

Pakin boaters who spent cold night in boat submerged to the gunwales rescued

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

September 7, 2021

Pohnpei— At around 3:00 in the afternoon on September 6, six residents of Pakin, two female adults, three adult males and a 3-year old girl who was celebrating her birthday on that day boarded their boat bound for home. They were due to arrive two hours later, but by the next morning, they still had not arrived.

When the boat had not arrived by the appointed time, Patterson Lawrence, the brother-in-law of one of the boat's passengers asked one of the

boats from Pakin to go out and look for them. Unfortunately, the tide was too low in Pakin and they could not go out immediately. They left more than an hour later during the gloaming as the sun faded from the sky.

They continued on anyway, hoping to see lights from a stranded boat, but they were unsuccessful on that evening.

Lawrence said that he asked two boat owners from Sokehs to do a search on the next morning. They were able to leave by 5:30 in the

See "Pakin Rescue" continued on page 4



Police still investigating pedestrian hit-and-run incident in Pohnpei

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

September 10, 2021

Pohnpei—Police are investigating a hit-and-run incident that took place on August 25 on the stretch of road in Pohnpei between the Bank of Guam and the Black Sand Store. The victim, Noriko Lopez, said that she was struck by a car during the lunch hour as she made the walk between the two businesses. She said that the vehicle's mirror hit her in the upper right chest and continued driving north toward Kolonia Town. She was knocked face down onto the road side. She said that other drivers did stop

and assist her.

Doctors at the Pohnpei State Hospital examined and released her after treating her for minor injuries.

Police have asked us not to name the principal suspect because the matter is still under investigation. They said that a report has been filed but the suspected driver has not yet been brought in for questioning.

However, Lopez said that the family members of the alleged driver of the hit-and-run vehicle visited her at home to apologize to her but not the driver

himself.

Lopez is an extraordinarily peaceful woman, and even after having been hit while walking said that she felt sorry for the driver. "The road is not only for the cars, drivers, but for the people for walking since long time ago," she responded in a Facebook direct message. "Especially where are no side walk. It was a hot day at lunch time, Aug. 25, I was walking to Black Sand from the Bank of Guam. I replaced my hat on my head deeply for protecting from the sunlight. Suddenly a car hit me and fell down on the side of the road. Where just after cutting grasses and fell down facing

down. In a moment I forget that the area is very dangerous I had experienced that a car almost hit me. The problem is not enough space for walking people, if there is a sidewalk never would happened this kind of accident. I felt so sorry for the driver and all who took care of me that time. I appreciate many people cared me as soon as possible and many people helped me included friends and family who had concerned. I do not blame anybody because I know I did a mistake for a moment a careless mistake, but fortunately I am slight injured and still alive. I really hope we live without accident, safely. Thank you very much for the kind drivers who help us."

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U team members take top place in open water swimming

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

September 4, 2021

Pohnpei—As part of Pohnpei's 42nd Liberation Day athletic competitions, Pohnpei's swimmers also competed in a thrilling day of swimming in the open water, a challenge for organizers and athletes alike. "With the pool closed, we felt we had to do something for the swimmers," one organizer said. They did so in fine form at Nett Point with several hundred people watching and participating.

Teams from U, Nett, and Kitti municipalities competed in 12 separate events during the competition, some of them with so many competitors that they required multiple heats. The competition was looser than it would likely have been had it been held at the swimming pool with electronic timers and all of the amenities that make it easier to run a competition. Teams were awarded 10, 7, 5, 3, 2, and 1 point for finalists in the top six positions where there were six positions.

In the first event, the Men's 200-meter freestyle for ages 13 and up, Kyler Kihleng of U took top. He was followed by Deshawn Obed of U, Layton Joakim of Kitti, Gino Santos of Kitti, Kaleo Kihleng of U, and MacCory Torres, Jr. of Nett.

Women also competed in the 200-meter freestyle. Kestra Kihleng of U had the top time of that event followed by Katrianne Kihleng of U, Mayra-Linda Paul and Teresa Torres of Kitti. Saioreen Clarence and Marizza Hawley, both from U swam into fifth and sixth places.



Boys 13 and under also participated in their own event with Phelcalson Eperiam and Teraul Eperiam of Kitti getting the top two times. They were followed by McCaden Jim of Nett, MJ Augustin of Kitti, and Genaro Primo and Ajax Ponapart of Nett in the fifth and sixth places respectively.

Kaylinn Kihleng of U was the only girl 13 and under to swim in the event for that group, naturally taking first place with a final time of 4:02.55.

Kyler Kihleng of U had the top time for the Men's 200 Meter Individual Medley. He was followed by Justin Rodriguez



and Jasper Ponapart of Nett, Deshawn Obed of U, and Kitti swimmers Katterson Moya and Gonzales Eperiam.

Kestra Kihleng of U swam into first place in the Women's 200 Meter Individual Medley. She was followed by Mayra-Linda Paul of Kitti, Katrianne and Kaylin Kihleng of U, and Kitti Team members Teresa Torres and Annymert Moya.

In the grueling 1000-meter freestyle competition, U swimmer, Kyler Kihleng took top spot. He was followed by Justin Rodriguez of Nett, Kitti swimmer Christopher Eperiam. Team U swam

into the final three spots with Deshawn Obed in fourth place, Carson Amor and Elden Eram in the final two positions.

Four intrepid women also competed in their own 1000-meter freestyle competition, three of them Kihlengs from U who took first second and fourth places. Kestra Kihleng was in first place, followed by Katrianne Kihleng, Santra Jack of Kitti took third place, followed by Kaylin Kihleng.

The next event was a Men's 4x50 Meter Medley Relay with four team members each from Nett, Kitti, and U taking the top three places. Nett

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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF
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WILL BE RELEASED ON:
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**Deadline for submission of articles or
advertisements for this issue is the end
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competition of Liberation Day games



swimmers were Saia Augustine, Jun Ponapart, Justin Rodriguez, and Jasper Ponapart. Kitti swimmers were Gino Santos, Layton Joakim, Gonzales Eperiam, and Ketterson Moya. U's swimmers were Kyler Kihleng, B.J. Aron, Deshawn Obed, and Carson Amor.

Only two teams competed in the women's 4x50 Meter Medley Relay with Kitti team members taking top place followed by U swimmers. The Kitti team comprised Santra Jack, Annymert Moya, Mayra-Linda Paul, and Teresa Torres. U swimmers were Kestra Kihleng, Katrianne Kihleng, Kaylinn Kihleng and Marizza Hawley.



The final two events were Men's and Women's 4x100 Meter Freestyle relays. In the men's event, Kitti team members took the top two places, followed by U and Nett swimmers. The men's Kitti team had members JR Santos, Epencio Paulino, Katterson Moya, and Gino Santos. U's team was Kyler Kihleng, BJ Aron, Deshawn Obed, and Villa Aron. Nett swimmers were Win Hadley, AJ Dainart, Jaydee Augustine, and Paul Ponapart.

The women's relay again had two competing teams, the team from U that took first place, and the team from Kitti that took second place. Team U consisted of Kestra Kihleng, Katrianne Kihleng, Kaylinn Kihleng, and Saioreen Clarence. Kitti swimmers were Mayra-Linda Paul, Cameron Gilmete, Amelia Moya and Teresa Torres.

When the dust cleared, or more appropriately, as the water droplets dried from the bathing suits of the swimmers, Team U had taken first place in the swimming competition with 120 total points for wins. Kitti took second place with 87 points. Nett swimmers took the final position as top team winners with 43 points.

Unfortunately, at press time, the results from the Swimming Competition of the Liberation Day Games that had been finalized for release with no other information having come to KPress from the committee.





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Deadline for Submission:

Project Proponents can submit Project Concept Papers **AT ANY TIME**. Reviews of Concepts are usually done quarterly but can be more frequent depending on number of Concepts received. Project Concept Papers must be submitted **WITH ALL ATTACHMENTS** to the appropriate contact below before they can be reviewed.

If you have questions, please contact the following:

Mr. Simpson Abraham
Coordinator, SGP-FSM
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...Pakin Rescue

Continued from front page

morning. Lawrence had contacted the Department of Public Safety to dispatch the Search and Rescue boat and then called contacts at the Pohnpei Fishing Club. Members from the club came out in force and after coordinating their search efforts at Mangrove Bay Bar and Grill began their search en masse during the morning of September 7.

Lawrence continued to call the Pakin municipality, asking for their boats to go out and conduct a search closer by Pakin, but they were hampered by limited fuel. Lawrence loaded fuel and headed straight out.

At about 10:00 that morning, the Pakin searchers started seeing floating debris including a cushion that had been on the seat of the missing boat and a five-gallon bucket that contained money and food items. Heading east from Pakin to continue the search, the rescuers spotted the boat, which had sunken to the gunwales in the water and was barely floating.

"The thing that saved them," Lawrence said, "was that tied empty containers to the transom so that the boat would at least not sink. It saved them." The boat floated just enough but not enough to move anywhere and the engine was underwater, even had it been able to move.

Lawrence said that the waves had been choppy when the stranded boaters left Pohnpei's main island. The boat was dangerously overweight. When a third wave rose up in front of it, the bow submerged and the captain, unfortunately, drove it right into the wave, filling the boat with water.

Lawrence said that the captain said that when they first started taking on water from waves at about 4:00 on September 6, he tried to call Lawrence but as the boat dipped, he lost cell phone signal. When the boat rose again, he tried again, but this time the water drenched his phone as they descended into the wave.

The boat occupants tied themselves

together to be sure that they didn't lose anyone over night.

Rescuers were able to rescue all six passengers and towed the sunken boat to Pakin. The passengers didn't want medical treatment and are now on their home island.

Lawrence said that Pakin has EPIRBS (a rescue beacon that can either be manually turned on or automatically turns on in the event of submersion in water) but the boaters had forgotten to bring one. The Pohnpei Fishing Club made sure that every boat that participated in the Pakin search and rescue had an EPIRBS before they were allowed to participate in the search.

James Wichman, a Pohnpei Fishing Club member and an employee with SPC working on many projects in boating safety, pointed out some boating safety issues including communication ability. "One of the challenges we always come across during a SAR operation is the means to communicate with each other or the base. There are no workable radio repeater towers to bounce the marine channel 16 for mariners. The fishing club is also working on three radio repeaters to be placed on Sokehs Ridge, Ant atoll and Madolenihmw to help with our Marine VHF radios," he said.

