



Nauru Bulletin

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Nauru celebrates Independence Day

55th Independence Day and 77th anniversary of Nauruans return from exile on Chuuk

His Excellency President Russ Kun delivered his maiden Independence Day address to the nation celebrating its 55th Independence Day and the 77th anniversary of Nauruans return from exile on Chuuk following the Second World War.

President Kun stressed that while Nauruans celebrated Independence Day, they must also reaffirm to continue to promote its traditional values and principles entrusted to them as custodians of their island nation, and to work hard to foster sustainable development that will propel Nauru to prosperity.

“Even as Nauru celebrates, our hearts lament in remembrance of our ancestors, uprooted from their homes to live in a country not their own.

“Their stories passed down through generations, forever embedded in Nauru’s history are a part of our essence as a nation.

“Their courage, patriotism, tenacity, and unwavering faith in God are an inspiration. We acknowledge and rejoice with those here with us today, who returned from Chuuk 77 years ago.”



President Kun addresses the nation at the flag raising ceremony

President Kun also paid tribute to Nauru’s founding father and president the late Sir Hammer DeRoburt.

“I am privileged to have the opportunity to uphold his vision and ensure that Nauru remains ‘free and independent’.”

President Kun laid a wreath at the foot of the cenotaph in honour and remembrance of all Nauruans who perished and survived the occupation of Nauru during World War II including the lepers who were killed during that time.

The national flag was then carried by WWII

survivor Abawo Diringa and hoisted by Nauru Police Force Senior Constable Alice Fritz.

The NPF brass band then performed the national anthem followed by the inspection of the guard by President Kun and his state address.

Seventy-nine year old Joseph Hiram spoke on behalf of WWII survivors sharing his knowledge and stories told to him of the war then as an adult Nauru’s progress and achievements in gaining independence and eventual ownership of its phosphate industry.

President Kun then presented gifts to the senior citizens affectionately known as young at hearts and national treasures before the congratulatory messages of foreign governments were read out by the foreign affairs department.

Hymns were sung by church choirs and the opening and closing prayers rendered by Pastor Gaye Hiram and Reverend Roger Mwareow respectively.

The program was rounded off with the march parade led by the NPF •

WWII survivor tells his story

Joseph Laben Hiram, born during the World War II invasion of Nauru, spoke on behalf of World War II survivors at Nauru’s 55th Independence Day and 77th anniversary of the people’s return from Chuuk.

Mr Hiram did his studies in mechanical engineering at Gordon Institute, Geelong, in the Australian state of Victoria.

Throughout his 40 years of service to Nauru he held the positions of general manager of NPC; Director of Civil Aviation; Mechanical Engineer at RONPHOS; former Member of Parliament for the Constituency of Ubenide; and manager to various projects.

Mr Hiram oversaw and managed the installation of Nauru’s first desalination plant and the tank farm.

This is Joseph’s story:

My name is Joseph Laben Hiram. I was born on the 10th of March 1943. I am very honoured indeed to be given this opportunity to speak to you all on this very auspicious occasion on Independence Day for this lovely island of ours.

My story began many years ago, when I was working as a General Manager of the Nauru Phosphate Corporation (NPC) and I had a visitor from Korea who came to negotiate purchase of phosphate rock from Nauru. I took this visitor to the Menen hotel for lunch where we met Mr Frank Limen, also known by Nauruans by the name of Gongow, who was the manager of the bar at that time.

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WWII survivor tells his story

...from pg 1

Mr Limen saw three expensive pens in my shirt pocket and asked if I could give him one, which I hesitated and told him that these pens were used to sign multimillion dollar contracts for the sale of phosphates.

With that, he started telling me a story that happened many years ago in 1943. He continued delivering and said, “during that time the Americans were strafing the island with machine gun fire and dropping bombs randomly, as I ran passed a house I heard the wailing of a baby, I went to investigate and I saw this baby alone in the house in a mosquito net. I immediately snatched the baby up and ran off with the baby to the caves, and in my haste in entering the caves I accidentally bumped the child’s head against the rock face.”

As he told the story, I listened with fascination not expecting what’s at the end of the story until he mentioned the scar on the corner of my right eyebrow. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr Limen saved my life, I was that baby. I removed one of the pens in my shirt pocket and gave it to him, a very small reward for saving my life.

