

Embassy of Japan
Tonga

PRESS RELEASE

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Launching of the roll-out of vaccination in Ha'apai Island

His Excellency Mr. MUNENAGA Kensaku, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Tonga visited Ha'apai Islands to attend the launching ceremony of vaccination by the Japan-made AstraZeneca vaccines on Tuesday, 31 August 2021. Hon. Frederica Tuita Filipe was the Guest of Honour at the ceremony held at Maama 'o Mamani Hall, Pangai, Ha'apai.

Hon. Associate Professor Dr. 'Amelia Afuha'amango Tu'ipulotu, Minister for Health also attended the ceremony along with Hon. Viliami Manuopangai Hingano, Governor of Ha'apai, Dr. SETOYA Yutaro ,WHO Country Liaison Officer, Dr. Reynold 'Ofanoa, Chief Medical Officer, and medical officers of the Princess Fusipala Hospital, and the people of Ha'apai.

In addressing the occasion, His Excellency left the audience amazed when he delivered his speech in Tongan language. In part of his speech he said "*Oku ou faka'amu ke fakahaofi 'e he huhu malu'i ni 'a e kakai 'o Tonga he ko e kaungame'a fafale kimoutolu 'o Siapani. Ko e huhu malu'i 'a e taha 'o e founa pau ke malu'i kitautolu mei he Koviti-19 pea lava ai ke matātali 'a e ngahi fokoutua 'oku mafola fakamāmani lahi,*" which is translated into "I hope the vaccines will protect the lives of Tongan people who are the best friends of Japanese people. This vaccine is one of our few, yet reliable weapons against COVID-19 with which we could make our Kingdom more resilient to the pandemic."

He acknowledged the on-going strenuous efforts by the Government of Tonga and the Ministry of Health, and front liners who have been working hard to achieve Tonga's COVID-free society.

Japan's support of 36,800 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines through COVAX facility arrived the Kingdom on 25th August. In appreciating the vaccine donation Dr. Reynold 'Ofanoa conveyed the Government of Tonga's sincere appreciation for Japan's kind generosity. He said Japan's donated vaccines will be beneficial to protect the people of Ha'apai and the rest of Tonga from COVID-19.

Ambassador MUNENAGA before returning to Nuku'alofa toured the Princess Fusipala Hospital and two Government Primary Schools (Fotua and Faleloa) during Soroban classes. He was pleased with the opportunity to encourage young soroban students who were winners of the soroban competition for Ha'apai island.

END

Attached: Photos



Launching of the Japan-made AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine in Ha'apai on Tuesday 31 August 2021, by Hon. Frederica Tuita Filipe, in attendance of H.E.MUNENAGA Kensaku Ambassador of Japan to Tonga.



H.E MUNENAGA Kensaku, with the VIP guests at the Ha'apai COVID-19 vaccine launching.



The tour of the Ha'apai hospital jointed by Hon. Dr. 'Amelia Tu'ipulotu Minister for Health and Governor of Ha'apai.



Staff of Ha'apai hospital with Ambassador MUNENAGA and the tour delegation.



Young soroban student of Fotua GPS welcomed Ambassador MUNENAGA.



Soroban Teachers and students of Faleloa GPS honoured with the visit by Ambassador MUNENAGA.