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## FINANCE SECURED FOR CRITICAL BRIDGE UPGRADES

Fiji has secured \$US134.5 million (approximately \$F307.7 million) from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to replace four key bridges on Viti Levu as part of the Critical Bridges Resilience Project.

The funding package, which includes \$US120M (\$F274.5M) in concessional loans and \$US14.5M (\$F33.2M) in grants, will strengthen infrastructure resilience against climate change. “We are taking this loan to address urgent infrastructure needs and ensure our critical transport links remain resilient to extreme weather events,” Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Hon. Professor Biman Prasad

said. “These upgrades are essential for improving connectivity and supporting long-term sustainable growth in Fiji.” The project will replace the Lami, Medraukutu, Sabeto, and Viseisei bridges, which are vital for linking communities, facilitating trade, and supporting tourism. The upgrades align with Fiji’s National Development Plan, which prioritizes climate-resilient infrastructure and improved connectivity. The loan comes with favorable terms, including a 40-year repayment period and a 10-year grace period, giving the government the flexibility to implement the project without undue fiscal pressure. This agreement further strengthens

the partnership between Fiji and ADB, supporting the nation’s efforts to enhance its infrastructure and adapt to the challenges of climate change.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Hon. Professor Biman Prasad, and Regional Director for ADB’s Pacific Subregional Office, Aaron Batten, signing the loan agreement.

## FRA PRIORITIZES EMERGENCY ROAD WORKS IN THE EASTERN ISLANDS



In line with the Fijian Government’s commitment to rural development and boosting socio-economic activity, the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) has deployed teams to carry out urgent road infrastructure works in the Eastern Islands of Fiji.

This initiative, which starts with Gau Island and extends to Moala, Koro, and Vanuabalavu Islands, aims to enhance connectivity, accessibility,

and safety for rural communities. These infrastructure investments will play a key role in integrating rural communities into Fiji’s broader economic landscape.

The first phase of the project focuses on Gau Island, which is geographically isolated and in critical need of road upgrades. Work is already underway, including grading a 5-kilometer stretch of the Gau Circular Road and implementing

drainage systems to safeguard against seasonal flooding. These upgrades will significantly improve the safety and reliability of the road network.

The improved road infrastructure will facilitate better transportation of goods, enhance market access, and ensure essential services such as healthcare and education are more accessible.

These improvements will particularly benefit vulnerable groups, including women and children, who face significant challenges accessing basic services due to poor infrastructure.

By improving the road network on Gau Island, the FRA is laying the groundwork for long-term economic and social benefits, contributing to the island’s economic growth and the well-being of its residents.



## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES: FRA'S COMMITMENT TO RURAL ROADS

The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) remains steadfast in its commitment to upgrading and maintaining the roading infrastructure across Fiji, recognizing the vital role that well-maintained roads play in the nation's overall development. In alignment with government initiatives, the FRA actively supports the upgrading and maintenance of rural roads, and this is evident with current programmes planned for Vanua Levu. The authority understands that improving these roads is essential for connecting all villages and ensuring access to critical infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, and markets. This focus on rural roads is not just about enhancing transportation; it is about fostering economic opportunities, social development, and improving the quality of life for Fijians.

Rural roads have immense potential to utilize local resources effectively, creating decent jobs and bolstering the local economy. By investing in these road networks, the FRA contributes to strengthening local commerce, which is crucial for poverty reduction and overall economic and social development. The direct benefits of investing in rural roads are significant; they lead to job creation, increased incomes, and new business opportunities. When development and maintenance efforts prioritize local resource-based methods, the positive impact on the community is amplified. Over time, these improvements result in better access to goods and services, enhancing production and productivity, which are vital components of sustainable poverty reduction.

One of the key objectives of the FRA

is to ensure equal access to essential infrastructure and services for all communities. Rural roads act as critical arteries, linking residents to markets, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions. The upgrades being undertaken by the FRA aim to provide local residents with reliable access to these essential resources, ultimately enhancing their quality of life. By making it easier for farmers to transport their produce to markets, these road improvements directly boost local economies and livelihoods, creating a ripple effect that benefits entire communities.