On a happier note, Nauruans were again celebrating for the reunion of the 500 Nauruans who remained on Nauru and the return of the 700 Nauruans from Truk in 1946, and a lot of celebration and jubilation was had amongst all the Nauruans, according to my parents - a very happy occasion.

The next happy occasion occurred on the 31st of January 1968, when Nauru was granted independence by Australia following the insistence of the United Nations Trusteeship Council. At that time, I was living in Melbourne working for the British Phosphate Commissioners (BPC) as a junior mechanical engineer. On the day of Independence, I felt very happy being congratulated by my many work mates at BPC, and everywhere I went it seemed that everyone was smiling and laughing, and as I walked the streets of Melbourne I was filled with mixed emotions.

Later in that year 1968, I was summoned by the general manager of BPC Mr Ravens Croft, and upon entering his office I was greeted by two revered gentlemen, the general manager himself and the new president of the newly elected Republic of Nauru. And after normal exchanges of greetings and congratulatory



World War II survivor Mr Joseph Hiram

words, the general manager conveyed to me that His Excellency request to have me transferred from BPC to the newly inaugurated Nauru Phosphate Corporation, to help assist in establishing the NPC Melbourne office, and to ensure that there is a continuity of supplies to the island with regards to medicines, essential goods, fuel, and spare parts for the Phosphate industry, and this was carried out immediately with no delay incurred.

I am very fortunate and blessed to have witnessed the birth of the new Republic and the developments that carried on in the latter years. I have worked for my home country since the start alongside the first president His Excellency Hammer DeRoburt, and the successive presidents that followed in regards to the phosphate business. I am fortunate to see three handovers of the phosphate industry in Nauru, from BPC to NPC and later from NPC to RONPHOS Corporation in 2005. By 2008 I finally retired from my duties to the Republic after a working span of over 40 years.

To my fellow Nauruans, there is nothing more rewarding than serving your country to the best of your abilities. There were great times with great wealth, and there were also times of great struggles that we have all experienced, and with perseverance and the will of God we will suffice. God bless Nauru and her people.

Thank you.

Donations of artefacts to Naoero Museum

The Naoero Museum received donations of artefacts from the personal collection of the Secretary for the Department of People Living with Disabilities Riddell Akua, 3 February.

The artefacts include one bombshell casing, four clamshell fossils, one long-barrelled firearm and a plaque depicting the Nauru Phosphate Corporation’s (NPC) emblem used during Secretary Akua’s time as chair of the state-owned entity, NPC, before taking it down as the corporation transitioned into RONPHOS in 2005.

Secretary Akua donated his personal collection saying that he wanted other Nauruans to be able to view and appreciate them.

Director of the Naoero Museum, Horasio Cook expressed his gratitude on the museum’s behalf saying that the artefacts will further contribute to teaching future generations about Nauru’s history.

The museum welcomes artefacts from members of the public as a donation or temporary lending.

For enquiries and donations you may contact the museum on 5573999 or horasio.cook2418@gmail.com •



Secretary for DPLWD Riddell Akua (left) and Director for Naoero Museum Horasio Cook

Philippines donate \$10K for COVID assistance

The Government of the Philippines donated USD10,000 in response to Nauru’s call for assistance during its first community outbreak of COVID-19 in June 2022.

Nauru’s High Commissioner to Australia Camilla Solomon received the donation on behalf of the Nauru Government from Ambassador of Philippines to Nauru Ma Hellen Barber de la Vega, on the eve of Nauru’s Independence Day, 30 January.

Nauru had been COVID-free for two years until the community outbreak in June 2022, prompting the government to reach out for assistance.

“We reached out to our close friends for support as we face the unknown of what lies ahead, keeping in mind the community’s most vulnerable members, such as the elderly and those with chronic medical concerns. Due to our limited resources and capacity in the health sector, we needed the assistance,” Ms Solomon said.

“On behalf of the Government and the people of Nauru let me express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Philippines for responding with this generous financial donation.

“In saying this, Nauru also stands with the Government and the



High Commissioner Solomon receives donation from Ambassador De La Vega

people of the Philippines in its fight against the pandemic and we continue to pray for your country as it battles this pandemic.

