



# NEWSLETTER

## Community Service Program Begins in Port Vila Through New Partnership



A new community service initiative has commenced in Port Vila following a MOU between the PVCC and the Vanuatu Correctional services.

Under the program, 12 to 13 low-risk detainees will assist with grass cutting, roadside cleaning, and detainees will work under the supervision and escort of Correctional Services officers to ensure safety and proper coordination.



The initiative aims to support rehabilitation by helping detainees develop responsibility, discipline, and practical skills while giving back to the community. PVCC acknowledged the support of the Department of Correctional Services and the Ministry of Justice and Community Services in promoting cleaner public spaces and supporting the successful reintegration of detainees into society.





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## Southeast Ambrym Area Council Expands Civil Registry Services

The Southeast Ambrym Area Council has continued providing important civil registration services to communities from January through to the first week of March 2026, with strong focus on improving access to identity documentation.

During this period, the Area Council successfully printed more than 220 National ID Cards, over 100 birth certificates, as well as several marriage and death certificates for residents across the area.



The Council is encouraging all citizens, especially parents and school principals, to ensure that school children have valid National ID cards and birth certificates to support access to school grants and other essential services. The initiative reflects ongoing collaboration between the Department of Local Authorities and the Department of Civil Registry and Identity Management to decentralize services and bring them closer to communities.





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## Roadside Clearance Works Begin Under Community Service Partnership.

Roadside clearance and cleaning works officially began along the airport road in Port Vila through the engagement of detainees under a new community service initiative.

The program follows the signing of the MOU between PVCC and the Department of Correctional Services, allowing detainees to assist with cleaning green spaces and roadside areas around the city.



PVCC is encouraging members of the public and motorists to show respect to the detainees while they carry out their duties under supervision. The cleaning activities will also expand to other scheduled locations across Port Vila as part of the ongoing initiative to improve the city's environment.

## PVCC and VPF Sign MOU to Strengthen By-Law Enforcement

The Port Vila City Council (PVCC) and the Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), marking an important milestone in strengthening cooperation on law enforcement within Port Vila.

The purpose of the agreement is to establish a framework for better coordination and more effective enforcement of PVCC by-laws across the city.





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The initiative reflects a shared commitment to maintaining a safer, cleaner, and more orderly Port Vila for residents and visitors alike.

## Sanma Province Receives Training on Upgraded CRVS System



Area Administrators and key stakeholders in Sanma Province participated in training this week on the upgraded Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) System of Vanuatu.

The training was facilitated by senior officers from CRIM, with support from a UNDP representative. Sessions focused on building the knowledge and skills needed to use the upgrade system accurately, efficiently, and effectively.





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The initiative is expected to strengthen the management of civil registration data, improve the accuracy of records, and enhance access to essential government services across communities in Sanma Province. The upgraded CRVS system also supports the Government's ongoing efforts to strengthen identity management throughout Vanuatu.

## New Zealand High Commissioner Makes First Official Visit to PVCC



The new New Zealand High Commissioner to Vanuatu, His Excellency Peter Kemp, made his first official courtesy visit to the Port Vila City Council (PVCC), strengthening the long-standing partnership between PVCC and New Zealand local authorities.

PVCC Commissioner Mr. Simon Tor Bebe welcomed the visit and acknowledged New Zealand's continued support over the years through technical assistance, training programs, and capacity building initiatives that have contributed to local government development in Port Vila.

During the visit, the PVCC delegation toured the seafront and Faturmaru Bay precinct re-development areas, part of a major New Zealand-funded project valued at more than VT1 billion. Discussions also covered future renovation plans and continued support through technical expertise and staff training.





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PVCC also acknowledged local handicraft vendors for their resilience and commitment following the recent earthquake, while reaffirming appreciation for New Zealand's ongoing partnership in supporting the city's recovery and development efforts.

## PVCC Consults Communities on Landfill Management Issues

The Port Vila City Council (PVCC) held its first consultation meeting with surrounding communities near the landfill site last weekend to discuss ongoing issues affecting the area and identify possible solutions together.



The consultation allowed community members to share valuable feedback, concerns, and suggestions on improving landfill management and addressing current environmental challenges.

