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Mick brings rain relief

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TROPICAL Cyclone Mick temporarily helped the drought situation in parts of the country but we are not out of the woods just yet.

Meteorology Department director Rajendra Prasad said the heavy rainfall associated with Cyclone Mick broke the drought conditions in eastern Viti Levu, western Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

But, with all the heat passing directly over Fiji now, all the moisture left behind by Mick may have dried up.

Mr Prasad, who had just returned from Ba when interviewed, said ground conditions in the area showed we may have returned to the drought conditions before the cyclone.

At the end of November, sites that were under drought conditions for more than a month were Yasawa-i-ra, Viwa, Penang Mill, Nadi Airport, Nacocolevu, Tokotoko, Laucala Bay, Koronivia, Nausori Airport, Dobuilevu, Monasavu Dam, Dreketi, Seaqaqa, Labasa Airport, Labasa Mill, Savusavu Airport, Udu Point, Matei Airport and Lakeba, Ono-i-lau and Vunisea.

Sites that were under "warning" status were Vatukoula, Rarawai, Lautoka, Nabouwalu and Rotuma.

Mr Prasad said if it was not for Mick, Fiji may have been in a more serious situation.

"It is better to have moderate rain over a long period instead of heavy downpour over a short period of time because there is a lot of runoff," Mr Prasad said.

However, there is hope that rain may come in mid-January, he added.