“Your kind donation will also assist our health sector in its ongoing efforts to battle the emergence of a second wave of COVID-19 and safely transition the country towards zero-COVID in community.” •

President Kun receives ambassadors

His Excellency President Russ Kun received six ambassadors on the eve of Nauru’s Independence Day for the presentation of their credentials accrediting them as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of their respective countries.

The order of presentation began with Ambassador Dean-Shiang Lin of Taiwan, followed by Ambassador Roi Rosenblit of the State of Israel, Ambassador Tim Mawe of Ireland, Ambassador Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten of Switzerland, Ambassador Marion Derckx of the Netherlands, and Ambassador Markus Ederer of Germany.

The ambassadors arrived in Nauru on 27 January on a Nauru Airlines flight and presented their credentials on 30 January. They visited various key areas of importance around the island and attended a church service, and were guests of honour at the Independence Day flag raising ceremony.

This is the second occasion in which the presentation of credentials have been done in person since the outbreak of COVID-19; the first being that of Israel’s Honourary Consul to Nauru, Sean Oppenheimer in February 2021.



National flags of the six nations whose ambassadors presented their credentials to President Kun fly in front of the government office complex

Ambassador of Taiwan Dean-Shiang Lin

His Excellency President Russ Kun received Mr Dean-Shiang Lin for the presentation of credentials accrediting him as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of China (Taiwan) to the Republic of Nauru, 30 January.

Ambassador Lin holds a Bachelor of Political Science Degree from the National Taiwan University and a Master’s Degree in Business Administration from RMIT University in Australia. He is a seasoned diplomat with a vast experience in Foreign affairs.



Ambassador Lin received by the Nauru Police Force guard of honour

His Excellency President Russ Kun said in his remarks that he was pleased to receive the ambassador and that his recent visit to Taiwan was successful in terms of deepening the ties between the two allied nations.

“Nauru and Taiwan... enjoy a familial and close relationship nurtured over the years. Our friendship relies on our common desires for peace, stability and economic prosperity.

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Ambassador of Taiwan Dean-Shiang Lin

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“It was a great honour for me to lead a high-level delegation to visit Taiwan last year. It was my first time in Taipei and the gracious welcome as well as the generous hospitality accorded to my delegation during our visit reinforced the feeling of family between our people and our countries.”

Prior to his arrival in Nauru, Mr. Lin was posted as the Director General of the Taipei Economic and Trade Office in Surabaya, Indonesia. Ambassador Lin succeeds Dean Hai-Long Wang who served in the role for over three years.

Ambassador Lin is the first foreign dignitary to present credentials in-person since the easing of COVID travel restrictions. President Kun received six ambassadors on the same.

Nauru and Taiwan established diplomatic relations in 1980, but after a hiatus of three years re-established diplomatic relations in 2005. Nauru is a staunch supporter of Taiwan on the international stage and the two countries enjoy a cordial and very close relationship based on mutual respect, understanding and cooperation.

Ambassador Lin joined other visiting ambassadors attend Nauru's Independence Day celebrations, a courtesy call on cabinet ministers and tours of various infrastructure around the island •

Tarowong Ambassador Wang

His Excellency President Russ Kun hosted a farewell banquet for the outgoing Taiwan ambassador to Nauru as he completes his tenure of three and a half years.

The dinner held on 17 January was filled with mixed emotions as Nauru says tarowong to close friend, Ambassador Dean Hai-Long Wang.

President Kun thanked Ambassador Wang for his friendship and unwavering support to Nauru and her people, and reiterated the likeness of the two countries' bond as that of family.

Ambassador Wang said his time on Nauru was challenging at times yet memorable and enjoyed the friendships he formed over the years while in Nauru.

He said he was privileged to have worked with three presidents, former presidents Baron Waqa and Lionel Aingimea, and now President Kun; and was honoured to have accompanied Mr Aingimea and President Kun on their state visits to Taiwan.

Ambassador Wang was instrumental in arranging chartered flights for Nauruan patients to Taiwan for critical medical treatments at a time when international borders were shut and overseas medical treatment was not possible due to the restrictions.

During the outbreak of COVID, Ambassador Wang worked closely with the Nauru government to provide timely support from Taiwan and worked to advance Nauru's development in areas such as health, scholarships, agriculture, aviation, infrastructure, renewable energy, maritime security, and climate change.

He was active in the community and a strong advocate for healthy living as he took up daily runs and bike rides around the airstrip and island ring road and took part or sponsored healthy living events.