He said that NORMA (National Oceanic Resources Management Authority) and SPC have agreed to provide 86 safety grab-bags containing EPIRBS, lifejackets, compasses, reflecting mirror, signal light, and other items. The official announcement of that donation has not yet come out but the intention is for the grab-bags to be distributed to active fishermen throughout Pohnpei and Pohnpei outer islands including Pakin, Ahnd, Sapwuhfik, Kapinga Marangi, Nukuoro, Mwokilloa, and Pingelap.

It won't cover every active fisher, but it will have a huge impact.

However, boaters will have to make sure to remember to carry the safety equipment with them once they get it.

The rescued Pakin workers were very lucky indeed to have been rescued. Unfortunately, that kind of outcome is not always the case.



The Board and Management of FSMTC congratulate the Chuuk State Leadership on the celebration of their Joint Inauguration.



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U.S. Government provides \$391,900 for sustainable giant clam aquaculture project during official launch

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

September, 2021

Pohnpei—This morning, MERIP (Marine and Environment Research Institute of Pohnpei) and Pacific American Fund of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) hosted a launch ceremony of a new aquaculture project in Pohnpei. The Pacific American Fund grant of USD 391,900 will allow MERIP to implement a three-year project aimed at improving livelihoods and self-sufficiency through the farming of giant clams in low-income coastal communities in Pohnpei. The project is for “Responding to COVID-19 through Small-Scale Aquaculture to Improve Food Security in Pohnpei.”

The project goal is to establish a rapid response productive safety net to reduce impacts of COVID-19 through farming of Hippopus Hippopus

(Pahsu) clams in low-income coastal communities in Pohnpei, FSM. The main objective is to transfer farming technologies of Hippopus hippopus to four communities in Pohnpei, establish pilot farms and promote individual/family farm units.

MERIP technical staff will raise awareness of the benefits of sustainable aquaculture and fisheries, and eating healthy foods, especially locally sustainably captured or farmed seafood within the four communities by conducting a series of workshops and school visits within and near the communities.

“In order to create successful practices to improve coastal fisheries management to occur simultaneously with Climate Change and COVID-19, we need to apply the ‘think-outside-the-box’ approach,” said Eugene Joseph, MERIP Board Chair. “And in this particular case, I applaud MERIP for actually taking the box out into the



water. In a realistic sense, the success of this project will also be a gigantic success for Pohnpei, and we certainly hope it is replicated in other FSM States as well.”

Speaking on behalf of Pohnpei State Governor Reed Oliver, Dakher Daniel, Administrator of the Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture gave the State’s endorsement of the project. “Governor...congratulates you on your significant achievements and extends our assistance, well wishes and success for your undertaking. The State of

Pohnpei continues to support MERIP and its undertakings of the project and is willing to help where possible,” he said. He reminded the attendees at the ceremony that the project is in line with FSM and State Strategic Development Goals for fisheries.

“We are very excited about this new grant to Micronesia and we greatly look forward to our new partnership with MERIP, and MERIP team in implementing this wonderful new project,” said Mr. Orestes Anastasia, Chief of Party, Pacific American Fund during a video address from his office in Suva, Fiji.

“This grant to the FSM through MERIP is just one part of the U.S. Government’s commitment to support the FSM to manage the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said U.S. Ambassador Carmen G. Cantor. “The goal of (PAF projects) is to increase resilience, improve quality of life, and to provide access to services in Pacific Island communities such as the FSM. The U.S. Government recognizes that local civil service organization play a key role in responding to people’s needs at times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

“...The MERIP project focuses on enhancing food security through aquaculture, and actively promotes the inclusion of women and young people in these activities. In this way, the project will be a catalyst to lead the way for innovation, inclusion, and locally owned solutions that lead to a resilient future... we are proud to stand with you in achieving your objectives and making a real and lasting difference through this grant,” she said.



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Simon Ellis, MERIP Executive Director gave an overview of the plans for the project by video. He explained that the project sites would be located in the northeastern quadrant of Pohnpei, mainly because they have extensively worked in that area, and they can be reached easily by boat.

He said that while the giant clam is not suitable for the ornamental trade, it is important as a food value and is widely eaten. It is something of a delicacy. In recent years, the species has been declining in the natural environment of Pohnpei primarily due to overfishing. The fast-growing clams are spawned in concrete raceways, and once they reach sufficient size will be transferred to cages in shallow water.

The clam has a symbiotic relationship with a plant that grows within and receives its nutrients from the photosynthesis process. The cages would allow that process to occur, to protect them from predators, and allow them to grow to harvestable size.

The project will transfer farming technologies of giant clam production to four communities in Pohnpei, establish pilot farms and promote

individual/family farm units. The clams will ultimately be produced at MERIP except for the first year's cohort which are already being raised in Kosrae. Pilot farms will be established for training, and individuals will be equipped and trained to manage the farming of the clams.

MERIP will conduct a series of workshops on the importance of eating healthy food, especially sustainably captured farmed seafood with the four communities. It will conduct a series of workshop and school visits within and near the communities on sustainable aquaculture and fisheries and healthy eating.

The project will help farmers to add value to their products by helping to establish local markets and will train on matters of processing such as pickling smoking and other preparation, preservation and sales skills with local communities.

After the launch ceremony was completed, Governor Oliver, members of the diplomatic corps from the United States and Australia, and other interested attendees were treated to a tour of the MERIP facility and explanations of the projects the NGO has been successfully running. MERIP staff members Mikelson Hemil, who served as Master of Ceremonies for the launch ceremony, and Daisy Falcam conducted the tours.



MERIP broadcasted the entire launch ceremony on their Facebook page as a live feed. (<https://www.facebook.com/298059760329760/videos/380775133558747/>)



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Marlin just misses \$8000 jackpot at 14th Blue Nile

By Pohnpei Fishing Club

September 11, 2021

Pohnpei—Wenster Martin completely floored anglers at the 14th Blue Nile Fishing Tournament when his boat, the “Sakau” pulled up to the dock at Mangrove Bay for weigh-in and painstakingly unloaded a monstrous 432.5-pound marlin. Had his majestic fish been but eighteen pounds heavier, Martin would have broken the club’s record for marlin and would have earned him the \$8000 marlin jackpot. Still, he soundly walked away with the \$500 cash prize and \$50 gift certificate for largest fish caught on the day.



Blue Nile, Rumors/Ocean View, Panuelo Gas, Rain Water Company, One World Plaza/Best Buy, President David Panuelo and Arnold’s Pizza sponsored the tournament which attracted 28 boats. All returned safely.

Cash and gift certificate prizes were awarded under four categories: Big Fish, Biggest of species (not awarded a prize in the top category), Lady Angler, and Junior Angler.

For Big Fish, the top four anglers won \$50 gift certificates in addition to cash prizes. The fifth place angler in the category won a \$25 gift certificate for Panuelo Gas in addition to his cash

prize. After Martin’s marlin, Wilbur David won second prize of \$400 with a nice 102-pound yellowfin tuna. Dicklet Paul took third prize if \$300 with a 64.5-pound yellowfin. Konrad Englberger took both fourth and fifth prizes of \$200 and \$150 respectively for a 57.5 sailfish, and a 27.5 pound wahoo.

Anglers caught examples of five different species for the top weighing species prizes. Top prize-winning anglers in this category scored \$25 gift certificates to Panuelo Gas in addition to cash prizes with top angler in each species earning \$100.



For yellowfin, Lara Trott’s 14.5-pound fish won the top prize. Louisa Movick and Francisco Sohl tied for second place with 10-pound fish, each taking home \$40 and \$20 respectively.

Allois Malfitani caught the only wahoo awarded a prize in the species category with his 22-pound fish.

For skip jack tuna, Naihila Peterson and Costan Sosan took first and second prizes with a fish of 14.5 pounds and one of 14 pounds.

Marcia David landed a 13-pound

Photos by Abert Carlot



barracuda for top prize for that species. Her catch was followed by that of Melner Isaac with a 10.5-pound example of the species.

Asterio Takesy caught the first prize Grand Trevalle of 21 pounds. His fish was followed by that of Leeson Lenson whose fish weighed 13 pounds.

Both Ypeye Esperanza and Lara Trott caught wahoo as the top Lady Anglers of the tournament. The \$160 prize winner with a \$25 Panuelo Gas Station gift certificate, Ypeye’s fish was 20 pounds followed by Trott’s 14-pound fish that won her a \$90 prize for second

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Location: National Campus | Annual Salary: \$44,196.00 | Closing Date: October 19, 2021

Position Profile: Reporting to the President, the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (VPIEQA) is the individual providing leadership that supports the College of Micronesia-FSM goals and strategic plan for institutional effectiveness and quality. The VP-IEQA provides leadership for and oversight of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) and Information Technology Office (ITO). The VP-IEQA is a key contributor to policy development and implementation related to institutional effectiveness and quality assurance. Essential functional areas include: governance, planning and budgeting, integrity, community engagement, administration, and continuous improvement.

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Location: National Campus | Annual Salary: \$30,168.00 | Closing Date: October 15, 2021

Position Profile: Under the supervision of the Vice President for Instructional Affairs (VPIA), the director of the Institute for Student Learning and Excellence in Teaching (ISLET) will provide coordination of distance education and oversight of faculty development opportunities, and resources for teaching. ISLET will be a place where faculty work together to focus on providing quality online and in person learning experiences promoting student success and development of a learning culture guided by learning leaders. The institute will create culturally valuable, engaged, learning and teaching experiences by providing programming, resources and support for quality teaching and advising.

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Fishing Tournament

place.

Dane Nighswander, prolific junior angler prize winner, took home \$75 and a Panuelo Gas Station gift certificate for his 8.5-pound barracuda.

Jun Charlie won an EPIRB in a drawing—yet another EPIRB awarded to anglers to help keep them safe. Many volunteers also contributed to the effective running of the tournament and the club would like to thank them for their efforts.



UN wraps up virtual mission to FSM

United Nations

September 16, 2021

Earlier this month, the United Nations (UN) officially concluded a week-long Virtual Mission to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) with a courtesy call on FSM President, H.E. David W. Panuelo, by UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC), Fiji multi-country Office, Sanaka Samarasinha.

Due to COVID-19-related travel restrictions, UNRC Samarasinha and the UN Pacific Country Team (UNCT) opted to conduct the mission virtually, instead of a physical mission to the country. Together with UN staff on the ground in Pohnpei, FSM, the UNCT's meetings proved to be insightful, crucial and constructive to the ongoing enhanced UN presence in the North Pacific and wider Micronesian region.

This mission was particularly significant and timely, as the UN's Fiji-based Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) supports FSM to open its doors to a new UN coordination office to cater to the specific needs, challenges and goals of countries in Micronesia. This newest Multi-Country Office in the RC System will cover FSM, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru and Kiribati and will be based in Pohnpei under a new Resident Coordinator.