The significance of these road upgrades extends beyond mere connectivity; they are particularly beneficial for women and students. Improved rural roads provide safer travel conditions, enabling students to attend school more regularly and fostering educational opportunities. This access is crucial in helping to break the cycle of poverty, as education is a powerful tool for social mobility. For women, enhanced road access facilitates greater participation in the workforce and community activities, promoting gender equality and empowerment. When women are able to travel safely

and easily, they can engage more fully in economic and social life, contributing to the community's well-being.

The FRA's ongoing initiatives in Vanua Levu exemplify a comprehensive approach to infrastructure development. By concentrating on rural roads, the authority addresses immediate transportation needs while laying the groundwork for sustainable community development. The FRA remains committed to engaging with local communities throughout the rehabilitation process, ensuring that their needs and concerns are prioritized. This community involvement is essential for the success of infrastructure projects, as it helps to tailor solutions that directly address local challenges and aspirations.

Looking towards the future, the FRA's medium- to long-term vision for Vanua Levu is to connect all rural roads, thereby providing safe accessibility to all communities. Currently, several villages remain unconnected to the road network, including Duavata Secondary School to Nukusa, Nukudamu, Nabouono, and Vunikodi in the Tikina of Udu within the Macuata Province, as well as Tawake to Wainika, Vatu, Nagasauva, Vatulevu, and Yasawa in the Tikina of Tawake within the Cakaudrove Province along the Udu Peninsular.

Also, from Wailevu, Salia, and Nailou to Napuka, within the Tikina of Tunuloa, to name a few. Achieving connectivity in these areas will unlock significant economic potential, facilitating greater economic activities, boosting tourism, and enhancing access to essential services such as schools and healthcare.





## FRA COMMITTED IN BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENT ROAD NETWORK

Climate change poses a significant threat to Fiji, particularly impacting the coastal roads that connect rural villages to urban areas. These roads are essential for the movement of goods, access to services, and overall community connectivity. However, as sea levels rise and weather patterns become increasingly unpredictable, the infrastructure supporting these vital routes is under increasing strain. Inundation from intense rainfall and flooding has become more frequent, often rendering coastal roads impassable and isolating communities from essential services like healthcare and education.

This isolation can have dire consequences for rural populations, exacerbating vulnerability and limiting economic opportunities. Additionally, coastal erosion is gradually undermining the foundations of these roads, especially those situated near coastlines. As the land erodes, the risk of road collapse increases, leading to costly repairs and prolonged periods of disconnection for affected communities. The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) has recognized the



profound implications of climate change and is actively working to rehabilitate and maintain these roads. The FRA is not only focusing on road rehabilitation but is also incorporating coastal protection measures into its plans. Routine rehabilitation works include reinforcing road structures and encouraging villages to implement natural solutions such as mangrove planting, which helps buffer against wave action and reduces erosion. These dual efforts aim to mitigate the immediate

impacts of climate change while promoting long-term sustainability. By investing in resilient infrastructure, the FRA is striving to ensure that rural roads can withstand future climatic challenges.

Moreover, the FRA is committed to integrating climate resilience into all future road projects. This approach involves using durable materials, innovative engineering practices, and careful planning that takes into account projected changes

in weather patterns. By adapting to these new realities, the FRA aims to create infrastructure that not only survives but thrives, fostering economic growth and social cohesion in rural areas.

The importance of these coastal roads cannot be overstated; they are lifelines for rural communities, facilitating access to markets and resources that are vital for livelihoods. As Fiji continues to face the challenges posed by climate change, the ongoing efforts of the FRA will be crucial in maintaining these connections. Ultimately, building climate-resilient infrastructure is not just an engineering challenge but a necessary step towards safeguarding the future of Fiji's rural communities in an increasingly uncertain climate.

Through collaboration and innovation, Fiji can work towards a sustainable future where its coastal roads remain functional and reliable, empowering its rural populations to thrive despite the looming threats of climate change.

# NORTHERN UPDATE: ROAD WORK CONTINUES ON BUCABAY ROAD

The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) remains committed to maintaining and upgrading the country's sealed road network, recognizing the essential function these roads play in Fiji's overall development and connectivity. As part of its strategic plan, the FRA places significant emphasis on innovative engineering designs that ensure the longevity and durability of national roads.

