

Society to spend Vt10 million on iron roofing

...while Ambassador to appeal for help at Islands Summit

By Ian Garae

THE NPO JAPAN VANUATU Goodwill Society has raised over Vt10 million cash from the Japanese in Japan towards the organisation's relief effort for Vanuatu and says they will spend 100% of the donation to buy much needed corrugated iron sheets to help victims rebuild their homes.

Estimating that each family will get ten iron sheets each, Hiro Osuka (General Manager of the Melanesian Hotel) whose father is the Chairman of NPO Japan Vanuatu Goodwill Society says the organisation is expected to help some 10,000 households.

Osuka says the National Disaster Management Office says the corrugated iron sheets must be handed over to the Vanuatu Red Cross to distribute to the victims. "The

Red Cross has no space in their storage facility at present and says we are to hand over the sheets to them in two to three weeks' time when they have space. When the time comes, they will tell us to bring the roofing sheets over to them," Osuka says.

Meanwhile he says they have distributed water and tinned foods and rice from their own contributions to the people of Paunangisu in North Efate.

Not only that but Vanuatu Japan Goodwill Ambassador Rie Doyama (of JICA) is going to make a special appeal during the Islands Summit to be held in Fukushima in Japan next month, for more donations from the Japanese market in the form of cash as well as investors and visitors to come to Vanuatu to help rebuild its economy.

The Goodwill Ambassador has left for Japan to continue to appeal for more donations to help Vanuatu before the cut-off date at the end of the month.

Asked why NPO Japan Vanuatu Goodwill Society is set up, Osuka answers, "We set up here because we love Vanuatu.

We have met Vanuatu Prime Minister and he said investment is vital for the country's recovery. Doyama adds, "We are one of the many organisations in Japan that support Vanuatu. A Japanese doctor and nurse medical team is here now.

Another NGO is here helping in other efforts, also a Japanese self defence force team came but injuries were minimal so it left again".

On the official side, the Japanese Government has donated Vt20 million worth of temporary building materials, as well as approximately



Goodwill Ambassador Doyama (left) and Osuka

Vt150 million to help Cyclone Pam victims in the Pacific. "Let me assure the Government and people of Vanuatu that the Japanese Government and people of Japan are concerned about you guys here in Vanuatu. The JICA volunteers are also

contributing towards this effort. A total of 80 Japanese live in Vanuatu, half of them JICA volunteers", Osuka says. "When we met the Prime Minister, we told him this is the time to appeal for help not only with cash but also to bring

people to Vanuatu. We do not want to stop the momentum because now people in Japan know of Vanuatu, before not many people knew of Vanuatu but after the cyclone, people now know more about Vanuatu".

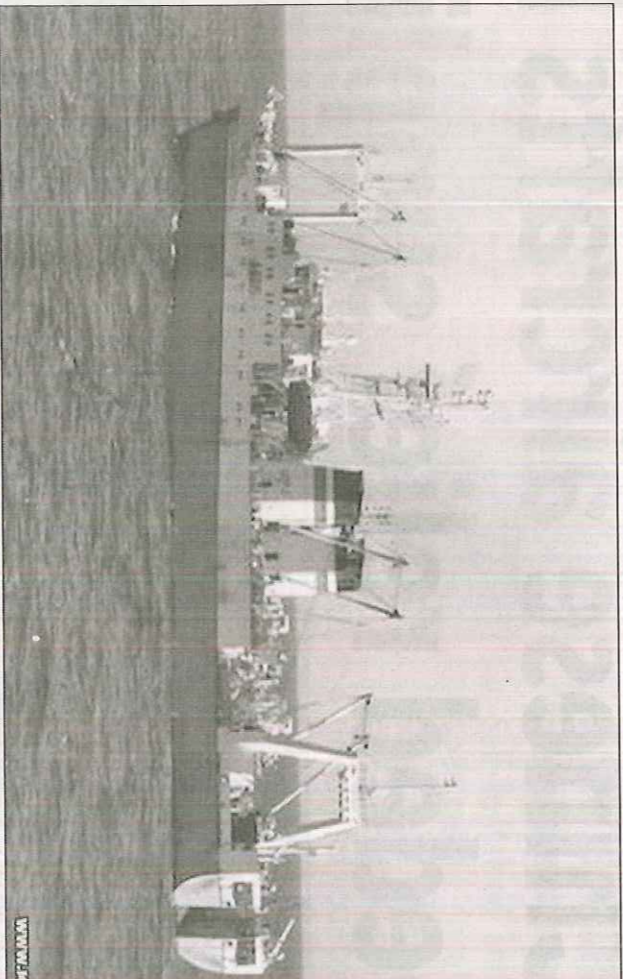
Russian trawler sinks, 4 ni-Vanuatu crew survive, 1 missing