Speaking virtually to President Panuelo, Mr Samarasinha commended FSM on effectively keeping COVID-19 out of the country thus far, adding that the UN stands ready to continue providing support to the Government of FSM on inclusive recovery from COVID-19. In 2020, UN Pacific reprogrammed 42% of FSM Joint Country Action Plan (JCAP) funds towards emergency COVID-19 response, amounting to over USD9 million. President Panuelo expressed appreciation to the UN for their part in

helping to keep FSM COVID-free.

"This mission has provided an opportunity to review and finalize the 2021 JCAP for FSM and has been an important step towards aligning UN work on the ground with the priorities of your government and UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) to ensure our support actually meets the needs of the people of FSM," Mr Samarasinha said.

"Discussions with government officials have revealed challenges regarding limited local capacity due to out-migration and other staffing issues, which the UN understands and appreciates. We will continue to work together to support these specific concerns."

Throughout the week-long mission, UN staff virtually met with FSM government officials, civil society and development partners to discuss specific ways to continue working together meaningfully and supporting each other to understand and address key challenges.

It was also an opportunity to discuss FSM's development and progress towards achieving Agenda 2030, as well as plans towards a new National Development Plan to upgrade the current FSM Strategic Development Plan (2004-2023).

Convened and facilitated by the UN RCO Fiji multi-country Office, virtual missions are being carried out in other Pacific countries where UN agencies work.

As the current UN Pacific Strategy comes to an end in 2022, UN Pacific is working with Pacific partners to develop the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2023-2027 – this framework will outline the UN's collective response to the development priorities of the 14 countries covered in the Pacific.



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2021 highlights of Micronesia Clean Up Day activities

Micronesia clean up day Zoom meetings

DECEM

This year's Micronesia Clean Up Day event kicked off with a POETRY/TIKTOK Earth Day Contest, inviting high school students residing in the FSM, to respond to the Earth Day 2021 theme: Restore our Earth through a video-clip presentation.

Three winners were identified from Pohnpei Catholic School and Our Lady of Mercy Catholic High School, and awarded during the month of April.

Following the contest, a cleanup your own yard activity was encouraged on World Environment Day, June 5. During the month of September, a two day zoom meeting was held on September 9 and 10, 2021 with the purpose of engaging the general public to become aware of issues and solutions for waste management.

First Lady Patricia Edwin was the guest speaker during the September 9 meeting where she encouraged the states to take ownership of the protection of their islands and utilize the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle). She was supported by Secretary Yatilman who opened the Zoom meeting for this year's Micronesia Clean Up Day event.



First Lady Patricia Edwin, Secretary Andrew R. Yatilman, Ms. Gale



DAY 1 ZOOM PARTICIPANTS with GIRL SCOUTS

AWARENESS BOOTHS ON DISPLAY



On September 10, the Guest Speaker who is known as the "Garbologist of the Pacific", Mr. Alice Leney encouraged us to be mindful of minimizing our waste through the 3Rs.

Finally, on September 13, 2021, members of the diplomatic corps, mayors of the municipalities, leaders of environment related organizations and offices came together to witness an environmental fair which included a ceremony and a fashion show. During the ceremony, Pohnpei State Acting Director Francisco Celestine on behalf of Governor Oliver, placed emphasis on the importance of September 13 as a day to clean and protect our environment, while FSM DECEM Secretary Andrew R. Yatilman on behalf of President Panuelo, reaffirmed FSM's commitment to strive for "Clean Islands for Healthier Communities in the FM."

The speeches were followed by a recognition of the Earth Day student winners, Ms. Kalani Hadley from PCS (1st place); Ms. Tanisha Sharma from OLMCHS (2nd place), and Mr. Moses Segal from PCS (3rd place). Students received certificates and monetary awards. Two other students, Ms. Paris Panuelo and Mr. Alex Gonzales read essays on the 3Rs as part of the program. Following the recognition of the students was a Fashion Show performed by the Pohnpei State Girl Scouts. The Fashion Show highlighted creative dress wear made of various waste materials from plastic bottles to paper, CDs, and foam. Each model posed and displayed the dress wear through a cat walk performance with the audience. After the show, participants were encouraged to visit the various display booths on environment protection.

All photos by Lee Arkie Perez



Mr. Leney, Ms. Grazia, Ms. Oishi, Mr. Sanel, Mr. Shingko



DAY 2 ZOOM PARTICIPANTS with College of Micronesia -CRE

MICRONESIA CLEAN UP DAY ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR

September 13, 2021



MC: Mr. Calvin Ehmes



National Anthem: Ms. Amanda Abello



Secretary Andrew R. Yatilman

Acting Director Francisco Celestine

Diplomatic Corps and Mayors

Award Recognition -2021 Earth Day POETRY/TIKTOK Winners/Essay Presenters



1st Place: Ms. Kalani Hadley, PCS

2nd Place: Ms. Tanisha Sharma, OLMCHS

3rd Place: Mr. Moses, Segal, PCS



Paris Panuelo, Essay



Alex Neth, Essay

Fashion Show by Pohnpei Girls Scouts



After dismissing three FSM court orders, BOG to answer four complaints on pandemic stimulus case

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

September 7, 2021

Pohnpei—On September 6, the FSM Supreme Court dismissed three causes of action in the case filed by several plaintiffs (CA 2021-008) against the Bank of Guam regarding alleged improper handling of pandemic stimulus checks the plaintiffs deposited into their accounts at the bank. Plaintiffs say that instead of crediting their accounts as they expected when they deposited the funds, BOG officials instead sent the checks to the US Department of Treasury without informing their depositors of the intent.

Yesterday's ruling came after hearings on the Bank of Guam's motion to dismiss plaintiff's claims and plaintiff's opposition to that motion. Though the court dismissed three causes of actions in the original complaint that plaintiffs filed on March 29, 2021, defendant Bank of Guam must now file its answers on the four remaining causes of actions. The court has given them until September 27 to do so.

In yesterday's ruling, the court dismissed count three of the amended complaint that pled due process violations because the defendant is not a government or governmental actor.

It dismissed the count of fraud because it was "not pled with the particularity that Civil Procedure 9(b) requires. It

Special thanks to the following organizations and agencies that supported the 2021 Micronesia Clean Up Day Activities:

- College of Micronesia-FSM
- SPC
- PETRO CORPS
- FIJIAN COMMUNITY of Pohnpei
- SAMOAN COMMUNITY of Pohnpei
- MERM YAMADA
- IOM
- Pohnpei Arts and Crafts
- KAPINGA WOMEN GROUP
- OLMCHS ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB
- PCS Environmental Club
- ANGIE's
- UH WOMEN GROUP
- PAHP TRAKIES
- ISLAND PALM
- JICA MICRONESIA-FSM
- PACIFIC TOURISM ORGANIZATION

explained that "someone pleading fraud should state the time, place, and content of the misrepresentation, the fact misrepresented, and what was obtained as a consequence of the fraud."

The court dismissed count six which pled theft because theft is not a civil cause of action and because it "otherwise duplicated the plaintiffs' conversion claim in count seven. It was also stricken, on the court's initiative, as redundant, impertinent, and scandalous matter."

The court has ordered the Bank of Guam to submit its answers to four remaining causes of action in the case.

The first remaining cause of action is "Breach of Contract" in which plaintiffs claim that in the absence of fraud on the face of a negotiable instrument, the US Treasury issued pandemic stimulus checks, the Bank of Guam's action to return the instrument to the United States Department of Treasury violated the terms of the depositor agreement with the plaintiffs.

The second remaining cause is "Breach

of Fiduciary Duty" and though stimulated by the alleged actions of the first cause is different in that it also has to do with the bank's alleged refusal to communicate with "the plaintiffs about the status of their deposits, and refusing to account for the funds owned by the Plaintiffs..."

The third of the remaining causes to be answered is "violation of consumer protection act". Plaintiffs claim that BOG's actions regarding their deposits violated the act by "engaging in an act or practice which is unfair and/or deceptive to the consumer..."

The final cause of action for answer by the defendants is "conversion". It claims that BOG by its actions regarding the deposits in question "wrongfully and without any authorization acted to convert the Plaintiff's property by taking dominion over each of the Plaintiff's funds, which is inconsistent with each of the Plaintiff's right to ownership over the funds at issue here."

At press time, defendants had not yet responded to the allegations contained in the case which is far from over.

INVITATION TO BID
for
Construction of Two Lagoon Dispensaries (Romanum and Sapore), Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia

NOTICE

The Project Management Office (PMO) of the Chuuk State Government is hereby issuing this Bid Invitation Notice to interested contractors for the **Construction of Two Lagoon Dispensaries (Romanum and Sapore), Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia**, out of the five lagoon dispensaries approved for construction.

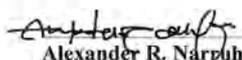
The Pre-Bid Meeting and subsequent Site Visit is scheduled for **Monday, October 04, 2021 at 10.00 AM** at the Conference Room, Project Management Office, Third Floor, Administration Building, Chuuk State Government, Weno, Chuuk, FSM 96942. For out of State contractors who wish to participate, a Zoom conference will be arranged, for which they are advised to send their names and email addresses to Mr. Sanjata Basu, Contract Specialist, PMO at email sanjata.basu@gmail.com, latest by Thursday, September 29, 2021.

Further information on this ITB may be obtained by submitting a written request for details to the Contract Specialist at P.O. Box 1659, Weno, Chuuk, FSM 96942 or at the email address cited above, with the subject heading:

"Construction of Two Lagoon Dispensaries (Romanum and Sapore), Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia"

The bidding documents, including the instructions to bidders, scope of work, bills of quantities, technical specifications, drawings and conditions of contract may also be directly obtained from the website of Dept. of Transportation, Communication & Infrastructure: <https://www.tci.gov.fm/>, in the PMU section.

The closing date for the submission of bids is Friday, **October 29, 2021 at 4.00 PM.**


Alexander R. Naruhnn
 Governor, Chuuk State & Contracting Officer

September 20, 2021
Date

Pohnpei Surf Club and host of donors and volunteers work to clean up trash in Pohnpei waters

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

September 18, 2021

Pohnpei—The Pohnpei Surf Club, ever vigilant and concerned about the problem of floating and sinking trash in Pohnpei's waters and on its shores, recently held two separate cleanups of selected areas in Pohnpei.

Though the Pohnpei Surf Club organized the cleanup operations, donors and volunteers helped to get all the work done.

The first of the two cleanups was in Ahnd, a common destination for Pohnpei Surf Club customers. "We collected around 60 large 33-gallon bags of trash," Alloys Malfitani said. "I'd say 99 percent of it was plastic trash. We got most of the larger pieces of plastic trash but there are a lot of small pieces and micro pieces of plastic broken into millions of parts, mixed up with the coral rubble and sand."

