



British Friends of Vanuatu

Breaking News

As at 1st November 2021

The Effect of Coronavirus on BFoV Social Activities

The Coronavirus pandemic has severely affected the association's planning of future events. As a result, a number of events had to be cancelled or postponed during 2020-2021. Arrangements are now in hand for a BFoV Spring break and AGM to be held in April, 2022. Full details details of that and other events are given on the 'FUTURE EVENTS' page of this website.

Census Results announced in June 2021

The latest official total population of Vanuatu were published in June, 2021 following the national population census held on November 16, 2020. The Minister of Finance formally announced the 2020 population as being 301,695, with 152,345 males and 149,350 females. The trend emerging in the previous census of a surge in the numbers of young people, as a percentage of the population as a whole, has increased even further. Full details are available on the VanGov website and the BFoV newsletter issue 149 in July 2021. PDF copies are available on request.

Shock Presidential Pardons

In a shock public announcement, the President of Vanuatu, Obed Moses Tallis, pardoned the criminal convictions of three former prime ministers. The effect of the presidential pardon is that Charlot Salwai, Joe Natuman, and Serge Vohor, are cleared to stand again for public office. Salwai was convicted of perjury last year after being accused of misinforming the country in regard to the appointment of parliamentary secretaries in 2016.

Natuman was in 2018 convicted on a charge of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice after being found to have sought to stop a police team from investigating high-ranking officers accused of mutiny when he was prime minister in 2014. Both Natuman and Salwai were given two-year suspended prison sentences. Vohor spent 18 months in prison from 2015 along with 13 other MPs after being found guilty of bribery and corruption charges.

Vanuatu Consul General to New Caledonia Suspended from Duty

Following the detection of two Covid-positive travellers among 18 unauthorised passengers who arrived at Bauerfield airport on Friday, 29th November on board a cargo flight from Noumea, Serge Alain Mahe, the Consul General has been suspended. Also suspended in connection with this incident was Abraham Nasak, the Director of the Vanuatu National Disaster Management Office. The suspension of the Consul was announced by the Director General of Foreign Affairs following a decision by the Council of Ministers.