PVCC highlighted that the meeting marks an important step toward strengthening cooperation with nearby communities as both sides work together to improve waste management and create a cleaner and healthier environment.





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## Luganville Municipal Council Pays First Courtesy Visit to Minister of Internal Affairs

The Luganville Municipal Council (LMC) made its first courtesy visit to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. Andrew Solomon Napuat, to discuss key development priorities and future plans for Luganville Municipality as the city continues to grow as an important economic hub of Vanuatu.



The delegation included Lord Mayor Hon. John Boe Mavutu, the Deputy Mayor, and Chairpersons of various working committees within the Council.



During the meeting, the Minister reassured the delegation of the Ministry's full support toward implementing important development initiatives aimed at improving Luganville for both residents and visitors.



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## RV5 Training Workshops Strengthen Civil Registration Services in Three Provinces

The Department of Civil Registration and Identity Management (CRIM) successfully conducted RV5 Training Workshops in Sanma and Malampa Provinces over recent weeks for Area Administrators and Community Liaison Officers (CLOs).



The workshops, facilitated by Senior CRIM officers with support from a UNDP representative, focused on strengthening participants' understanding of the upgraded Vanuatu Civil Registration system and improving their capacity to support and facilitate civil registration services within communities and Area Councils.



At the conclusion of the training, participants received certificates of completion, confirming their readiness to support the implementation of the upgraded civil registration system across their respective provinces.





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## Joint Operation Inspects 145 Shops Across Port Vila



The Port Vila City Council (PVCC), in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Shefa Health, has completed a major joint inspection operation across all five municipal wards in Port Vila, inspecting a total of 145 shops to ensure compliance with national health and business regulations.



The annual inspection exercise resulted in the confiscation of 5,782 food items found to be in breach of the Food (Control) Act No. 21 of 1993, Food (Control) Regulation Order No. 37 of 2007, and the Port Vila Municipal Council Food Hygiene Control By-Law No. 7 of 1992. Authorized officers identified issues including expired food products, missing or incorrect labelling, damaged packaging, pest-infested goods, and improperly stored or packaged food items.

PVCC acknowledged the continued support of the public in reporting unsafe products and reaffirmed its commitment to working alongside health authorities to promote safer and healthier standards for businesses and consumers across Port Vila. .





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## Ministry of Health and Luganville Municipal Council Sign MOU to Strengthen Health Services.

On 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026, the Ministry of Health signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Luganville Lord Mayor and the Municipal Council Chairperson to support the decentralization of outpatient health services in Luganville.

The partnership will allow several municipal clinics-including Sarakata Clinic, Chapui 2 Clinic, Capricorn Clinic, St Michael Clinic, Solwota Clinic, and Pepsi Clinic - to provide expanded outpatient services currently handled by Northern Provincial Hospital (NPH).



The initiative aims to strengthen Primary Health Care services within communities, improve access to health care, and reduce the patient workload at NPH by bringing essential medical services closer to the people of Luganville.

## Collaboration Strengthens Port Vila CBD Rebuild Efforts

The Port Vila CBD Recovery Project Management Unit (PMU), under the Department of Urban and Planning (DUAP), is continuing to strengthen collaboration with government agencies, private sector stakeholders, and the Port Vila Central Business District following the 2024 earthquake.

The rebuilding efforts are being guided by the Government-endorsed Port Vila CBD Vision and Concept Plan, with the Government aiming to complete most major infrastructure projects by 2030 to coincide with Vanuatu's 50<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary.





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Since its establishment in December 2025 under the Disaster Recovery and Resilience Act 2024, the PMU has been working closely with businesses, developers, donors, and government ministries to coordinate recovery planning and ensure a shared vision for the future development of Port Vila.

## PVCC and Luganville Municipal Council Strengthen Partnership

PVCC welcomed a delegation from the Luganville Municipal Council (LMC), led by Lord Mayor Hon. John Boe Mavutu and Deputy Mayor Hon. Patricia Packet, during an official visit to Port Vila to meet with PVCC Commissioner Mr. Simon Tor and Town Clerk Mr. Avio Roberts.