This approach is particularly evident in ongoing projects like the road works on the Bucabay Road in Savusavu, located in Vanua Levu. This crucial highway serves as a lifeline, connecting the town of Savusavu to Vatuyalewa Jetty in Natuvu, which facilitates the movement of goods and people to and from Taveuni Island.

The Hibiscus Highway along the Bucabay road is more than just a road; it is a critical infrastructure component that supports local economies and enhances accessibility to essential services. By improving this route, the FRA aims to create a more connected and resilient road network that can withstand the challenges posed by increasing travel demands and the changing climate.

The highway's upgrade is not only about enhancing the physical infrastructure but also about ensuring that it can support economic activities, especially in tourism and agriculture, which are pivotal to Fiji's economy.

The Hibiscus Highway was significantly impacted by prolonged periods of rainfall, which led to erosion, potholes, and other structural damage that compromised its safety and



accessibility. The FRA continues to face significant challenges in executing these upgrades, particularly due to the changing weather patterns that have become more unpredictable in recent years. Moreover, logistical issues, such as delays in the supply of essential materials like bitumen from the suppliers, can hinder progress and delay routine maintenance of such roads. These factors underscore the need for adaptive strategies and proactive planning to mitigate potential setbacks in road construction and maintenance.

To address these challenges, the FRA is exploring various solutions that encompass not only technical innovations but also strategic collaborations with local suppliers and stakeholders. By fostering partnerships, the FRA aims to streamline the supply chain for construction materials, ensuring that projects can proceed without unnecessary delays.

Additionally, the FRA is committed to employing resilient construction methods that take into account local environmental conditions,

thereby enhancing the sustainability of the road network. The emphasis on innovative engineering designs is particularly crucial in an era of climate change, where traditional road construction techniques may no longer suffice. By investing in research and development, the FRA is seeking to incorporate cutting-edge technologies and materials that offer improved durability and resistance to weather-related damage. This forward-thinking approach is essential for building infrastructure that not only meets current needs but is also prepared for future challenges.

The ongoing road rehabilitation work along the Hibiscus Highway is a pivotal step in actualizing the Fiji Government's vision of transforming Vanua Levu into a prominent tourism hub. This initiative aligns seamlessly with the recent launch of the "NaVualiku" tourism program, which aims to enhance the island's appeal as a premier travel destination. By improving critical road infrastructure, the FRA plays a crucial role as an implementing partner, facilitating greater connectivity

between communities, towns, essential services, and tourist attractions. This enhanced accessibility is not only expected to draw more visitors but also to foster economic activity, thereby creating sustainable growth for the region. As more tourists explore the natural beauty and cultural richness of Vanua Levu, local businesses will thrive, generating employment opportunities and boosting the economy.

Ultimately, the investment in road rehabilitation is more than just infrastructure development; it is a strategic move to position Vanua Levu as a competitive player in the tourism sector, supporting the broader goals of economic diversification and community resilience. The combined efforts of the government and FRA in this endeavor reflect a commitment to nurturing the island's potential and enhancing the livelihoods of its residents. Ultimately, the FRA's dedication to maintaining and upgrading the sealed road network is pivotal for Fiji's growth and development. The upgrades to the Hibiscus Highway serve as a prime example of how targeted infrastructure investments can lead to broader economic benefits.

As the FRA continues to navigate the complexities of road construction in the face of environmental challenges, its commitment to innovative solutions and resilient infrastructure remains unwavering. Through these efforts, Fiji can look forward to a more connected and prosperous future, where the road network supports not only the movement of goods and services but also the overall well-being of its communities.



The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) remains committed to enhancing road infrastructure throughout Fiji, recognizing the critical role that safe and reliable roads play in the everyday lives of the people of Fiji.

As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance accessibility and road safety, the Fiji Roads Authority is undertaking significant asphalt concrete (AC) pavement works in key locations across the country.

These improvements are designed to increase the durability of Fiji's roads, ensuring they can withstand the challenges posed by heavy traffic and adverse weather conditions.

The Fiji Roads Authority is working closely with various stakeholders, including local communities, contractors, and government entities, to ensure that these developments align with the needs of the public. Through these initiatives, the Fiji Roads Authority aims to enhance connectivity, support economic growth, and provide safer travel for all Fijians.

By investing in robust and modern road infrastructure, the Fiji Roads Authority is helping to build a stronger, safer future for Fiji, as improved road conditions lead to a significant reduction in travel time, allowing individuals to navigate their daily commutes and errands with greater ease and efficiency.