Ambassador Wang presented his credentials on Friday 7 June 2019.

A qualified lawyer, he has held a range of leadership roles throughout his career in Taiwan's ministry of foreign affairs both at home and in Greece at the secretary level and in Capetown, South Africa in the role of director-general.

NAURU BULLETIN

ROAD SAFETY MEASURES



Buckle up

Wear your seat belt at all times. Wear a helmet when driving a motorcycle.



Observe the speed limit

Speed limit: 50kph
Driving past schools, churches and hospital: 20kph.



Pedestrian crossing

Drivers should slow down at traffic stops and give way to pedestrians at a zebra crossing.



Never drink and drive

Have a designated driver if you plan to drink. Don't operate a vehicle when you're intoxicated.

Carry your driver's licence and ensure your vehicle is registered and roadworthy.



Top: President Kun presents Ambassador Wang with a farewell gift of framed Nauru stamps

Bottom: Friends show support on the day of departure, 20 January.

[Photos: Taiwan Embassy]

He has also held a number of directorships including director and deputy director-general of the Taipei economic and cultural office in San Francisco, California., USA.

On the day of his departure, Friday 20 January, Ambassador Wang read banners of farewell at the airport and along the runway fencing strung up by friends and supporters.

Ambassador Wang hopes Nauruan friends continue their friendship and to lend their support to his successor Ambassador Lin Dean-Shiang, to further strengthen the relationship between the two countries •

Ambassador of Israel Roi Rosenblit

His Excellency President Russ Kun received the letter of Credence of Mr Roi Rosenblit accrediting him as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Israel to the Republic of Nauru with residence in Israel, 30 January.

Ambassador Rosenblit was accompanied by the Honorary Consul of Israel to Nauru Sean Oppenheimer at the presentation of credentials.



Ambassador Rosenblit presenting his credentials to President Kun

During the meeting the ambassador acknowledged that Nauru and Israel share fundamental values and expressed his gratitude for Nauru's continued support of Israel in the United Nations.

"Your Excellency, the relations between Israel and Nauru are unique. Our bond of membership is unbreakable. It is based on mutual values of peace, freedom and democracy and in our belief of the Lord Almighty and in the scripts of the Holy Bible," Ambassador Rosenblit said.

"We cherish Nauru's strong and ongoing support for Israel in the United Nations. We are thankful for Nauru's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel."

In 2021, the State of Israel reappointed Mr Oppenheimer as Honorary Consul of Israel to Nauru and agreed to the appointment of Nauru's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Mrs Margo Deiye as non-resident Ambassador of Nauru to Israel.

Nauru and Israel established diplomatic relations in 1994 and have enjoyed a close partnership based on mutual respect and interests.

Bilateral discussions between Nauru and Israel remain active. Most recently the State of Israel took an active role in engaging with the Pacific region via the launching of the Israel-Pacific Food Security Alliance (IPFSA), focusing its development assistance in the agricultural and water sectors.

In the international arena, Nauru is a champion in advocating for Israel from the Pacific region. Nauru has consistently supported the State of Israel at the United Nations by voting against resolutions that jeopardise Israel's interests and voting in favour of resolutions that support the interests of Israel.

Ambassador Rosenblit arrived on 27 January and during his stay joined other visiting ambassadors at the Independence Day celebrations and visited solar farms, RonPhos, Nauru port, museum, Nauru Secondary School and toured other destinations around the island •

Ambassador of Ireland Tim Mawe

His Excellency President Russ Kun received Mr Tim Mawe for the presentation of credentials accrediting him as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ireland to the Republic of Nauru, 30 January.

During his visit to Nauru Secondary School, the Ambassador placed special emphasis on the importance of education and how vital it is for students to "build" their lives, careers and their country.



Ambassador Mawe with President Kun following the presentation of credentials

Ambassador Mawe joined other visiting ambassadors attend Nauru's Independence Day celebrations on 31 January, courtesy call on cabinet ministers and tours of key infrastructure around the island.

Ireland provides a Trust Fund for Building Climate Change and Disaster Resilience in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) which Nauru has access to.

In the past, Ireland has provided multiple scholarship and fellowship opportunities for Nauruans to further their education and helped Nauru through donations of medical supplies to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 in 2020.