Donor individuals and organizations provided manpower and other donations, along with a list of volunteer cleaners who he, Malfitani, did not name. Donors were Rohsa, Marcela Foundation, Marko and Michelle Kamber, Conservation Society of Pohnpei, Pohnpei Environmental Protection Agency, Micronesia Conservation Trust, RARE, the United States Embassy, Australian Embassy, Ahnd Atoll rangers, the College of Micronesia FSM, and of course Pohnpei Surf Club.

Marko Kamber provided a donation for a "big barbecue" after the clean up effort for the day was completed.

The second cleanup was an underwater cleanup. Pohnpei Surf Club recruited all the divers who were available to dive and bring up trash from the bottom. "Tires, cans, bottles, fishing line, fishing weights, pampers, plastic bags, tin roof, kids' toys were the most common items. We also found a sunken Paiao (FAD). All trash people dispose of anywhere can also be found in the mangroves and ocean," Malfitani said.



All photos by Chris Knight



Pohnpei Surf and Dive Club sent two boats out, one with divers and one to load up the trash. Laidenki Divers and Club Pareo also sent out full crews of divers. "Marko Kamber provided lunch for everyone and also helped us take all the trash to the dump site, where all the trash was supposed to be to start with, with a truck from the Caroline Fisheries Corporation," Alloys said.

The Nature Conservancy helped with fuel money, RARE, Micronesia Conservation Society, and Dave Mathias from FSM R&D, who donated t-shirts, and the FSM Department of Climate Change and Emergency Management, which donated reusable bags to all who participated as donors.

"The plastic problem is here and is already affecting most of us. You just don't know you eat fish with plastic," Malfitani said. "Dispose of your trash properly, please."



Yap AG's office shut down; Falan suspects political motives

By Joyce McClure
Pacific Island Times

September 19, 2021

Colonia, Yap--Yap Gov. Henry Falan has issued an executive order directing the temporary closure of the attorney general's office partly due to the Yap State Legislature's failure to authorize funds for salaries of the state's only two attorneys.

The two lawyers have not been paid since July 4.

A complete government shutdown in Yap was avoided once during the current fiscal year, but a shutdown of the attorney general's office was finally deemed unavoidable, said Falan.

He issued the executive order on Sept. 16.

"I was forced to take this drastic step and shut down the AG's office," Falan said, "to avoid the Yap State government from being liable for a potential charge of human trafficking and abuse of constitutional rights because the attorney general and assistant attorney general are foreign citizens."

"In addition, this unavoidable action leaves the state without legal counsel," he said. "Neither I nor my administration can operate without our only two lawyers."

At the beginning of FY2021 last Oct. 1, the legislature removed the budget for all vacancies across all departments, including the AG's office.

On March 5, Falan sent a supplemental budget request for FY2021 to Speaker Vincent Figir in the amount of \$556,250 to cover the resulting shortfall.

Of that, \$421,483 was to be funded from local revenue, and the remaining \$134,767 was to come from a Compact Health Sector grant which was approved by JEMCO and OIA for the Department of Health Services.

Figir forwarded the request to Nicolas Figirlaarwon, chair of the YSL finance committee, for review and recommendation.

Some of the roadblocks to the legislature's approval of Falan's request have been temporarily resolved. But still at issue is the compensation of Attorney General Eliesa Tuiloma and Assistant Attorney General Tevita Muloilagi.

While all have agreed publicly that the money is available, the core issue raised by the committee was how the administration's budgets are managed once approved.

The administration presents a line-item budget to the legislature every year for approval and enactment on Oct. 1; but, once approved, the funds have historically been managed by each department as all-up funds, not by line-item allocations.

Based on this method of all-up accounting, Falan made the decision to combine four open positions in the attorney general's office to provide competitive compensation to attract and hire two qualified candidates.

"Once the legislature approves the ceiling for the fiscal year for each department," said Falan, "it is the administration's prerogative



to move monies according to need within each category, in this case salaries, so long as the ceiling is not exceeded."

But the legislature's legal counsel, Leelkan Dabchuren, said fund realignment is illegal. Attorney General Tuiloma disagrees with her opinion.

"Despite what Chairman Figirlaarwon has been saying that he supports moving forward and that he agrees it is inhumane not to pay the salaries of the state's employees, none of his committee reports have recommended approval of the salaries for the two AGs even though I have not exceeded the ceiling for expenditure in that office's budget," said Falan. "I am not a lawyer, but it is common sense to me that not paying a salary is not in the best interest, or the welfare, of the people."

In an attempt to resolve the impasse, Falan invited Figir to meet one-on-one.

"During this meeting, I suggested ways of resolving the issue," Falan said, "including having the legislature's budget people meet with my administration's budget people to work out a solution."

Falan suggested a continuing resolution. "This is a common practice of legislative bodies to give the administration the authority to continue operating based on the prior fiscal year's budget ceiling while the issue is resolved," the governor said.

"The legal counsel of Yap's legislature could have recommended this action to Figirlaarwon. The legal counsel and most members of the legislature have served in their positions for many years and should be familiar with this option. But they did not and so they tied my hands."

After their meeting, Figir told Falan that he needs concurrence from the other members about the governor's proposed options before moving forward. But so far Figir has not responded to Falan's suggestions on how to put the matter to rest.

One part of the original supplemental budget request involved salaries for employees of the Office of Administrative Services (OAS).

Falan said the legislature's approval of the OAS payroll while withholding action on the AGs' salaries appears to be a political move linked to the 2022 elections. The OAS employees are local citizens and eligible to vote; the AGs are not.

"This is unprofessional, heartless and intolerable," Falan said. "There is no reason for this refusal when the state has the money to pay the two AGs. I have not exceeded the ceiling for that department in my request."

On Sept. 11, Falan met with the traditional Council of Pilung (COP) to inform them "that I am being forced to shut down the AG's office."

The COP, the fourth branch of the Yap government in charge of matters concerning culture and tradition, met with Figir and Falan last year and mandated that the two officials work together for the benefit of the state's citizens.

The FY2022 budget is up for approval by the end of September so it can be used on Oct. 1, but there is no word yet from the legislature about the status of the administration's proposed financial plan for the coming year and no indication as to how they intend to address compensation for the two attorneys general.

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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES)

Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Nationals Only

Country: Federated States of
Micronesia

Project: Prioritized Road
Investment and Management
Enhancements (PRIME)

P172225 Assignment Title: PRIME
and SCORE Project Assistant (PA)

Reference No: FM-DOTCI-
211012-CS-INDV

The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Prioritized Road Investment and Management Enhancements Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") includes provision of low to mid-level administrative and technical support to the Project Manager and Project Officer. The PA will work under the overall direction of the PRIME and SCORE Project Manager and will be directly supervised by the Project Officer. The PA's role and responsibilities will be extended to SCORE once the project become effective.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment are attached to this request for expressions of interest and can be found in the website: www.tci.gov.fm

The Department of Transportation, Communication and Infrastructure now invites eligible individuals ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc.). The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

Mandatory

- Associate Degree in Accounting, Business Administration or

other relevant degrees.

- Minimum of one (1) year relevant experience.
- Experience with working in a team environment.
- Fluency in written and spoken English.
- Competency in the use of computer applications, especially MS Office and Excel.

Desired

- Demonstrated ability to work under pressure and pay attention to detail.
- Good communication skills.
- Experience in procurement, project accounting and/or administration.
- Ability to learn quickly.
- Organised and detailed-oriented person.
- Technical training and technical background.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrower" Fourth Edition, November 2020 ("the Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours i.e. 0800 to 1700 hours.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by Monday 27 September 2021.

Robert Goodwin,
PMU Program Manager
Prioritized Road Investment
and Management Enhancements
(PRIME) Project
Department of Transportation,
Communication and Infrastructure
(DoTC&I)
Palikir, Federated States of
Micronesia (FSM)
Office: +691 320-2080
Email: rscgoodwin@hotmail.com;
Web: www.tci.gov.fm

And cc to:

Ciu.tci@gov.fm
Central Implementation Unit

FSM President nominates Salomon Saimon to be next FSM Supreme Court Chief Justice

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

September 14, 2021

FSM—Today FSM President David Panuelo named Attorney Salomon Saimon as his nominee to be the Chief Justice of the FSM Supreme Court. He made the announcement in an official message to FSM Congress Speaker Wesley Simina and included Saimon's curriculum vitae as an attachment.

"Mr. Saimon is without doubt qualified to be the next Chief Justice of the FSM Supreme Court," the President wrote. "He possesses the essential qualification that makes him a suitable candidate for this important position. I also believe that his wealth of experience will bring a positive outcome to further strengthening the performance of the national judiciary.

"As a sovereign nation, our interest is to prioritize the appointment of FSM citizens to critical national positions including the highest position in the judiciary. Mr. Saimon will be the third Micronesian citizen-following the footsteps of the late Chief Justices Andon Amaraich and Martin Yinug to head the Judiciary should the 22nd FSM Congress give him the distinct opportunity to do so. As I trust Mr. Saimon's valuable talent to lead the Judiciary, he is equipped with professional abilities to initiate essential and meaningful judicial reforms that will make the FSM Supreme Court much stronger and far more attuned to face the challenges facing our nation. This administration definitely invests upon our citizens by tapping our own citizens to head a co-equal and independent branch of the National Government, something that we can be proud of as a nation as a people."

By press time, Congress had scheduled public hearings on the nomination throughout the FSM that had to be moved back due to the tragic and untimely passing of sitting Congressman Derensio S. Konman.

Lohd Water Pipe Project

Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT)

Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) continues to support vulnerable communities in Micronesia. With funding from the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, MCT is working with the community of Lohd in Madolenihmw, Pohnpei. Lohd does not have access to running water and has been collecting water for household use and livelihood for years from nearby communities. MCT is supporting the community with water pipes that will deliver water from a perennial stream several miles away to Lohd. Water is an essential means of healthy community living and this support from MCT will help this community establish a running water system to ensure water security and improve community's health and livelihoods. Pohnpei is currently going through a period with little rain and so this assistance comes at an opportune time.



EHUPENE



KALAHNGAN USADA **BRIAN P. ETSCHHEIT**

**Weliepen SOKEHS ong
Pohnpei State Legislature
Special Election
October 14, 2021**



Final FSM Food Security National Dialogue convenes before UN Summit presentation held in Pohnpei

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

September 8, 2021

Pohnpei—With the theme “Food and Health, Food and Livelihood, Food and Security,” the FSM convened a National Dialogue on the ongoing issue of food security in the FSM. The two-day meetings were intended to be a final dialogue before the 2021 United Nations Food Systems summit that is being convened by UN Secretary General Antonio Gutierrez to be held after the UN General Assembly at the end of September.

