

# Australian Gov't applauded for giving hope

By Anita Roberts

**TOURISM OPERATORS ON TANNA** have applauded the Australian Government for giving them hope after cyclone Pam.

Two years ago, cyclone Pam battered Vanuatu and these small local operators lost everything they depended on for survival.

But today, their businesses are up running again, thanks to the recovery funds from the Australian Government.

By mid of this year, almost 20 of the affected bungalows including restaurants and bars will be operational after being renovated.

Almost 10 are already up running.

They were part of the first phase of the Tanna Tourism Recovery Project (TTRP) financed by Australia Government through the Governance for Growth Program and implemented by the Department of Tourism (DoT) and Skills for Economic Growth Program.

During the launching of these renovated bungalows, business owners applauded

the Director of the Governance for Growth Program, Matthew Harding and officers, on behalf of the Australian Government for reviving businesses and meeting their needs.

They stressed that they lost hope when the roofs and walls of their bungalows were blown away. Owners of newly established bungalows were disappointed when their businesses were brought down.

Owner of the Yasur View Lodge, Thomas Noal, said the project has helped to take his business to another level.

“For 6 years since I started my business, I have never receive such assistance from anyone,” he said.

The launching of his renovated restaurant was witnessed by delighted family members.

Before that little was known about Yasur View Lodge.

The project has engaged an industry coach who trained owner Noal to redesign businesses to match the brand.

Today, visitors who visit Yasur View Lodge will be able



Unlike before, visitors to the Yasur View Lodge will be able to enjoy the view of Mt Yasur while dining in its newly renovated restaurant / inset: One of the small tourism operators on Tanna, Philip Lop, in front of his newly lauched bungalow. He is the owner of Imaru Bungalows

to enjoy the smoke spewing out of Mt Yasur.

The Secretary General (SG) of the Tafea Provincial

Government Council, Ketty Napwatt, encouraged tourism operators to make good use of the opportunity given by

the government of Australia to rebuild better and to boost tourism growth in Tafea.

Director Harding assured

the tourism operators that the proposed budget of TTRP phase two is around Vt29 million.