Ireland adopts a regional-specific assistance rather than country-specific, it therefore tends to engage directly with the related Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies including the Pacific Islands Forum (PIFS) and funding injected into international funding mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the Adaptation Fund which Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are one of the major beneficiaries, including Nauru as a SID.

Ireland is committed to developing two-way economic partnerships with Asia-Pacific in the following sectors as relevant to Nauru's priorities:

- i. Trade and Investment
- ii. Agriculture and Food
- iii. Education

He arrived Friday 27 January and departed Friday 3 February. Ambassador Mawe succeeds Breandán Ó Caolláí.

Ireland and Nauru established diplomatic relations on 25 February 2000 •

Switzerland Ambassador Bichet-Anthamatten

His Excellency President Russ Kun received the letter of Credence of Ms Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten accrediting her as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Switzerland to the Republic of Nauru, 30 January.

Ambassador Bichet-Anthamatten succeeds Ms Yasmine Zwahlen. Her service with the Swiss Foreign Ministry began in 2003 and has since served at the Swiss Embassy in Singapore, as legal advisor at the Swiss Mission to the United Nations in New York, and as Second Deputy Head of Mission at the Swiss Mission to the European Union in Brussels.



President Kun receives Ambassador Bichet-Anthamatten

“Despite the distance between Nauru and Switzerland, I am pleased to note that our relationship has evolved into a genuine partnership premised on mutual respect and shared principles to uphold universal peace, freedom, democracy, and human rights. My government looks forward to working with you during your tenure to further strengthen ties and forge new opportunities for cooperation,” President Kun said.

The Ambassador holds a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School of Law in Diplomacy in Boston.

Nauru and Switzerland established diplomatic relations in 2003 of which were previously limited to periodic contacts and occasional cooperation.

However, in 2019, Switzerland offered Nauru assistance to establish an office in Geneva with dual accreditation to the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG) and Swiss Confederation, and subsidises the office rent of Nauru’s mission in Geneva, staff recruitment, and relocation costs for Nauru’s ambassador up to four years ending in August 2023.

Switzerland is a major partner of the Pacific region. Its cooperation to the Pacific includes USD100,000 contribution in 2020, for capacity building and climate change migration projects.

Under the Switzerland Official Development Assistance (ODA), the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs focuses international cooperation in four priority regions, including South-East Asia (which includes the Pacific).

For the period 2021-2024, the four thematic priorities are: Creating decent jobs; Addressing climate change; Reducing the causes of forced and irregular migration; Working to promote the rule of law.

The Ambassador visited the Nauru Post office to officially handover the donation of three electric delivery bikes to Nauru Post on behalf of her government.

The Ambassador arrived on Nauru on 27 January and joined other visiting ambassadors attend Nauru’s Independence Day flag raising ceremony, courtesy call on cabinet ministers and toured the Nauru port, solar farm, RonPhos, museum and a separate courtesy call on the Department of Women’s and Social Development Affairs’ women’s rights and child protection section •

Ambassador of Netherlands Marion Derckx

His Excellency President Russ Kun received Mrs Marion Derckx for the presentation of her letter of credence accrediting her as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Republic of Nauru, 30 January.

“I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Netherlands for the assistance and cooperation rendered to Nauru. I hope your visit will provide the opportunity for potential cooperation between our two nations,” President Kun said.



Ambassador Derckx inspecting the guard before presenting her credentials

Mrs Derckx has multiple accreditations in Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and Nauru.

Previously, she held the role of His Majesty’s Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines accredited to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau.

Ambassador Derckx commenced her foreign service and diplomatic career in 1989.

Prior to her overseas diplomatic postings in Africa and the Indo-Pacific region, Ambassador Derckx was responsible for the Dutch development cooperation with Non-State Actors presiding over a AUD\$500 million annual budget from 2014-2018.

At the Human Resources Department (2007-2011) she was responsible for the staffing of Dutch Diplomatic Missions.

Ambassador Derckx enjoys her free time as a classical guitarist and singer.

Nauru and the Kingdom of the Netherlands established diplomatic relations in 1982 but contacts and engagements are occasional. However, with Nauru’s recent establishment of its diplomatic presence in Canberra, there is potential to advance bilateral relations between the two countries.

The Netherlands offers collective support to Pacific Islands Countries through the European Union operational budget for the European Development Fund (EDF).