Since the FSM convened a series of dialogues in each of the FSM States and in Woleai, more than 300 people throughout the nation have contributed their ideas as to what could be done to enhance food security in the FSM.

“I am very pleased from the reports received that this approach has struck such an excited response from the more than 300 citizens who have been involved in the state dialogues over the past six weeks, in all four state capitals and on Woleai Atoll,” said FSM President David Panuelo during his opening speech. “These responses indicate to me that our communities are looking for solutions that might work better. In particular, they are looking at their own role and responsibility as individuals, families, and communities. And that is exciting; because how else are we going to tackle these issues that have plagued us for so long? Why DO we still eat food that we know is unhealthy and could lead to diabetes, stroke, stunted growth, heart disease and other non-communicable diseases for ourselves? Why do we still over-harvest fish and certain crops when we are aware of the potentially negative impacts on the natural environment that we live in?”

“...The FSM National Government is committed to continue and sustain regular nation-wide, community-level dialogues to measure, assess, and adjust our way forward to the healthy, fair, and sustainable future that we aspire for. Your focus and input over the next day and a half will be an important part of the process of building what we earnestly hope will be a better way forward. I thank you for your efforts now, and continued

support into the future as we seek to transform our nation’s food systems into better health, better and fairer livelihood, more vibrant ecosystems, and in social stability that facilitates individual dignity and community resilience and opportunity,” President Panuelo concluded.

Kay Schwendinger, Head of UN Resident Coordinators’ Office addressed the gathered interested participants. “On behalf of the United Nations system, I wish to congratulate the FSM on undertaking a series of state level/ community dialogues as well as this national dialogue to reflect on the current state of your food systems, to exchange ideas on solutions, and to initiate concrete actions to develop a pathway for sustainable food production and access to healthy and nutritious food for all”, she said.

“The game changing solutions and pathways you commit to today are part of a greater global effort to create more inclusive, resilient and healthier societies, and a future that is strong, safe, and fair for all.”

“Each one of us is a part of the food system. So we all must come together to identify bold new actions that will lead to healthier, more sustainable, and equitable food systems while protecting environment and Earth ecosystems.”

“Taking the World Summit Outcomes as a guidance and holding participants to account while rolling up our sleeves locally and making the difference for those at risk on every one of our beautiful FSM islands. Ultimately, global partnerships and local commitment and action must go hand in hand,” she concluded.

At press time, the outcomes from the National Food Dialogue were still in draft stage in preparation for the UN Food Systems Summit. It will be finalized before presentation to the body at large.

For now, the outcomes document defines several outcomes painted in somewhat broad strokes and for more dialog and solid action:

The most common and significant outcomes distilled from the state dialogues were:



a) Need for government, donor and community commitment to support a long-term (at least 10 years), multi-level (national, State, local, community), dialogue process to reinforce, modify and monitor food system progress.

b) The need for Improved information systems for decision making (including improved data collection and statistical analysis, and improved access to information).

c) The desirability for improved governance transparency and accountability (including establishment of monitoring and reporting mechanisms, efficiency and equity standards, and implementation and enforcement accountability accessible for public scrutiny)

d) To recognize the basic importance of infant and family food health improvement in long term NCD exposure, but also its potentially catalytic role to promote broader and longer term community and family health in each community.

e) The necessity for greater and more community awareness, education, training and technical support systems, including capacity, resources, reinforcement and integration.

f) The critical need to promote, establish and utilize a responsive and appropriate Innovation system for FSM, in partnership with national, regional and international centers and guided by community needs and interests (including research, development, trial and demonstration of technology, product and processes).

g) To promote and facilitate Value-Added food product development for all purposes (preservation, accessibility, usability, waste reduction, income); possible also a distinctive subset of #7 above.

h) To identify and as appropriate support communities to establish and maintain appropriate community management and policy advocacy capability to participate effectively in on-going community level dialogs as well as to effectively manage local production and ecosystems.

i) Suitable financing to be available for (a) community social investments and (b) for private production investment.

The currently four-page document continues:

Amongst the 9 cross-cutting growth enablers listed above, 5 are hereby submitted to the Summit secretariat for assistance that are deemed to be very important but are not being appropriately addressed by current programs in FSM at this time:

1. The need for Improved information systems for decision making (including improved data collection and statistical analysis, and improved access to information).

2. The desirability for Improved governance transparency and accountability of funds utilization and progress on food systems mitigation issues (including establishment of monitoring and reporting mechanisms, efficiency and equity standards, and implementation and enforcement accountability, all accessible for public scrutiny).

3. The critical need to promote, establish and utilize a responsive and appropriate Innovation system for FSM, in partnership with national, regional and international centers and guided by community needs and interests (including research, development, trial and demonstration of technology,



value-added products, and processes).
 4. To support communities to establish and maintain appropriate community management and policy advocacy capability to participate effectively in on-going community level dialogs as well as to effectively manage local production and ecosystems in accordance with good governance practices including transparency and accountability.

5. Underpinning all of these foundation programs is the need for government, donor and community funding, technical and operating commitment to support a long-term (at least 10 years), multi-level (national, State, local, community), dialogue process to reinforce, modify and monitor food system progress.

“The proposed game-changing pathways submitted by FSM Government to the Food System Summit for support from the broad international coalitions may seem rather basic and unglamorous,” the draft document said in its closing words. “However, our realization is that sustained transformation must be built on a solid foundation of good information, good governance and accountability, appropriate innovation, and robust community participation, all under-pinned by a firm commitment to sustain the transformational effort over the long term of at least 10 years and preferably longer. These are the strong foundational pillars with which each community will then have the opportunity to build long term responses and practices that meet their specific situation and preferences.

“It should be noted that these 5 growth enablers are those that we feel can and should be established within the three-year timeframe of initial investments envisaged in the call for the UN Food Systems Summit. The remaining items on the longer list of enablers are also very important and while some aspects are being dealt with under existing programs any offers of assistance with achieving those growth enablers would be looked at favorably by the FSM government subject to available resources and appropriate institutional arrangements.”

Elina Akinaga, President Panuelo’s nominee for FSM Secretary of Resources and Development is, and has been serving as the National Convenor of the Nationwide Food Security Summits.

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20th Micronesian Presidents' Summit succeeds at strengthening solidarity, concretizing subregional initiatives

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—From August 30th to September 2nd, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—attended the 20th Micronesian Presidents Summit (MPS) with the Presidents of the Republic of Nauru, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The theme of the 20th MPS was “Sustainable Transportation & Trade Through the Micronesian Region.”

The Presidents agreed to extend the mandate of the Transport Bubble Working Group, and to actively

pursue, initiate, and concretize Nauru's and Kiribati's membership in the Micronesian Shipping Commission.

The Presidents noted that high transportation costs and unreliable services contribute to the challenges the Micronesian subregion face in attracting trade and investment. The Presidents recognized the importance of establishing a regional network through expansion in the transport sector to ensure that MPS member countries are not susceptible to fluctuating and inflated cost, and spasmodic servicing. Officials were directed to develop initiatives in subregional shipping and air services, including the development of air services agreements among MPS

member countries.

A significant element of the discussions focused on subregional security, particularly in light of the recent high-level defense talks between the Freely Associated States with the United States of America and other bilateral defense partners such as Australia. In this regard, the Presidents reaffirmed their endorsement of the Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-related Sea-Level Rise and its accompanying Aide Memoire, and recognized the value of sharing information and resources to combat transnational crime.

Arguably the most visible outcome regarding the substantial discussions on subregional security was an agreement wherein the FSM, the Marshall Islands, and Palau agreed to extend an invitation to Kiribati and Nauru to join the Micronesian Transnational Crime Unit. When juxtaposed with the FSM's intention to join the International Police Organization (INTERPOL) by the end of 2021, and contemporary security ties between the Freely Associated States and the United States of America, including law enforcement cooperation, it is increasingly likely (and also the hope of the MPS) that illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing threats will decrease throughout the North Pacific.

Substantial discussion occurred on the forthcoming United Nations Multi-Country Office for the North Pacific, to be hosted in the FSM. President Panuelo shared that establishing the office is on track, with an interim lease agreement of the facility already in place. President Panuelo noted that after the conclusion of the UN Virtual Mission also occurring on the same days as the MPS that FSM Government officials would liaise with the MPS to relay the latest information on the Multi-Country Office.

The Presidents spoke at length about their mutual grave concerns regarding the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report that describes how the World, through its failure in providing unity and cohesive action, is losing the war against Climate



H.E. David W. Panuelo signs the 20th Micronesian Presidents' Summit Joint Communique

Change which remains the single greatest existential threat to each of the MPS countries and the World at large.

The Presidents directed their Foreign Affairs and Legal staff to work on the requisite legal documentation towards formalizing the legal status of the MPS, whose Secretariat shall be established in the Republic of Nauru.

At the conclusion of the 20th MPS, it was agreed that the FSM will host the 21st MPS at a date to be determined in the future. It is the intention of the FSM National Government to host the 21st MPS in conjunction with the 25th Micronesia Islands Forum (MIF). While the five sovereign Micronesian countries are all members of the MPS, the MIF's contemporary membership includes the Freely Associated States, the U.S. Territory of Guam, the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the FSM's States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae as separate and distinct members.

The 20th MPS Joint Communique may be found on the Nauruan Government site here: http://naurugov.nr/media/149932/naoero_communique.pdf

The 20th MPS Joint Communique may be found on the FSM National Government site here: https://gov.fm/files/Joint%20Communiques/20th_MPS_Naoero_Communique_SIGNED.pdf

President Panuelo's September 6th, 2021, media engagement with ABC Radio Australia on the outcomes of the 20th MPS may be found here: <https://www.abc.net.au/radio-australia/programs/pacificbeat/micro-pres-iv/13528850>

Congress in recess mourns the passing of Chairman Konman

FSM Congress Information Services

September 16, 2021

Weno, Chuuk—The Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia has gone into recess today until Monday to mourn the passing of the Chairman of the Special Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Issues, the Honorable Derensio S. Konman.

Congressman Konman passed away at 8pm last night September 15, 2021 at the Chuuk State Hospital. The Congressman was attending to his personal errands following yesterday's session when fell ill and was rushed to the hospital, he never recovered. He would have turned 49 at the end of month.

The Congress had just convened on Monday to begin its approval process for the National Government budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Today is Day 4 of the national body's deliberations and with last night's turn of events it was the consensus of all members to go into recess.

