



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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For Immediate Release

EU supports Fiji schools affected by Cyclone Tomas

The European Union (EU) and the Fiji Ministry of Education today signed an agreement to allocate FJD 2 million for rehabilitation of schools damaged by Cyclone Tomas. The funds are provided by the EU through the Fiji Education Sector Programme (FESP) and will be used to repair damaged school buildings, equipment and supplies, amongst others.

An advanced amount of FJD 1 million has been paid to the Ministry right away to tackle immediate challenges and address the schools' most urgent needs. The other 50 per cent of the money will be used to carry out essential repairs of infrastructure and replenish damaged school equipment such as computers, copiers, workshop machinery, and laboratory equipment.

Approximately 90 schools have been identified as having been severely damaged by Tropical Cyclone Tomas following an assessment by the Fiji Ministry of Education and FESP. These schools are in need of urgent support in order to be able to fully resume teaching.

'The European Union would like to convey their expression of deep sympathy and solidarity to the people of Fiji affected by the Cyclone, ' said Ambassador Wiepke van der Goot, Head of EU Delegation for the Pacific. 'We sincerely hope to see schools re-open as soon as possible in the affected areas so as to minimise the disruption to students learning' he said.

After the signing of the agreement at the EU Delegation for the Pacific, Mr Filipe Jitoko, Permanent Secretary for Education, said: 'The Ministry is grateful to the EU for its sympathetic consideration by providing these funds'.

The EU-funded Fiji Education Sector Programme has been supplying widespread and vital assistance to Fiji's education system since 2005. The programme has a total volume of FJD 56 million and provides infrastructural support to 303 schools spread across 37 islands.

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