The visit marked an important step in strengthening relations between the two municipal councils and promoting closer cooperation on local governance matters in Vanuatu. Discussions focused on renewing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between PVCC and LMC, sharing resources and experiences to address common urban challenges, and collaborating on the view of Municipal Financial Regulations to improve accountability and financial management.





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## Two Foreign Nationals Arrested Following Major Drug Seizure in Havannah Harbour



A British national and a Lithuanian national have been arrested after the Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) seized approximately 1.6 tones of cocaine from a yacht Havannah Harbour, north Efate.

The seizure was carried out during a police operation targeting illegal drug activities within Vanuatu waters. Authorities confirmed that the illicit drugs were discovered onboard the vessel during inspections conducted by law enforcement officers.

The Vanuatu Police Force stated that investigations into the matter are continuing and reaffirmed its commitment to combating transnational crime and protecting the safety and security of the country.

## MoIA Teams Conduct Spot Check and ICT Support Mission in Torba Province



The Department of Local Authorities Finance Unit and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA), Corporate Services Unit have conducted a joint spot-check mission across Area Councils in Torba Province, including a review of asset registries.





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The mission also included support from the MoIA ICT team, who worked to update laptops, troubleshoot and fix Starlink and Internet connectivity issues, and ensure government email systems for Torbna province staff are fully functional.

The activity, carried out from 09<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March, is part of ongoing efforts to strengthen administrative systems, improve ICT infrastructure, and support efficient service delivery across provincial and area council offices.

## Foreshore Development Unit Conducts Site Inspections in Sanma Province



Following a request from the Sanma Provincial Government, the Foreshore Development Unit (FDU) conducted site inspections and reviewed key proposals for the strategic development of jetties and wharves across the province.

The inspections covered proposed developments at Taiyo and Losofe wharves, as well as discussions on the designation of Northwest Santo and West Malo Area Councils as provincial economic hubs. These initiatives aim to strengthen maritime access, improve trade and tourism opportunities, and enhance service delivery in support of decentralization efforts.



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The FDU confirmed its support in assisting the Sanma Provincial Government with the Coordination and implementation of these development initiatives to ensure improved connectivity and economic growth across the province.

## Ministry of Internal Affairs Launches Corporate Plan 2026 - 2030

The Ministry of Internal Affairs officially launched its Corporate Plan 2026 - 2030 today, marking an important milestone in setting the Ministry's strategic vision and direction for the next five years as Vanuatu approaches its 50<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary in 2030.



The Corporate Plan is a home-grown document developed internally by the Ministry and its agencies, reflecting the collective priorities, experiences, and aspirations of staff across the Ministry. The plan outlines key strategies to strengthen governance, improve service delivery, support decentralization, and empower communities throughout Vanuatu.





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During the launch, both the Director General and the Minister of Internal Affairs highlighted the importance of ownership, commitment, and collaboration in implementing the plan. The Ministry also acknowledges the contributions of staff, stakeholders, and development partners whose support helped shape the Corporate Plan and strengthen future development efforts across the sector.

## Leba Team Conducts Awareness Program in Tanna, Malekula and Santo.



The Leba Team recently travelled to Tanna, Malekula, and Santo to conduct awareness programs for communities and students on career opportunities, employment pathways, and workers support services.

During the outreach session, each unit delivered presentations based on their areas of responsibility. Leba Konect provided career guidance support to help students make informed decisions about future career pathways, while the ESU shared information on overseas skills development and international work experience opportunities.





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The Work Permit Unit also highlighted current skills shortages and employment opportunities within Vanuatu's labour market, while the Industrial Relations Unit raised awareness on workers rights, workplace protection, and available welfare support services for employees.

## Geotechnical Assessments for Port Vila CBD Rebuild Progressing Well



Geotechnical assessment works for the Port Vila Central Business District (CBD) rebuild are progressing steadily, with completion expected by the July 2026 as part of the Government's long-term recovery and redevelopment plans.

