



# MINISTRY OF WATERWAYS

## Press Release

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### **Namatakula Seawall construction works begin.**

The construction of 450 meters of Nature-Based seawall for the village of Namatakula has commenced that would benefit close to 300 villagers and a primary school.

The seawall will protect close to 60 households in the village from coastal flooding, coastal erosion, and infrastructure damage.

This work is achievable thanks to a timely intervention by the British High Commission to the village. The Ministry of Waterways will oversee the project with a grant of FJD 38,139.00.

While officiating at the groundbreaking ceremony at the village in Sigatoka, the Minister for Waterways, Environment and Agriculture Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy highlighted the significance of building a Nature-based eco-friendly seawall that would address concerns for the village.

Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy further applauded the initiatives of the British High Commission to Fiji in supporting the Fijian Government's effort towards building resilience amongst the coastal communities through climate mitigation measures, which are most affected by climate change.

"The project today is a significant initiative for coastal erosion management and environmental rehabilitation using a Nature-Based Solution (NbS), He Said.

"Environmental rehabilitation involves restoring the degraded landscape, with the natural features of the locality, and returning it to its original diversity. The clean-up undertaken post Tropical cyclones and floods, restoring heavily eroded coastline or riverbanks are good examples of environmental rehabilitation," said Dr. Reddy

The Head of Network Strategy and Operations, British High Commission Mr. Tim Hanson commended on the initiatives of the Ministry of Waterways using Nature-Based approaches to protect the Namatakula community.

"The objective of the project is to reduce the vulnerability of the Namatakula site to coastal inundation and erosion, and to create enabling conditions for scaling up and replicating the project impact beyond the immediate target areas.," he said.

“Through creation of a “living breathing seawall” by the community, assisted by the Ministry of Waterways, the project will protect the community coastline from being washed out and will bring life back into the marine biodiversity, and forge a permanent home for some of the most sought after marine species, replenishing fishing stocks and boosting food security,” he said

The Turga-ni-Koro for the village Mr. Josevata Nagasaukula has commended the timely intervention by the government that will safeguard the village from coastal flooding.

“During high tides, especially during the cyclone seasons, most of the villagers had to evacuate their houses and seek shelter somewhere else because of the threat of coastal erosion and flooding,” he said.

We thank the government of the day, the Ministry of Waterways, for the construction of the seawall that will not only protect the village but will also secure our ancient land.

Close to 450 meters of a hybrid sea wall, will be built by the Ministry of Waterways with bouldering work, land reclamation, rows of mangroves (as a first), and vetiver planting (last line of defense) to protect the village coastline.