By Jonas Cullwick

ONE NI-VANUATU SAILOR IS AMONG 13 people still reported missing after a Russian trawler sank on Thursday April 2 in icy waters in the Sea of Okhotsk, 330 km west of Krutoorovsky settlement, according to international media reports.

Four ni-Vanuatu sailors are reported to be among 63 sailors who survived the incident. 56 people have so far been confirmed dead. The captain was reported to be among the dead.

The Dainiy Vostok freezer trawler had 132 people on board when it sank, the international media reports say.



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Media reports say Vanuatu's Department of Foreign Affairs in Port Vila was alerted of the incident by the Head of Consular in the Russian Embassy in Canberra, Eduard Shakirov. He is reported to have said the four ni-Vanuatu who survived the incident were safe and in good health. Shakirov is in Port Vila assisting in the delivery of emergency relief supplies from Russia toward the Cyclone Pam relief efforts.

Senior Journalists Moses

Stevens posted in his Facebook page quoting the Director of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Yvon Basil, that his office had managed to locate the local agent for those ni-Vanuatu working in the Russian vessel. The Daily Post still has no identity of the ni-Vanuatu fishermen, nor their local agent.

"Mr. Basil says his office would continue to follow up on the reports and if need be,

a repatriation arrangement would be made for them. He says one of the ni-Van sailors is reportedly among the 13 missing persons," Stevens writes.

International media reports say it is understood the trawler sank within 15 minutes and the captain didn't even have time to send a distress signal.

Up to 26 boats, some fishing nearby, were involved in the

rescue operation. Some of those who survived were unconscious and some with severe hyperthermia.

According to the BBC News, emergency services suggested that drifting ice may have caused a hole on the vessel. But it adds that a senior official in Kamcharka was quoted by Tass news agency as saying the boat foundered while trawling a 100-tonne dragnet.

Sanma chiefs want Chand back

NISCOL Chairman warns chiefs not to interfere

By Harrison Selmen

CHAIRMAN OF THE Tavuemasana council of chiefs, representing the upper council of chiefs in Sanma Province, has sought for the reinstatement of the sacked indo-Fijian Pravinsh Chand recently.

In a letter dated 24th March 2015 to the Northern Islands Stevedoring Company Limited (NISCOL) the Chairman wrote, "with due respect the office of the island council of chiefs is kindly asking if the shareholders can reinstate Mr Chand back to CEO.

"The nakamal has recognized him for all his efforts and good work and want him back". But the Chairman of the shareholders, Mr Zachariah

Daniel, has refuted such move and warned the chiefs not to interfere with the state owned enterprise instead they should focus on dealing uprising community issues. He says there was never a CEO of NISCOL after Matai Seremaih's contract.

"As Chairman I was not aware of any such move. But to set the records correct there was never a CEO of NISCOL after Matai's Contract. "Chiefs should deal with community issues than dealing with a SOE (State Owned Enterprise). "It is a too big in magnitude for them to deal with. It is so sad if they had done that. Board of Directors of NISCOL and Shareholders can decide the future of NISCOL, not the chiefs."

Meanwhile, Chand says the audit has been done and everything is cleared yet his bank accounts are still kept frozen and his passport held by the shareholders.