The investigations include 11 completed boreholes across the CBD, 9Km of roadside geophysical testing, and advanced seismic and geophysical surveys aimed at understanding ground conditions and strengthening future building and infrastructure safety. The assessments will help guide future foundation designs and support implementation of the Government-endorsed Port Vila CBD Vision and Concept Plan.





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Since December 2025, the Port Vila CBD Recovery Project Management Unit under the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP) has coordinated the project alongside government agencies, private sector stakeholders, development partners, and the Port Vila City Council. The initiative is supported through funding from the New Zealand High Commission in Vanuatu, with Tonkin + Taylor International Ltd leading the technical assessment works.

## Business Updated on Port Vila CBD Rebuild Plans

A consultation meeting with members of the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) was held at MG Cocomo on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026 to discuss ongoing plans for the Port Vila Central Business District (CBD) rebuild.

The consultation provided an opportunity of businesses and stakeholders to share their views, ask questions, and engage directly with agencies responsible for overseeing the CBD recovery process. Participants also received updates on key government activities already undertaken and priority areas identified for rebuilding works within the CBD.





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The forum was led by Mr. Nik Regenvanu, Project Management Unit established under the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP) to coordinate the Port Vila CBD earthquake recovery initiatives.

## Labour Department Introduces National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons



The Compliance Manager of the Department of Labour officially introduced the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2024-2028), aimed at strengthening national efforts to address human trafficking in Vanuatu.

The action plan focuses on four key areas: prevention through awareness and community education, protection and support for victims, stronger prosecution and enforcement against offenders, and partnerships with communities, organizations, and stakeholders.

The Department highlighted that combating human trafficking requires collective action and encouraged the public to remain informed, alert, and supportive of initiatives that protect vulnerable individuals and communities across the country.





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## World Bank Delegation Receives Update on Port Vila CBD Recovery.



A senior World Bank delegation visited Port Vila this week to review key development initiatives supported by the World Bank and finalize additional financing under the VARS Project to support earthquake recovery efforts in Vanuatu.



During the visit, the Project Management Unit (PMU) under DUAP, together with PVCC, hosted a presentation and site visit focused on the progress of the Port Vila CBD Vision and Concept Plan following the 2024 earthquake.

The delegation toured the Port Vila seafont and central market area to observe planned redevelopment works and public space improvements aimed at rebuilding a greener, safe, and more inclusive capital city. Officials also acknowledged the World Bank's ongoing technical and financial support toward Vanuatu's recovery and urban resilience efforts.





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## Vanuatu Police Force and United Kingdom Sign Security Partnership MOU



Vanuatu Police Force  
March 2026 11:12 am

The Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) and the Government of the United Kingdom signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) today aimed at strengthening law enforcement capabilities across Vanuatu.

The partnership will support police training programs and community safety initiatives designed to enhance policing standards and improve public security throughout the country.

During the signing ceremony, the Commissioner of Police acknowledged and thanked the United Kingdom for its continued support through previous projects and expressed confidence that the partnership would continue to strengthen cooperation in the future.

## Vanuatu Officially Launches Upgraded RV5 Civil Registry System

The Ministry of Internal Affairs today officially launched and handed over the new RV5 Civil Registry System, marking a major milestone in Vanuatu's efforts to modernize civil registration and identity management services.





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The ceremony was officiated by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. Andrew Napuat, and attended by senior government officials, the New Zealand High Commissioner to Vanuatu H.E. Peter Kemp, and the UNDP Pacific Officer Deputy Resident Representative, Mr. Abduvakkos Abdurahmanov. The upgraded RV5 system replaces the previous RV4 platform introduced in 2016 and is designed to improve data security, system reliability, and the speed of service delivery.

The new system will also expand access to civil registration services at the Area Council level, allowing Area Administrators to deliver services directly to communities, particularly in rural and remote areas. The Ministry acknowledged the support of UNDP and the Government of New Zealand for their continued partnership in strengthening civil registration systems and improving public service delivery in Vanuatu.





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## New Dedicated Market Space for Women Vendors Handed over in Port Vila



A new dedicated space for women market vendors has been officially handed over to PVCC, funded by UNDP as part of its earthquake recovery support for Vanuatu.