Ambassador Derckx arrived on 27 January and during her stay she visited solar farms, RonPhos, Nauru port, museum, Nauru Secondary School and toured other destinations around the island.

She joined President Kun and visiting ambassadors for the Nauru 55th Independence Day program and church service, and attended meetings with Nauru Country Coordinator Specialist Chancy Chilimbila and Australian High Commissioner Dr Helen Cheney •

Ambassador of Germany Markus Ederer

His Excellency President Russ Kun received the letter of credence of Dr Markus Ederer accrediting him as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Germany to the Republic of Nauru with residence in Canberra, Australia, 30 January.

Dr Ederer is also Germany’s ambassador to Australia. He began his career at the German Foreign Ministry in 1988.



Ambassador Ederer viewing the guard of honour as the national anthems of Nauru and Germany are played

Immediately before his posting to Australia, Dr Ederer was Germany’s Ambassador to the Russian Federation and served as the European Union’s Ambassador to the People’s Republic of China from 2011-2014. He holds a Masters of Law degree and a Juris Doctor.

Nauru and Germany formalised diplomatic relations in September 1984.

Germany supports Nauru through its contributions to the European Development Fund (EDF), and most recently to the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).

“My government looks forward to working with you to further strengthen ties and forge new opportunities for cooperation. Your appointment underpins the friendly and productive relations our two countries have fostered over four decades, founded on mutual respect and shared principles to uphold universal peace, freedom, democracy, and human rights,” President Kun said.

Nauru-Germany relations are strong on the multilateral front, especially at the United Nations (UN). In 2018, Nauru and Germany co-founded the Group of Friends on Climate and Security in the UN and chair the group together.

Germany seeks to put more focus on the Pacific region, to tangibly step up its engagement. This is evident in the appointment of a first-ever Special Envoy for the Pacific Islands States in July 2022 for one year.

Nauru was a German colony from 1888 until World War I. Many historical documents from this era were written in German by the administrators at the time. In 2019, a two-volume work by Hambruch was translated into English.

Ambassador Ederer arrived on Nauru on 27 January and departed on 3 February. During his week-long visit he joined other visiting ambassadors attend Nauru’s 55th Independence Day flag raising ceremony and church service.

The Ambassador also visited key infrastructure around the island and paid courtesy calls on Cabinet Ministers •



Public health to rebuild

The Ministry of Health is keen to commence rebuilding plans of its Public Health Centre but is aware of possible delays in the design and tendering of contracts if it is to follow proper procedure.

The rebuilding follows the devastating fire on 16 December which consumed the front office block destroying rooms for eight public health services and cutting off power and internet lines.

Health's Acting Director of Operations Dominic Cain says they would like to start the rebuilding process as soon as possible but are aware "that design and tender of contracts take several months to follow proper procedure."

"So we would expect that it would be 2-3 months to the issue of a contract and potentially a 6-month construction period," Mr Cain said.

Reassessments of damages come to approximately \$600,000; over \$100,000 for equipment and over \$500,000 for infrastructure.

Secretary for Emergency Services Barassi Botelanga said investigations deduced the fire broke out in the dentures room of the recently renovated dental clinic and quickly travelled through the ceiling and walls.

Fire services and Nauru Utilities were at the scene to shut off mains power and hose down the flames. Nobody was harmed.

Mr Cain confirms working with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) who has contracted Australian architect and project managers, Alexander and Lloyd (A&L) to assist the Ministry of Health in addressing its urgent infrastructure needs. The A&L team is expected to be in Nauru this month, February.

"The support from A&L will include looking at options of building design, costs of options and discussions on financing," Mr Cain said.

"We expect that the new public health building design will look at multi-storey office options to make the best use of space but ensure full accessibility for all users.

"Multi-storey buildings also come at a lower cost. We would like increased space to allow for expansion of services but also now to ensure adherence to best practice in office space to allow ventilation for reducing risk of COVID transmission."

Mr Cain says the department expects external support will be needed considering the building costs could range from \$2,500 to \$5,500 per square metre depending on the required quality of



Demolition of the fire ravaged public health building on 5 January

the final finish and building use.

Medical level finish is on the higher cost range while office and storage space are in the lower range.

Acting Director for Public Health Don Kadir says despite the destruction staff continued to work and shared office space and equipment to ensure the public continued to receive the public health services required.

"For now we just continue with our plans and programs that we'd already set for the year.

