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PRESS RELEASE

First Vet Hospital for the Pacific takes shape

Suva, Fiji Islands. Today marks a historic day for the Pacific as Fiji National University (FNU) signed the contract for the construction of the regions first Veterinary Hospital Complex at the FNU's College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF), Koronivia Campus.

Four consultants signed the contracts today at CAFF. Architectural Services will be provided by Conrad Garget, Civil & Structural Engineering Services by Shri Singh & Associates, Quantity Surveying Services by Rawlinson Jenkins Ltd and Lucid Consulting Australia Ltd is the Building Services Engineer consultant. HLK Jacob was awarded the Project Manager contract last year.

The Government of Fiji has given an allocation of \$3.0 million for the year 2017-2018 for this project.

The hospital will consist of isolation wards, dog and cat ward, x-ray room, dental facility, treatment room, prep and store room, surgery room, six consultation rooms, post mortem facilities, DNA lab, Post PCR lab together with other facilities.

FNU Vice Chancellor Professor Nigel Healey said the project is exciting for the University because it is the most novel.

Professor Healey said the University has been looking for best practices and has reached out to international universities to obtain assistance in the design of the hospital.

"Fiji is going through a period of rapid economic growth with the capital GDP being more than double since 2006, everywhere you look there is investment taking place and constructions are underway and this is particularly true for the University. The University is in the major development phase at the moment and this facility will be a game changer for Fiji."

Professor Healey said the hospital would be of great assistance in training the specialists to curb the shortage of vets in the Pacific.

"We currently, sub-lease our dairy farm to Grace Road Food Company in Navua and they had to bring in vets from Korea when they took over that place because they couldn't get staff here."

"At the moment, in Fiji most of the vets are expatriates on short term contracts. This hospital transforms for the nation, our ability to produce and support the livestock sector and this is an area which we know has huge potential if we actually had the trained staff to support that."

Professor Healey said FNU is committed in its endeavor to achieve its vision of a quality education that is contributing positive economic returns to the nation and lives of animals as well in partnership with a caring, sustainable animal healthcare system.

Currently, there are 125 students enrolled in the Veterinary Science programme at CAFF.

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About the Fiji National University: The Fiji National University (FNU) was established through the merger of 7 government-owned tertiary institutions in Fiji, and commenced operations from 1 January 2010. The constituent institutions are found at over 40 different locations across Fiji, and collectively offer Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Degrees, Postgraduate qualifications and Skills Upgrading for those who are already in employment. Approximately 30,000 students pass through the University each year. Over the last six years of its operations, the University has registered major achievements with regard to new programme delivery, quality improvements and contribution to research and publications via its 5 Colleges: The College of Humanities & Education (CHE), the College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences (CMNHS), the College of Engineering, Science & Technology (CEST), the College of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry (CAFF), the College of Business, Hospitality & Tourism Studies (CBHTS) and the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC).