



MINISTRY OF WATERWAYS

Press Release

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Desilting Commissioned for Vitogo River

Efforts to safeguard nine communities and an estimated 11,000 Fijians have been further boosted following the commissioning of desilting works in the Vitogo River.

The dredging works are expected to mitigate flooding and in turn benefit 7 settlements, 3 villages, and sugarcane and crop farms adjacent to the Vitogo River.

Close to 20 kilometres of river desilting works will be undertaken by the Ministry of Waterways under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) agreement with Digmach.

While commissioning the desilting works at Vitogo Village in Lautoka today, Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment Hon. Dr Mahendra Reddy said that desilting works will provide relief to thousands of Fijians from flooding during heavy rain.

Minister Reddy reiterated that the Ministry of Waterways will be vigilant in protecting the communities who needed urgent assistance by prioritizing the immediate works based on an emergency basis, where applicable.

"I want to assure all the communities that we are progressively coming and will be protecting them.

"We have our work to do, and it is not something that we'll be able to finish in a couple of years as requests from communities to us are increasing on a daily basis. So I assure you all that we will come and protect you and your villages or communities," he said.

Dr. Reddy further noted that these desilting works are not to safeguard households only, but intended to protect roads, schools, arable land and infrastructure adjacent from river flooding.

Meanwhile, Mata ni Tikina Vitogo Mr. Ravusou Sauqaqa said during heavy rain, the village is constantly affected by flash flooding and crops on village farms and other farms adjacent to the river are washed away.

He further expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of Waterways as three villages and more than six settlements had been constantly and adversely affected by floodwaters.

"This does not only affect our households, but it also affects our farms and root crops as well and we're grateful to the Ministry of Waterways for the desilting works, it is a sigh of relief for us and we hope that flooding will be addressed through these works," said Mr. Sauqaqa.

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