Speaker Simina recessed the Congress to allow the Members time for grief and personal reflections. The entire Congress family is in shock as the Congressman was always a staff favorite. Congressman Konman joined the Congress in 2017 as the two-year representative of the people from Southern Namoneas or Congressional Election District (3) of Chuuk State to



the 20th Congress. He was re-elected to hold the same role in the subsequent elections of 2019 and to this year's national elections in March. He served on the various Standing Committees of the Congress throughout his tenure, and was appointed during the 21st Congress to chair the Special Committee on Climate Change and maintained his chairmanship during the reorganization of the current 22nd Congress.

Congressman Konman is survived by his wife Dr. Beth Sappa and their two daughters and 4 sons along with an extended community of family and friends.

The Congress is working with the family and the State Government on the funeral arrangements.

President Panuelo Submits FSM National Oceanic Fisheries Investment Policy for Congress' Consideration

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On September 16th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—submitted the “National Oceanic Fisheries Investment Policy for the FSM 2021-2026: A Policy to Maximize Value of Participatory Rights under the Vessel Day Scheme” to the 22nd FSM Congress. The Policy, which had been in development for the previous five years as a result of the 9th State & National Leadership Conference (SNLC), aims to support economic growth in the FSM.

The five years of workshops, seminars, conferences, and consultations at State and National levels, and engagement with the fishing industry and other private sector partners, the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), and the Pacific Community (SPC), culminated in a Fisheries Summit held at the end of August and beginning of September 2021. The Fisheries Summit concluded with common agreement that the Policy will improve the investment climate in the FSM.

“Fisheries remain our largest source of local revenue,” President Panuelo said at the Fisheries Summit. “Revenue from fisheries has grown fourfold, from fifteen (15) million dollars in 2018 to sixty-eight (68) million dollars annually today. During this period of growth, the FSM has become a major fishing state, with 28 purse seiners flagged to the FSM, and 17 longliners flagged and based in the FSM.”

“Pohnpei and Kosrae have risen to be two of the busiest ports in the Pacific. The FSM has seen transshipments averaging 844 purse seine transshipments and 430 longline transshipments annually between 2017 to 2020. Kosrae’s port, with its innovative reefer container transshipments, exported 810 forty-foot reefer containers in 2019, which increased to 899 reefer containers in 2020, and is expected to export around

See “Fisheries Policy” on page 22

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Blue Prosperity Micronesia's Legal & Policy Framework Assessment Report is now live

FSM Information Services/Blue Prosperity Micronesia

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—The Legal & Policy Framework Assessment Report for the Blue Prosperity Micronesia Program is now available to the public. The assessment surveys laws, policies, and governmental institutions of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) that are relevant to the management of marine resources. Findings will inform discussions for policy and legal development in support of marine spatial planning, and the protection of the FSM's marine waters.

This report is the result of research by a team of lawyers under the guidance of the FSM Department of Justice; content has been vetted for accuracy and completeness by a group of government officials working at the national, state, and municipal levels. The authors, who include attorneys David C. Angyal and Lucas M. Cupps of Ramp & Mida, Bruce Myers, Vanessa Dick, and Rocky Sanchez Tirona, requested written comments on a draft of document from the following fourteen (14) organizations: Micronesia Conservation Trust, FSM Department of Justice, National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA), the FSM Department of Resources & Development, the Department of Environment, Climate Change, & Emergency Management, FSM National Police Maritime Surveillance, the Office of National Archives, Overseas Embassies, Consulates and Missions,

the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the Congress, the National Fisheries Corporation, and the State Governments of Yap, Pohnpei, Kosrae, and Chuuk.

The report was produced in partnership for Blue Prosperity Micronesia and Rare's Fish Forever program, under the Fishing for Climate Resilience project, with funding from the Waitt Institute and Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety through the International Climate Initiative (IKI). It seeks to provide both programs with a legal foundation to help advance sustainable resource management in the FSM.

This report is part of a larger Blue Prosperity Micronesia program to protect, value, and sustainably use the ocean resources of the FSM through the development of a legally binding marine spatial plan.

"I encourage everyone who wants to protect this Paradise in Our Backyards, who wants to protect 30% of the FSM's waters, to read this legal and policy framework assessment report," His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, said in a statement.

The report may be found here: https://gov.fm/files/FSM_Legal_Framework_Assessment_V4_Final_27AUG21.pdf Any and all other Blue Prosperity Micronesia resources may be found on a dedicated page here: <https://www.blueprosperitymicronesia.org/resources>

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention partners with Kosrae State to make inroads with COVID-19 education and vaccinations

*FSM Information Services
U.S. Embassy Kolonia
Joint Press Release*

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—A three-person team from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently wrapped up a three-week trip to Kosrae State, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), during which they were able to work closely with Kosrae State Government, the Kosrae State COVID-19 Task Force, and the FSM National COVID-19 Task Force. The team succeeded in vaccinating more than 500 people.

In a virtual presentation, the CDC team, led by Dr. Richard Brostrom, and members of the Kosrae State Government, presented the results of their recent experience introducing the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to the population in Kosrae to His Excellency President David W. Panuelo and U.S. Ambassador Carmen G. Cantor.

CDC officials credited the visit's success to the excellent cooperation of Kosrae officials, led by Kosrae Governor Carson K. Sigrah. With Kosrae's large adolescent population in mind, the CDC utilized the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to reach a large number of vaccine-eligible school-aged youth. In partnership with Kosrae State and

close coordination with the FSM COVID-19 Task Force, the teams held public outreach sessions the night before vaccination clinics at local schools, where the CDC team answered questions and ensured parental consent.

The FSM COVID-19 Task Force is looking to replicate this experience across the States of Yap, Chuuk, and Pohnpei once the ultra-cold storage equipment provided by the CDC is ready. National health officials will provide training to ensure vaccinations are carried out properly.

Based upon the latest data, it is estimated that Kosrae has now reached 73% of the adolescent population with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 91% of the eligible adults with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

"On behalf of the people and Government of the FSM," President Panuelo said in a statement, "I extend our deepest and sincerest gratitude to the US CDC for their generous assistance in helping our country combat the COVID-19 Pandemic. I further express my appreciation to the people and Government of the State of Kosrae for their sense of community, and for showing the example that—by working together—we can transition from being COVID-19 free to COVID-19 protected."

...Fisheries Policy

Continued from previous page

1,566 reefer containers by the end of 2021. This has resulted in employment opportunities for FSM citizens in Kosrae," President Panuelo continued, noting that a fish processing plant established in Kosrae State is capable of producing upwards of fifty metric tons of frozen tuna daily, and that further onshore investments are crucial for the Nation's economic development.

The Fisheries Policy signals a shift in focus for the FSM ensure its fisheries



sector generates more economic activities that can themselves contribute to economic growth. It is the FSM National Government's intention for

the Policy to galvanize all stakeholders to commit to actions in harmonizing and improving the fisheries investment climate in the FSM. Among other intended benefits, the Government through the National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) is developing a long-term partnership with the Nation's biggest and longest-residing partner in the fisheries sector, Liangcheng, to utilize the Nation's large longline Party Allowable Effort (PAE) that will translate into transshipment in all four FSM States.

In his letter to the Honorable Wesley W. Simina, Speaker of the 22nd FSM Congress, President Panuelo wrote that "The Panuelo-George Administration fully supports Fisheries Policy and calls on the Congress to join forces with my Administration to begin the work of its implementation."

The Fisheries Policy may be found here:

https://gov.fm/files/FSM_NATIONAL_OCEANIC_FISHERIES_INVESTMENT_POLICY_2021-2026_final_draft_as_of_9_1_2021.pdf

Governor Reed Oliver, Ambassador Cantor kick-off Office of Insular and International Affairs Grant for Pohnpei Public Radio Station

*Officer of the Governor,
Pohnpei State, FSM
U.S. Embassy Kolonia*

Sept 03, 2021

Pohnpei State Governor, the Honorable Reed B. Oliver, was joined by U.S. Ambassador Carmen G. Cantor and Department of Interior/Office of Insular and International Affairs Grants Management Specialist Cheryl Burkindine in kicking off an Office of Insular and International Affairs' Technical Assistance Program (TAP) award for \$237,444 to Pohnpei Public Broadcasting Corporation. This award is for the purpose of improving and enhancing the emergency/disaster public announcements, communication systems, and energy production.

Governor Oliver provided the following statement: "With this \$237,444 grant assistance from the US Department of Interior, Pohnpei Public Broadcasting Corporation/V6AH and Pohnpei State as a whole will benefit greatly with improved emergency broadcast capabilities, upgraded communication systems, and significant energy efficiency and production. I would like to convey my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the US Ambassador, H.E. Carmen Cantor, and the US Government for their enduring support and friendship to the people of Pohnpei."

The event was hosted by Brenda Hadly Epheriam, Secretary of the Board of Directors of V6AH Radio. Peterson Sam, Commissioner of V6AH Radio, provided a tour of the facilities and in a presentation explained how the money would be utilized to purchase new AM and FM transmitters, as well as a VOIP telephone communication system and additional solar panels.

Ambassador Cantor presented the Radio Station with a ceremonial check for the grant and a commemorative plaque in gratitude for V6AH hosting American Waves Radio for the past year. American Waves is a weekly radio show that provides current news on US Government activities in the FSM, as well as American music. After the event, Ambassador Cantor said: "We are always happy to support our partners at V6AH, and our partnership with the Pohnpei State Government is dynamic and enduring. After learning about the increased capacity of the new transmitters and additional solar panels, we are excited that V6AH will be able to reach many more listeners in a larger geographic area for emergency as well as public broadcasting, as well as be able to take more incoming calls if an emergency situation arises." The equipment is slated to be fully operational by Spring 2022.



FSM-Australia cooperation talks conclude; FSM-Australia relations soar to new heights



FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Government of Australia have recently concluded the 2021 FSM-Australia Cooperation Talks.

The FSM and Australia have agreed to continue collaboration on priority areas of mutual interest, such as security cooperation, Climate Change, infrastructure development, environmental resilience, health security and COVID-19 Pandemic response, human resource development, people-to-people links, and gender equality.

Regarding FSM-Australia security cooperation, the FSM and Australia agreed to continue building the FSM's regional leadership and operational capacity through the Pacific Maritime Security Program as well as additional FSM-Australia security cooperation efforts. It is the FSM's view that this cooperation is in line with the FSM's interests to promote and protect a Free & Open Indo-Pacific.

Regarding Climate Change and Environmental Resilience, the FSM and Australia reaffirmed that Climate Change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific. Australia committed to taking steps to explore how they might support the building of high-priority climate-resilient infrastructure and critical economic infrastructure.

