigate the economic shock.

No country should be alone in this crisis. Nowhere is this more true than in the Pacific. Australia faces its own immediate challenges, but our support for, and partnership with, our Pacific family is essential for our regional health security and our long-term interests.



College of Micronesia-FSM



www.comfsm.fm

Presidential Search Announcement

The College of Micronesia-FSM, an institution accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, is seeking a visionary, dynamic, and inspirational leader who can make a difference at the college and in the communities it serves. The larger community is the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), a nation of 607 islands scattered across approximately a million square miles of the western Pacific Ocean. Each of four states of the federation – Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae – has its own unique language, culture, and needs. The college has a key role in the development of the Federated States of Micronesia. Like the nation, the college is geographically extensive. The national campus located in Palikir, Pohnpei, and the FSM Fisheries and Maritime Institute located in Yap state serve students from all four states, while the four state campuses, one in each state, primarily serve the residents of that state.

For specific information on the job profile and the college, see www.comfsm.fm/search/

Challenges and Opportunities

The college currently faces a series of challenges; the president will have the opportunity to make a difference in the following areas:

1. Determine and implement strategies to secure future funding of the college including ways to increase student enrollment and retention;
2. Work effectively with the Board, faculty, staff, and students;
3. Maintain accreditation by offering high quality educational programs and services provided by outstanding faculty and staff aligned with the needs of the FSM;
4. Enhance student access to learning;
5. Cultivate a culture of genuine communication, inclusiveness, participatory governance, and respect for cultural diversity with a shared focus on student success; and
6. Enhance overall standing of COM-FSM and advocate for the college in all arenas.

Position Profile

The President is appointed by the Board of Regents to serve as the chief executive officer of the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) and as the official advisor to and executive agent of the Board of Regents. The President is a non-voting ex officio member of the Board and attends all Board meetings. The President, as educational and administrative head of the college, devotes her/his full time to exercising a general superintendence over all affairs of the institution and brings such matters to the attention of the Board as are appropriate to keep the Board fully informed in discharging its policy-making responsibilities. The President, on behalf of the Regents, performs all acts and executes all documents to make effective the actions of the Board.

1. Has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution including planning, development, organizing, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness with the primary focus on student success;
2. Secures sufficient funding for the college by enhancing relationships with the FSM and State governments, increasing student enrollment, securing funding for implementation of the college's master infrastructure development plan, obtaining grants, and growing the endowment fund;
3. Establishes a collegial process that sets the college's values, goals, and priorities;
4. Appreciates cultural diversity and supports an inclusive college community;
5. Ensures the college sets institutional performance standards for student achievement;
6. Ensures that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis of external and internal conditions;
7. Ensures that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and allocation to support student achievement and learning;
8. Ensures that the college's annual budget allocates resources to support learning and achievement;
9. Establishes procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts to achieve the mission of the college;
10. Recruits, develops, supports, and retains quality faculty and staff;
11. Plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the college's purposes, size, and complexity;
12. Delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate;
13. Provides primary leadership for accreditation, ensuring that the college meets or exceeds ACCJC Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies at all times;
14. Assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and Board of Regents policies and assures that college practices are consistent with the college's mission and policies, including effective control of budget and expenditures;
15. Maintains a highly visible leadership role, working and communicating effectively with the communities served by the college including the Board of Regents, faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness and standing of the college;
16. Perform such other additional duties as the Board may require.

Required Qualifications

Applicant must have the educational credentials from a regionally accredited institution and executive leadership experience necessary to earn the respect and trust of the college, its associates abroad, and the public and private sectors in the Federated States of Micronesia. Foreign credentials must be equated to meet US standards using World Education Services at <http://www.wes.org>. A master's degree is the minimum qualification. Significant prior executive leadership responsibility, considerable experience in an institution of comparable size and complexity, proficiency in addressing the challenges faced by COM-FSM are required. Higher education teaching experience preferred.

Application Procedure

To ensure full consideration in the COM-FSM presidential search, candidates must submit the following documents:

1. A letter of interest addressing how the candidate's professional qualification and experience match the challenges and position profile (not to exceed three pages);
2. COM-FSM application form www.comfsm.fm/jobs/HRdocs/employment08.pdf;
3. A current resume which includes personal email address and cellular phone number;
4. Official transcripts for all degrees earned;
5. A minimum of five professional reference letters.

Due to a 3mb size restriction on incoming mails, candidates are required to upload application documents to Dropbox or Google Drive and share with presidentsearch@comfsm.fm. Alternatively, documents can be mailed to:

Presidential Search Committee College of Micronesia-FSM
PO Box 159
Pohnpei FM 96941

U.S Postal Service domestic rates apply in the Federated States of Micronesia.
All applications must be received by May 30th 2020, midnight Pohnpei/Kosrae time, 11pm Chuuk/Yap time.
Confidential inquires may be made to presidentsearch@comfsm.fm - a confidential call may be arranged upon request.

National Campus	Chuuk Campus	FSM-FMI	Kosrae Campus	Pohnpei Campus	Yap Campus
P.O. Box 159	P.O. Box 879	P.O. Box 1056	P.O. Box 37	P.O. Box 614	P.O. Box 286
Kolonia Pohnpei, FM 96941	Chuuk, FM 96942	Colonia Yap, FM 96943	Tofol Kosrae, FM 96944	Kolonia Pohnpei, FM 96941	Colonia Yap, FM 96943
Phone: (691)320-2480	Phone: (691)330-2689	Phone: (691)350-5244	Phone: (691)370-3191	Phone: (691)320-3795	Phone: (691)350-2296/5149
Fax: (691)320-2479	Fax: (691)330-2740	Fax: (691)350-5245	Fax: (691)370-3193	Fax: (691)320-3799	Fax: (691)350-5150
E-Mail: national@comfsm.fm	E-Mail: chuuk@comfsm.fm	E-Mail: fmi@comfsm.fm	E-Mail: kosrae@comfsm.fm	E-Mail: pohnpei@comfsm.fm	E-Mail: yap@comfsm.fm