The facility is part of broader rehabilitation works for the Port Vila Central Market and aims to provide a safe, organized, and accessible space specifically for women vendors to conduct their business activities.

PVCC acknowledged UNDP's continued support in strengthening recovery efforts and improving essential public facilities following the 2024 earthquake, contributing to safer and more inclusive urban spaces in the capital.

## UN Women Support Women Vendors with New Equipment in Port Vila



UN Women has officially handed over new printing equipment to PVCC and the Silae Vanua Association on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026, under the Markets for Change (M4C) project.





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The support will enable PVCC and Silae Vanua Market Vendors Association to issue formal identification cards on the spot, ensuring that vendors are properly registered, recognized, and able to access essential services and support more efficiently.

PVCC acknowledged UN Women for their continued commitment to empowering women vendors, noting that the initiative goes beyond equipment by strengthening security, dignity, and the formalization of the local market economy in Port Vila.

## Labour Department Conducts Nationwide Awareness Outreach



From 9<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> March, the Department of Labour carried out awareness programs across Tanna, Malekula, and Santo to strengthen public understanding of human trafficking, safe labour mobility, employment rights and career guidance for students.



The outreach focused on the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2024 - 2028), highlighting prevention, victim protection, and prosecution of offenders.





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In addition, the Department engaged with employers and workers to assess workplace challenges and compliance with labour laws, while also providing career guidance to students on priority sectors aligned with national development needs. The program also introduced “Leba Konect”, a new national employment platform designed to improve job matching, recruitment transparency, and labour market data collection. The Department acknowledged the support of the ILO and New Zealand Government through the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Program Phase II.

## **PVCC Strengthens Regional Partnerships and Urban Development Commitments at the 7<sup>th</sup> Pacific Urban Forum**

PVCC actively participated in the 7<sup>th</sup> Pacific Urban Forum (PUF7), held at APEC Haus in Port Moresby, PNG from 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026. The forum brought together Pacific governments, local authorities, development partners, and urban practitioners to address shared challenges and opportunities in sustainable and resilient urban development across the region. PVCC joined a broader national delegation led by the Minister of Internal Affairs, reinforcing a whole-of-government approach to urban planning and development.





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PVCC was represented by Commissioner Mr. Simon Tor and Senior Town Planner Mr. Manses Fatdal, who engaged with regional city leaders and development partners to share Port Vila's urban recovery experiences following the 2024 earthquake. Discussions focused on strengthening regional cooperation, improving urban resilience, and advancing inclusive development. On the sidelines of the forum, PVCC also advanced discussions with the National Capital District Commission (Port Moresby) on implementing the Sister City Agreement, including exploring the Active City Development Program to promote healthier, safer, and more vibrant public spaces in Port Vila.

## **China Hands Over Modern Policing Equipment to Vanuatu Police Force**

The Government of the People's Republic of China has officially handed over modern policing equipment to the Vanuatu Police Force (VPF), including motorcycles, drones, and batons. The handover ceremony took place today at Cook Barracks and was officiated by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. Andrew Solomon Napuat, alongside the Commissioner of Police and senior police executives





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This support reflects the ongoing partnership between China and Vanuatu in strengthening law enforcement capacity and improving public safety. The Vanuatu Police Force expressed its appreciation for the donation, noting that the new equipment will enhance community policing, improve operational mobility, and strengthen the ability to respond effectively to incidents across the country.

## PLTA Conducts Awareness on Proposed Bus Fare Review in Efate

On Monday 30 March 2026, the Public Land Transport Authority (PLTA) held a public awareness session with bus drivers and members of the public at Malasitapu Church Hall in Port Vila. The session, which ran from 1:00pm to 3:00pm, aimed to explain the proposed review of bus fares within Efate and to provide clarity on the suggested fare structure for different travel zones.





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Under the proposal, fares within the Port Vila Municipal boundary would be set at VT150, while travel beyond 5km outside the municipal area—including routes to Eton, Epule, Epau, Onesua, and Emua—would range from VT200 to VT500. PLTA also presented findings from a 2025 public survey, where 86% of 1,694 respondents did not support an increase to VT200 within town limits. Drivers also shared concerns over rising operational costs, including fuel, maintenance, road conditions, and vehicle registration fees, while PLTA clarified that the proposal has already been approved by the PLTA Board and is currently under public consultation before final endorsement.