## FRA ENHANCES ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SAFER, MORE ACCESSIBLE ROADS



### NABUKELEVU ROAD WORKS IN KADAVU

### ROAD WORKS AT NABOUTINI, SERUA

### NEW STREETLIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE



Recent maintenance works along Nabukelevu Road in Kadavu. Drainage work is now complete, with ongoing efforts focused on grading, spot re-sheeting, and compaction on critical sections of the road to improve the rural road surface. These ongoing efforts are expected to enhance the overall condition of Nabukelevu Road, making it safer and more accessible for the local community.

Preparatory works at Naboutini, Serua, to extend the sealing of village frontages, a project aimed at significantly reducing dust pollution and enhancing the overall quality of life for the local residents.

The Fiji Roads Authority plans to undertake similar projects in other identified locations soon.

Recent infrastructure upgrades have enhanced safety and convenience for several communities. New streetlights were installed and activated in various locations, including Tacirua, Upper Cunningham Road, Lomaivuna Government Station, Sector 4, Qoma Landing, Nukuvuto and near Queen Victoria School. These enhancements aim to improve safety and security for pedestrians and motorists.

# ENSURING ROAD SAFETY DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON: A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

As the festive and holiday season approaches, bringing with it an atmosphere of joy and celebration, the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) is urging all road users—motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists alike—to stay vigilant and prioritize road safety. This time of year typically sees an increase in travel, both within and across regions, and it is crucial to recognize the efforts being made to improve road infrastructure while also adhering to safety regulations. In recent months,



the FRA has been working tirelessly to rehabilitate and upgrade the country's road infrastructure. Significant efforts are underway, including resealing, asphalt concrete pavement works, and other essential roadworks aimed at improving the safety and efficiency of Fiji's road network. However, with these upgrades come necessary road closures, diversions, and the presence of roadworks, which require a higher level of awareness from all road users.

## UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF ONGOING ROADWORKS

While the roadworks are vital for the long-term development of our transportation network, they may cause temporary inconveniences. For example, parts of the road may be narrowed, lanes may be redirected, or speed limits may be reduced to ensure the safety of workers and motorists. FRA emphasizes the importance of adhering to road signage that directs you around these areas. These signs are placed with your safety in mind, and ignoring them can result in serious accidents, delays, and unnecessary risks to both roadworkers and the traveling public. Moreover, traffic controllers are positioned at key intersections and roadwork zones to help manage traffic flow and minimize disruptions. It is important for all drivers to listen to their directions and follow their instructions promptly. Simple acts of patience, such as slowing down in construction zones, can prevent potential accidents and ensure that everyone remains safe.

## PLAN YOUR TRAVEL AND STAY INFORMED

Meticulous planning is a cornerstone of safe travel. The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) emphasizes the importance of checking for the latest road updates, diversions, and advisories before embarking on any journey. By proactively planning your route, you can avoid unexpected delays and disruptions, allowing for a smoother and safer travel experience. It is crucial to

pay close attention to road-related advisories, such as weather warnings and traffic management plans. These advisories often provide vital information about potential hazards or road closures that could impact your travel plans. By staying informed and adapting your travel plans accordingly, you can significantly reduce the risk of accidents and ensure your safety on the road.



## PEDESTRIAN SAFETY: A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Pedestrians also have a role to play in road safety, particularly in areas where roadworks are in progress. It is important to use designated crossings, obey traffic signals, and remain aware of vehicles and road conditions. With the festive season bringing increased foot traffic in some areas, both drivers and pedestrians must exercise caution and consideration for each other's safety. Remember, road safety is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation from all individuals using the roadways.

## THE DANGERS OF SPEEDING AND RECKLESS DRIVING

Speeding remains a persistent menace to road safety, especially during peak travel periods like the festive season. The allure of rapid travel can often cloud judgment, leading drivers to disregard speed limits and compromise road safety.

The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) strongly urges all motorists to strictly adhere to the speed limits, particularly in areas undergoing roadworks. It is crucial to remember that

speed limits are not arbitrary regulations but are carefully calculated to ensure road safety.