Additionally, Australia committed to helping the FSM advocate and support

the Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-related Sea-Level Rise, as well as working with Japan and the United States of America to address environmental issues caused by the decay of World War II shipwrecks in Chuuk Lagoon.

Regarding Human Development & People-to-People Links, the FSM and Australia committed to building on the recent progress achieved under the Improving the Quality of Basic Education (IQBE) program, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank. Australia committed to continue to supplement its IQBE investment through additional support for three Education Advisers in the FSM National Government and Governments of Chuuk State and Yap State.

Additionally, Australia committed to continuing its support to the FSM's broader development through the Australia Awards program, and through progressing proposals through the Australian Volunteers program to support the Nation's gender, health, disability, environment, and disaster response.

Regarding Gender Equality, the FSM and Australia agreed to work together to elevate consideration of gender equality across the Pacific region. Through the Pacific Women Lead Program, the FSM and Australia will continue to work together on agreed priorities aimed at reducing the incidence of gender-based violence, and strengthening women's economic empowerment.

The 2021 FSM-Australia Cooperation Talks concluded with a signing ceremony between the Honorable Kandhi A. Elieisar, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, and Her Excellency Jo Cowley, Ambassador of Australia to the FSM.

President Panuelo creates FSM Cyber Security & Intelligence Bureau, a new, special division of the Department of Justice

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), through an Executive Order, has created the FSM Cyber Security and Intelligence Bureau (CSIB), a new, Special Division within the Department of Justice.

The CSIB operates under the authority of the Secretary of Justice, and is given the objectives of establishing a practical and operational link to relevant national agencies dealing with cyber security, threats, and management. The Bureau will serve as the cyber-criminal law enforcement and intelligence network that analyzes trends of criminal activities in the nation and the region; it is mandated to implement modalities of collaboration and sharing of information among cyber security agencies; and to provide high-level policy recommendation to the Secretary of Justice on strengthening cyber security and criminal law enforcement, joint exercises and cross training, sharing of intelligence information, and recovery of illegal assets.

The Bureau is mandated to provide technical guidance and expertise, collaborate with partners and networks of assets, to provide security to critical assets and infrastructure of the National Government, and to implement and execute operational mandates within cyber-space in combatting cybercrime. The Bureau shall assist Law Enforcement Officers and Investigators in executing cyber forensics and in other technical capacities.

The Honorable Joses R. Gallen, Secretary of the Department of Justice, has designated Mr. Adam Caldwell to serve as Assistant Secretary of the CSIB. Additional recruitment opportunities for the new division are contingent upon funding from the 22nd FSM Congress, which is presently reviewing the Fiscal Year 2022 budget over the course of their ongoing 2nd Regular Session.

“Mr. Caldwell was formerly employed at the Department of Foreign Affairs when he identified, and neutralized,

specific cyber activity that was harmful to the FSM and its provision of essential services to the People,” Secretary Gallen said in a statement. “That’s why President Panuelo and I urged him to move to the Department of Justice, where we have asked him to help spearhead the Nation’s advancement into the digital sphere.”

“As of 2021, the internet and information technology remain uncharted territory to many Micronesians,” Assistant Secretary Caldwell said in a statement. “The practical effect is that—whether it’s citizens becoming victims of cybercrimes, such as through ransomware attacks and social engineering scams through fake social media and email accounts, Government websites falling to DDOS attacks, or persons engaging in cybercrimes such as the creation and transmission of child pornography—it is entirely in the Nation’s interest that there be people and mechanisms in place to protect our citizens from cybercrimes and cyberattacks. My objective is to build CSIB into a functional bureau that protects Micronesians in the cyber-domain.” Assistant Secretary Caldwell is an alumnus of the Young Pacific Leaders in Cybersecurity Program sponsored by the Government of the United States of America and the Harris Cyber Policy Initiative at the University of Chicago.

The FSM National Government extends its appreciation to both the Governments of the United States of America and Australia for their historical, ongoing, and future support in building the Nation’s capacity in tackling cybercrimes and enhancing cybersecurity.

The creation of CSIB, the Department of Justice’s newest division, comes approximately two years after the creation of the Division of Anti-Human Trafficking.

President Panuelo’s Executive Order establishing CSIB can be found here:

https://gov.fm/files/Presidential%20Orders/September_13_2021-Executive_Order_Cyber_Security_and_Intelligence_Bureau_Division.pdf

Citing concerns over COVID-19 Delta Variant, President Panuelo extends Guam-based pre-quarantine to ten days, requires two tests prior to entry into the FSM

FSM Information Services Press Release

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On September 6th, 2021, and per the advice of the COVID-19 Task Force, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—extended the mandatory Guam-based pre-quarantine for repatriating citizens and residents to ten (10) days from its previous requirement of seven (7) days.

The decision cited concerns over the Delta variant of COVID-19, which has resulted in mobile morgues in the U.S. State of Hawaii and the installation of medical tents in the U.S. Territory of Guam due to hospital overflow. The extension of the mandatory pre-quarantine, crucially, allows for the FSM National Government to implement two COVID-19 tests to repatriating persons prior to their arrival into the FSM. Previously, such repatriating persons only required a single COVID-19 test whilst in pre-quarantine.

“The primary reason for extending pre-quarantine to ten (10) days instead of seven (7) is to give us ample time to conduct two (2) COVID-19 tests to repatriating persons before they come into the country,” President Panuelo said in a statement. “Guam is significantly more vaccinated than the FSM, and is equipped with superior resources, and yet our Guamanian brothers and sisters are finding the Delta variant extraordinarily challenging. The takeaway for us in the FSM, then, is to strengthen our efforts at keeping COVID-19 out of

our country. Our Nation’s top medical experts suggest that the way to keep ourselves safe is to mandate a second test in pre-quarantine. Simply canceling repatriation flights is not politically or economically feasible because the results would mean numerous schools shutting down, infrastructure projects being lost, and assets for tackling illegal fishing being shifted elsewhere.”

All other requirements for repatriation into the FSM remain unchanged, such as possession of documentary evidence of persons being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and the submission of appropriate forms.

Two repatriation flights are scheduled to arrive from the U.S. Territory of Guam to the State of Pohnpei on September 16th and September 30th, 2021, respectively. The latter of these flights is predominantly focused on essential workers such as doctors, engineers, and teachers. The States of Yap and Kosrae have described their intentions for a repatriation flight during the month of September but the dates for those flights are to be determined. The State of Chuuk has described that it may be prepared for its first direct repatriation flight sometime in the month of October, 2021.

As of September 6th, 2021, precisely 560 persons have been repatriated into the Nation. Of this number, 485 persons have been repatriated into the FSM through initial arrival into Pohnpei State; 38 persons have been repatriated into the FSM through initial arrival into Kosrae State; and 37 persons have been repatriated into the FSM through initial arrival into Yap State.

As of September 6th, 2021, approximately 60% of the Nation’s adult population is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and approximately 70% of the Nation’s adult population is partially vaccinated.

The FSM remains COVID-19 free.



People’s Republic of China turns over \$14.3 million, eight-kilometer long secondary road project in Pohnpei

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On September 17th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the newly completed Pohnpei Secondary Road Project in Madolenihmw Municipality. The \$14,300,000 project, generously funded by the People’s Republic of China (China), and constructed by the China Railway Construction Company, is the latest example of how the 32 years of the FSM-China Great Friendship results in tangible and visible benefits for FSM citizens. Joining President Panuelo were His Excellency Huang Zheng, Ambassador of China to the FSM, the Honorable Esmond B. Moses, Vice Speaker of the 22nd FSM Congress, the Honorable Reed B. Oliver, Governor of Pohnpei State, the Honorable Stevick Edwin, Speaker of 10th Pohnpei State Legislature, and His Majesty John A. Adolph, Iso Nahnken of Madolenihmw. The Pohnpei Secondary Road Project joins the endless list of practical construction projects funded and constructed by China, such as the Kahmar Bridge and the Chuuk State Government Complex, and will soon be followed by the completion of the forthcoming National Convention Center directly across from the Office of the President in Palikir, and renovations to the Pohnpei State Government Complex. During the week of September 20-24th, when President Panuelo will visit the State of Kosrae for a formal State Visit, one of the priority items for discussion is how Kosrae State will benefit from the recent donation of sixteen million dollars (\$16,000,000) for development projects of the Nation’s choosing.

“Ambassador Huang,” President Panuelo said in a statement, “I wish to solicit China’s continued support to our Nation and for our People, for Chinese assistance stems from sincere friendship, and comes without any political strings or conditions attached. In particular, I look forward to proceeding further with more projects under

my administration’s ‘Pave the Nation’ initiative.”

“Please extend to my dear friend,” President Panuelo continued, “His Excellency Xi Jinping, President of China, that Micronesia says thank you; I extend our Nation’s sincere gratitude and appreciation for this wonderful road that will serve the People of the FSM who call the State of Pohnpei and the Kingdom of Madolenihmw their home. We share the same values as China in extending peace, friendship, cooperation, and ‘building a community with a shared future for humankind.’”

The FSM National Government sincerely appreciates that China transparently adheres to its four principles of pursuing equality and win-win cooperation, honoring its word while pursuing real results, aiming at development with a focus on capacity-building, and committing to openness, inclusiveness, and mutual learning.

“The Communist Party of China is a political party that has noble feelings for the world,” Ambassador Huang said in his statement. “Under the guidance of Xj Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, the Communist Party of China always takes making new and greater contributions to mankind as its mission, and is committed to fulfilling its responsibility as a major country to promote human progress. China remains firm in pursuing an independent foreign policy of peace, advocates and actively promotes the building of a community with a shared future for humanity, and contributes by offering Chinese wisdom and solutions to global issues, such as poverty reduction and Climate Change.”

From major infrastructure projects that benefit the average citizens’ life on a daily basis, such as the Pohnpei Secondary Road Project, to technical capacity-building efforts to improve the Nation’s ability to sustain itself, the FSM is stronger and more resilient because of its Great Friendship with the People and Government of China.



Committee to Wait meets President to discuss FY2022 budget

FSM Congress Information Services

September 15, 2021

Palikir, Pohnpei--The Second Regular Session of the 22nd Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia convened on September 13, 2021 as set by Speaker Wesley W. Simina to wrap up its review and work on the FY 2022 budget among others measures.

Following the formalities to open and convene a session, Speaker Simina appointed Senator Ferny S. Perman, Chairman of the Committee on Health & Social Affairs to head the Committee to Wait on the President with congressional members Floor Leader Florencio S. Harper, Senator Joseph J. Urusemal and Senator Aren B. Palik.

The meeting began with President David W. Panuelo welcoming the Members of the Committee attending, present as well were members of the Executive staff. Chairman Perman informed the President that the Congress is in session and ready to transact business.