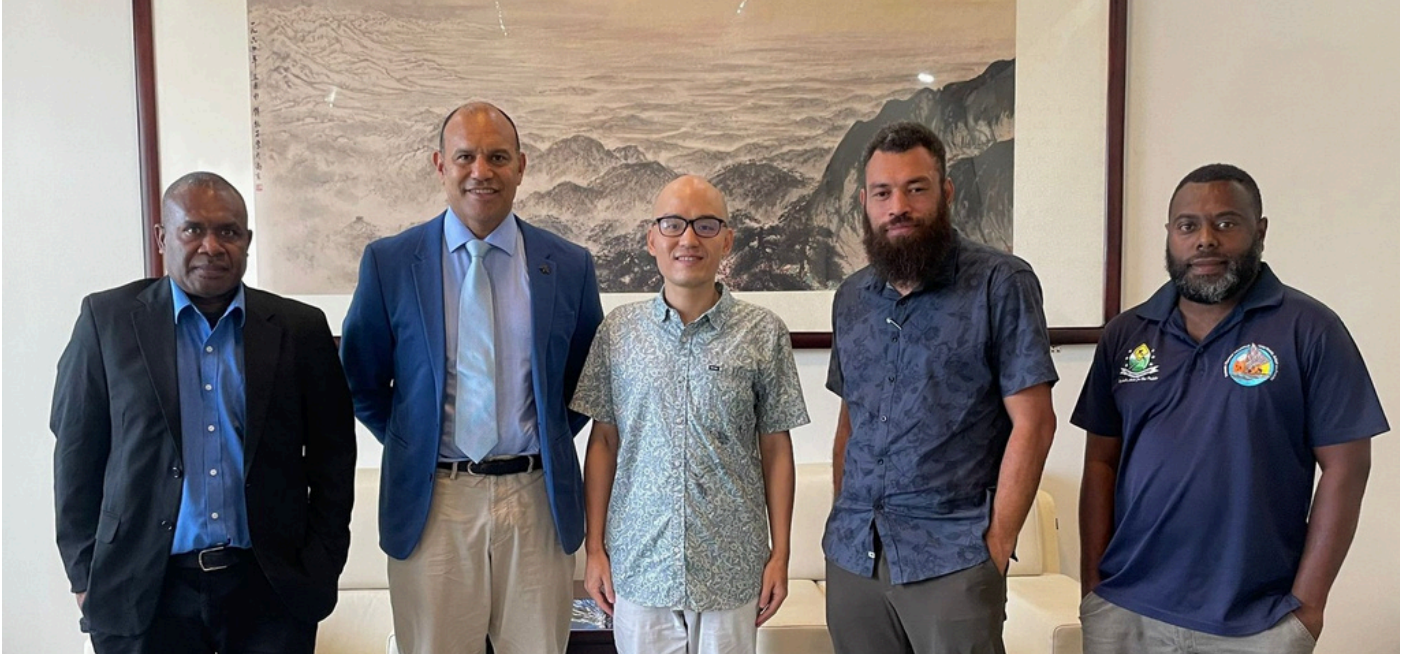
## Port Vila CBD Rebuild Update: Coordination of Road Upgrade Works

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP), together with the Public Works Department (PWD), met today with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Vanuatu to advance discussions on planned road upgrades within the Port Vila Central Business District (CBD). The meeting focused on strengthening coordination among development partners to ensure infrastructure improvements are well aligned and effectively delivered.





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During the discussions, it was highlighted that the Government of China has committed funding support for selected road upgrades within the CBD, complementing ongoing assistance from other development partners, including the Government of Australia through the Australian High Commission in Vanuatu. The Port Vila CBD Project Management Unit (PMU), under DUAP, continues to coordinate the overall rebuild in close collaboration with the Port Vila City Council to ensure a unified and efficient recovery approach.



Hope you enjoy  
reading our  
March News