"Because we'd already planned to spend more [time on] preventative [programs] in the communities and in schools so we'll just go ahead with our normal plan that we have had.

"It also gives us more opportunity to spend more time in the community and in the schools because that's where the focus we want to push for this year," Mr Kadir said.

Apart from the diabetes clinic, most of the public health staff will be out in the field and engaging more with the community and get the community wellness centres more functioning so they are utilised more by the public for basic check-ups and health advice.

Mr Kadir says patient records for the diabetes, TB and STI and clinics were saved but with some water damage on the records and equipment during putting out the fire.

Mr Kadir is thankful to the emergency services as well as the Correctional Centre who assisted in the clean-up effort straight after the fire was put out and through the weekend •



republicofnauru



Opening of the legal year 2023

Acting Chief Justice Mohammed Khan officially opened the 2023 legal year at the Nauru Supreme Court, 20 January.

The opening of the legal year serves as a reminder to the government and the community of the essential role an independent judiciary plays in a democracy and an opportunity to reflect upon the mistakes of the previous year, and what can be done to address issues moving forward.

In his address, His Honour Khan highlighted the recent success of the 24 graduates of the pleaders course who despite the hinderance of COVID-19 restrictions were ultimately successful.

He further mentioned the court's continued development in terms of infrastructure and capacity building in a joint effort with the government and development partners.

The Acting Secretary for Justice Bhavna Narayan talked about the resumption in drafting of the civil procedure rules and hope to circulate the first draft by late March of this year. Amongst other issues, she further stressed the importance of the media's role in publishing judgement records which can promote transparency and people's understanding of the law.

President of the Nauru Law Society Barina Duburiya said this year will be a year of reform and reflection offering an opportunity to address issues identified in past years. She encouraged greater consultative participation of the Nauru Law Society and that with the right attitude, they must all work together in serving the people.

The (former) Taiwan ambassador Dean Wang was also in attendance •

Pleaders course graduation

Twenty-four graduates of the 2021-2022 Pleaders Course were awarded their certificates in a ceremony held at the Nauru Parliament's Bagobagan Lounge, 13 January.

The ceremony was hosted by the Department of Justice and Border Control, with Speaker of Parliament Marcus Stephen, Deputy Minister for Justice Maverick Eoe and Deputy Speaker of Parliament Lionel Aingimea conferring the certificates.

Former justice minister Mathew Batsiua scored the highest amongst his peers, earning him the best overall student award as well as the awards for best male student, criminal law and procedure, contracts, land law, and tort.

Blossom Tsiode achieved the award for best female student as well as for equity, trusts, wills and succession.

Bernard Grundler received the award for constitution and administrative law, while John Daigon Julius and Mahlon Brechtefeld received the civil procedure and practice award.

The family law award went to Carlos Eoe who also received the best male award for evidence, and his female colleagues Taesha Aliklik and Trini Caleb received the same award in the female category.

Deputy Minister Eoe congratulated the graduates for their hard-earned achievement, and reminded them that it is their responsibility to serve the people of Nauru and contribute in developing the nation.

Secretary for Justice Jay Udit said that despite facing many challenges such as COVID-19 restrictions and the recent national elections, the class persevered and were ultimately successful in overcoming the challenges they faced, achieving their goal in



Graduates of the pleaders course work across the various government departments and private sector

becoming the newest batch of pleaders.

Mr Udit acknowledged former president Lionel Aingimea for his efforts, saying it was the first time the pleaders course had a president deliver training.

President of the Nauru Law Society Barina Duburiya placed special emphasis on the duties and obligations of pleaders in court and that each of them have a vital role to play within the legal system.

The graduates: Chloe Odelia Adeang, Taesha Aliklik, Cronisa Baguga, Mathew Batsiua, Katherine Belong, Ignatus Sharko Bill, Mahlon Brechtefeld, Ann-Marie Cain, Trini Josie Caleb, Amos Horasio Cook, Dane Dageago, Hon. Isabella Dageago, Regina Deidenang, Jane-Lyn Deireragea, Carlos Eoe, Bernard Grundler, Oanna Harris, John Daigon Julius, Kosak Kosam, Aie Ribauw, Lisa-Marie Solomon, Hon. Delvin Thoma, Blossom Lisi Tsiode, Chyna Wiram •

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Republic of Nauru

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