President Panuelo provided the Executive's agenda to the Committee with a summary report of the following details:

1. Pending Nominations
2. Covid19 Update
3. Supplemental Budget
4. Upcoming State Visits to Kosrae & Chuuk
5. Pending Legislation
6. Request: Extend Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund to June 30th, 2022
7. Request: Appropriate \$2,000,000 from local revenue to Augment the Low-Income Household Program.

First item on the President's agenda were nominations for the vacant positions for Secretary of the Department of Resources & Development, Secretary of the Department of Health & Social Affairs, the National Election Commissioner for the State of Yap and a board member slot for the FSM Social Security Board. President Panuelo is seeking positive confirmations from Congress to fill the essential cabinet positions before the next fiscal year. Chairman of

Health & Social Affairs, Senator Ferny S. Perman, explained to the President that during the previous session there was a shortfall of members voting as those members who were absent had prior engagements with the public during those days, but is optimistic that this session will accommodate the Executive's wishes for confirmations.

The next item on the President's agenda is an update by the President on the nation's COVID-19 vaccination status and repatriation efforts with flights scheduled for the upcoming months. Confirmed repatriation dates as of this time for the State of Kosrae are slotted for September 13th, October 4th and October 25th; for the State of Yap, October 3rd (proposed) and October 24th; scheduled for the State of Pohnpei, September 16th & 30th; as of the moment the State of Chuuk's repatriation schedule is to be determined at a later date. In addition to the reported repatriation dates, the President gave an update on the Nation's overall inoculation efforts with current stats for the fully vaccinated at 61.1% and the partially vaccinated at 71.2% of the Nation's population. A breakdown of individual states for those who are fully vaccinated; State of Kosrae at 69.4%, the State of Yap at 80.3%, the State of Pohnpei at 62.9% and 53.7% for the State of Chuuk. The figures for those who are partially vaccinated; the State of Kosrae at 74.2%, the State of Yap at 84.4%, the State of Pohnpei at 74.6% and finally with the State of Chuuk at 64.9%.

A general discussion surrounding the vaccines and quarantine procedures particularly with security issues were raised by the Committee. The President assured the Committee that additional measures in security protocols for quarantine procedures are in place to avoid breaches from likely occurring, one such measure is the use of security cameras to monitor the designated quarantine areas. The President also shared his sincere sentiments regarding the concerns of the Committee and assured them that the utmost care in deploying repatriation procedures are adhered to. Senator Joseph J. Urusemal raised his concerns whether or not

to continue the repatriation efforts until such time a better assessment on whether the current quarantine procedures are truly affective against the new strain of covid19, the Delta variant, as it is known to be highly communicable. Senator Aren Palik also raised his concerns regarding the efficacy of the vaccines and whether they are effective against the new form of Covid19, the Delta variant. Senator Perman responded saying that the vaccines are effective against the Delta variant insomuch as reports have shown that those who were vaccinated and then later infected with the Delta variant showed better odds in surviving than those who were unvaccinated. The President also added that the nation is close to achieving herd immunity and with the recent approval of the Pfizer vaccine by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA), recently rolled out in the State of Kosrae, shows a promising outlook for achieving the nation's goal of herd immunity sooner than later. Chairman Perman also mentioned that once the vaccines become approved for ages 12 and over, a priority vaccination campaign for our younger generation will be carefully considered.

Third item on the President's agenda is the Supplemental Budget. The President reported to the Committee that there is currently a shortfall of \$80,000 for personnel salaries and housing allowances; however, in this case no new money is being requested from the Congress, rather the executive is seeking congressional approval for the reallocation of existing funds to cover the shortfall. Fourth item on the President's agenda is notifying the Congress on the Executive's upcoming visits to the states of Chuuk and Kosrae from September 20th to the 24th, 2021. The purpose of this event is to attend the gubernatorial inaugurations with the possibility of members of the Joint Committee on Compact & Planning (JCRP) in tow.

Fifth item on the President's agenda is Pending Legislation. The President provided the Committee with a list of pending legislation that he wishes the Congress to address during this session, the following are the pending legislation:

1. Cybercrime
2. Non-Communicable Diseases
3. Passport Extensions
4. Bunkering and Provisioning
5. Penalties for violated prohibited plastic materials
6. Legislations to enhance Secretary of Finance's tax enforcement capacity
7. Rome Statute of International Criminal Court
8. Safe release of sharks
9. Maritime Surveillance Revolving Fund

The sixth item on the President's agenda is a request to extend the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund. It is projected that the local economy will still be affected by the pandemic in 2022, and the President is requesting the Congress to extend the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund to assist the local businesses to June 30, 2022.

And finally, the last item on the President's agenda is regarding the Low-Income Household Program, since its inception it has financially assisted upwards to 6,000 households as of this month. The Executive is requesting congressional approval for \$2,000,000 in additional funding to assist 2000 more households, particularly those who were unable to apply for the benefits due to their location on the far outlying islands. To ensure those funds reach these households, the Executive will have in reserve of up to \$500,000 for this specific purpose.

Another matter of importance raised by the President is the nearing expiration of the nation's Public Health Declaration. The Executive is requesting the Congress to address the issue to extend the deadline up to January.

The President concluded the meeting and thanked the Members of the Committee to Wait with Chairman Perman thanking the President, on behalf of Congress, and stated that the Committee would share the President's agenda with the Congress. The meeting concluded with mutual agreement to move forward on the above issues in a timely and cooperative manner.

FSM Consulate Office in Guam temporarily closing due to two COVID-19 positive staff; consulate staff to work remotely, focus exclusively on repatriation efforts

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On September 14th, 2021, the Honorable Teresa Filepin, Consul General of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) based in the U.S. Territory of Guam, sent a request to the Department of Foreign Affairs for the Consulate to be temporarily closed, with Consulate staff reverting to remote-only work. The cause for the request is due to two of the Consulate's staff testing positive for COVID-19. Follow-up testing confirms that all other remaining staff are negative for the virus. The request

for temporary closure has been granted, and so the Consulate is closed until further notice.

The practical effect for FSM citizens resulting from the temporary closure is that essential consular services, such as passport applications, will be indefinitely unavailable. Unless citizens are being directly engaged by the Consulate for repatriation efforts, Consulate staff will be unavailable to them. Conversely, all citizens who are presently engaged in pre-quarantine, or have been in direct communication with the Consulate for forthcoming repatriation operations, can continue to

Interior supports Insular area students through Close-Up and Junior State Foundation \$1.5 Million Promotes Civic Engagement and Education

U.S. Department of the Interior

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs has provided \$1,499,100 in fiscal year 2021 Technical Assistance Program grant funding to two civic engagement and education programs for insular areas students. One million dollars has been announced for the Close-Up Foundation and \$499,100 has been awarded to the Junior State Foundation.

"Every year Congress provides this important support so that the students from the insular areas may participate in the Close-Up and Junior State civic education programs along with students from the other fifty states in the United States," said Nikolao Pula, Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs.

For the past thirty years, Interior has supported over 10,000 students and

educators from the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands and from the freely associated states which are the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. This funding will provide opportunities for students and teachers from the insular areas to participate in Close Up's in-person programs, including both local summits and the Washington, D.C.-based programs for academic year 2021-2022. The civic education opportunities designed for insular area youth creates opportunities for promoting efficient and effective governance.

The Junior State Foundation will support four students from each of the seven insular areas to participate in 3-week programs at Stanford and Georgetown Universities, providing a rigorous summer college-preparatory experience and

President Panuelo strengthens Customs inspection of imports through Administrative Directive

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—Through a recent Administrative Directive, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—has instructed the Department of Finance & Administration to further enhance the Nation's border protection to detect undeclared and illegal imports.

The Directive instructs the Customs & Tax Administration to take "aggressive steps and actions" to ensure proper inspection of shipping containers for high-risk businesses that import cigarettes, and alcohol, and for the Government to identify ways to improve tracking of interstate movement of tobacco and other drugs. It is the intention of the Government that an "actual inspection of verification" occur for any and all high-risk containers, either to ensure appropriate revenue is collected (in the case of tobacco and alcohol) and that illegal items are confiscated and destroyed (in the case of various firearms etc).

For Fiscal Year 2021, the FSM's combined Customs & Revenue Collections on cigarettes has been \$342,112.50 in the State of Chuuk compared to \$421,607.60 in the State of Yap and \$1,946,508.56 in the State of Pohnpei. Juxtaposing this public information, with additional information known to the FSM

National Government, gives the Government reason to believe that the enforcement of laws already on the books will increase revenue and ensure that businesses are able to more freely compete with one another as all businesses follow the same rules.

The Directive requires the Department of Justice to provide protective assistance to the Department of Finance & Administration, including mutual coordination during shipping container inspections.

"The overarching goal behind this Directive is to strengthen the rule of law in our country," President Panuelo said in a statement. "The FSM is a Nation of laws. No person or organization can be above them. We are all equal in the eyes of the law, and our responsibility as Government is to make sure those eyes are where they need to be. This is a win-win situation where, by increasing enforcement, we are also increasing national revenue—which funds essential services that our citizens benefit from every day. Additionally, enforcing the laws already on the books helps to level the private sector playing field."

Citizens interested in reviewing the Directive may find it here: https://gov.fm/files/Presidential%20Orders/September_14_2021_-_MEMO_re_-_Presidents_ADMINISTRATIVE_DIRECTIVE_.pdf

academic boot camp. During these summer programs, students are assigned to develop a community action project in their home islands.

On July 19, 2021, Interior also announced grant funding to fund membership fees for the Insular Areas in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education which makes students from the territories and the freely associated states eligible for in-state tuition rates at select schools in the western United States.

Information about the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs and funding assistance for the insular areas can be found at www.doi.gov/oia.

The Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, @InsularAffairs, and the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) 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. Follow and "like" OIA on Facebook and subscribe to the OIA YouTube Channel.



College of Micronesia-FSM

Yap | Chuuk | Pohnpei | Kosrae

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The National Campus is situated on a 73-acre site near the FSM capital in Palikir, six miles from Kolonia. The student body at the National Campus is composed primarily of recent high school graduates from the four states in the FSM. These students come to the National Campus with bilingual or trilingual backgrounds representing eight different Micronesian languages and as many cultures. Approximately nine hundred fifty full-time students are enrolled each semester in either degree programs or programs leading to a certificate of achievement. Fifteen buildings exist at the site that include classrooms, learning resources center, recreation, student center, dining hall, residence halls for men and for women, offices for faculty and administration, a multipurpose gymnasium, maintenance facilities, tutoring and counseling center.

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We look forward hearing from you!

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