During the festive season, increased traffic congestion and potentially adverse weather conditions can significantly exacerbate road hazards. To mitigate risks, it is imperative to adjust driving behavior accordingly. This includes reducing speed, maintaining a safe following distance, and ensuring that vehicles are in

optimal working condition. By prioritizing safety and responsible driving, we can ensure that the holiday season is a time of joy and celebration, free from the devastating consequences of road accidents.

Let us all commit to being responsible road users, and together, we can create a safer travelling environment for all.

## IMPORTANT HEALTH AWARENESS SESSION AT THE FIJI ROADS AUTHORITY

In recognition of Movember, an annual event dedicated to raising awareness about men's health, the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) recently hosted an important health awareness session. This session, facilitated by the Fiji Cancer Society, aimed to educate FRA employees on the critical issues of prostate and testicular cancer.

The session provided valuable insights into early signs and symptoms of these cancers, empowering attendees with knowledge on how to detect these conditions early. By focusing on early detection, the session emphasized the importance of regular health checks, which can significantly improve the chances of successful treatment. During the presentation, participants learned about various detection methods and available treatment options. The information shared helped attendees understand that taking proactive measures, such as getting regular check-ups, can be a life-saving step. The Fiji Roads Authority recognizes that raising awareness and fostering open conversations about health is crucial in supporting the well-being of



its employees. By working together, we can ensure that no one faces the challenges of cancer alone. Early detection truly saves lives, and with continued education and action, we can make a lasting impact on men's health. The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA)



also supported the Pink October event, a global initiative dedicated to raising awareness about breast cancer. During this special month, individuals and organizations worldwide unite to educate communities on the importance of early detection, the signs and symptoms of breast cancer, and the life-saving impact of regular check-ups.

The Pink October campaign emphasizes the critical role early identification plays in the fight against breast cancer. By encouraging everyone, especially women, to be proactive about their health, it aims to reduce the incidence of late-stage diagnoses and improve survival rates. Simple steps like self-examinations, recognizing warning signs, and seeking professional medical advice can make a significant difference in outcomes. The Fiji Roads Authority recognizes the value of spreading awareness within the community and stands alongside the Fiji Cancer Society, who have been instrumental in educating the public and supporting those affected by breast cancer. Through their ongoing efforts, the Society helps empower individuals to prioritize their health and well-being.

## FRA AND JICA COLLABORATE ON MANGROVE REPLANTING



The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA), in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), facilitated Mangrove Replanting Program for the Tamavua-i-Wai Bridge Project. As infrastructure development progresses, it is vital to mitigate any potential negative impacts on the surrounding ecosystems. The Tamavua-i-Wai Bridge Project is no exception, and the FRA recognizes the importance of restoring mangrove habitats that may have been affected during construction. Mangroves play a critical role in coastal ecosystems; they act as natural barriers against storm surges, provide vital nesting and feeding grounds for various species, and serve as a key carbon sink in the fight against climate change.



The Mangrove Replanting Program aims to revitalize these essential ecosystems that have been compromised, ensuring they continue to support local biodiversity and contribute to the overall health of the environment. By engaging in this program, the FRA and JICA are not only addressing the immediate environmental concerns associated with the bridge construction but are also taking proactive steps toward long-term ecological sustainability. In addition, this initiative fosters community involvement and raises awareness about the importance of mangroves in maintaining ecological balance. FRA extends its heartfelt gratitude to all invited stakeholders, including local communities, environmental organizations, and volunteers, for their active participation in the replanting efforts. Their involvement



is invaluable to the success of this program and reinforces the idea that environmental stewardship is a collective responsibility. Through collaborative efforts such as this, the FRA demonstrates its dedication to creating infrastructure that harmonizes with nature. The Mangrove Replanting Program is a testament to this commitment, and it serves as a model for future projects aiming to balance development with environmental protection. By investing in the restoration of mangrove ecosystems, FRA is helping to secure the resilience of these areas against the impacts of climate change, ultimately benefiting both the natural environment and the communities that depend on it.





From the Fiji Roads Authority family, we extend warmest Christmas greetings to all our valued clients and stakeholders. We appreciate your continued support and understanding as we work tirelessly to improve Fiji's road network.

May this festive season be filled with joy, peace, and prosperity for you and your loved ones.

WISHING YOU A

**Merry Christmas**

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Fiji Roads Authority®

