

FijiFocus



A responsible, innovative and compassionate at Budget - PM

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama says the Budget for the financial year 2022-2023 is a responsible, innovative and compassionate one. He made the comments whilst speaking to the Ba Provincial council.

“This past Friday we went further, as our Attorney-General and Minister for Economy announced a new National Budget that is responsible, innovative, and compassionate,” he said.

“Through it, we will provide Fijian families with a combined annual income of \$50,000 or less with one dollar per day per child, or seven dollars a week or around 30 dollars per month — making for a total of \$180 per child for the next six months.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama said a family with three children, for example, will receive \$540 in cash support over the next six months that they can use to alleviate

the rising prices that they’re dealing with.

“Social welfare recipients and those in the After Care Fund, Government-funded pensioners, and tertiary students will also receive a payment of \$180 for six months.”

He added that Government will be stepping in to pay ten percent of the bus fares of all members of the public to combat rising bus fares as a result of rising fuel costs. Our opponents call these freebies.

“We call it compassion. Because prices are rising, and we must rise up together as a nation to protect those most vulnerable.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama said this comes in addition to the removal of VAT on 21 basic food items and the gradual raising of the national minimum wage that we announced earlier this year.

Story and photo: Mereani Gonedua

Everyone experienced the hardship and difficulty: PM

The people of Fiji along with everyone else on earth have experienced hardship and difficulty through the pandemic.

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama made the comments as he was speaking to the Ba Provincial council meeting.

“Let me be clear: Fijians, along with everyone else on Earth, experienced hardship and difficulty through the pandemic. It was not an easy, simple, or painless experience, in Fiji or anywhere else.

“But I believe that we chose the fastest and surest way through to the other side. We did it

with you. And we are grateful to each of you.”

PM Bainimarama told the council that the Fijian government latest budget also continues funding the basics of nation-building.

“It invests in roads, bridges, and jetties, in water and electricity access, and in telecommunications. And it builds on the over \$181 Million Dollars we have spent to develop Ba Province from 2014 to 2021.”

“Over that period, right here in Ba, my Government invested \$59 Million Dollars in social protection support through the Ministry of Women, Children, and Poverty Alleviation.”

“Those funds have shielded those most vulnerable from hardship; lifted people from poverty; and made for a more equal society. Those programmes all continue in the new financial year.”

PM Bainimarama said to ensure safe and reliable infrastructures for users, we have committed more than \$37 Million Dollars to Ba Province through the Fiji Roads Authority to build bridges and jetties and make your communities brighter and safer.

“We have dramatically reduced the time it takes to re-open roads after flooding. And we’ve made our coastal zones more resilient

through erosion prevention.”

“We have allocated over \$376 Million Dollars in the new budget for the construction, design, and maintenance of roads, bridges, and jetties nationwide.”

PM Bainimarama said a sum of 31.4 Million Dollars in the new budget will go towards the ongoing bridge construction for Naseyani bridge in Rakiraki, Vunikawa-kawa bridge in the Northern Division, Matawale bridge, Vuniyasi bridge, Yaqara bridge, most of which will be completed by September of this year.



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QUOTE OF THE WEEK



Voreqe Bainimarama.

I am sure that everyone gathered here today can agree that it would be a significant milestone in the relationship between the US and Pacific Parties

NUMBERS

The creation of the Maritime Centre is estimated to be completed in 2024 and will inject around

\$56.2 million

into the Fijian economy, creating more than 445 jobs across the nation

TWEET OF THE WEEK



Frank Bainimarama
@FijiPM

I've enjoyed every minute of the time I've spent with my fellow Forum Leaders this week. Every day has been extremely busy and not every issue we've talked through was easy; but we are still smiling and we are still family – I think we should congratulate ourselves for that!

CONTACT DETAILS

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

Main office: New Wing, Ground Floor, Government Buildings, Suva

North office: Level 3 Macuata House, Labasa

West office: Level 1 Ratu Nauliano House, Koroivalu

Contacts: Suva: 3301806
West: 6700086
North: 8811276
Fax: 3305139/3304663
news@govnet.gov.fj
@FijianGovt
Fijian Government
visit us at www.fiji.gov.fj

Over \$90m invested into the province of Rewa since 2014

PRASHILA DEVI

“We have levelled the playing field so that all Fijians can have better transportation, greater choice in the market, better health care, and better education.”

This was part of the official address by the Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama while opening the Rewa Provincial Council Meeting at Lomanikoro Village, Rewa today.

PM Bainimarama stated that the Fijian Government has invested over \$90m directly to the province of Rewa from 2014 to 2021.

“My Government believes that it is imperative that we help individuals and families, especially the poor and vulnerable, cope with crises and shocks, find employment opportunities, improve productivity, invest in the health and education of their children, and care for all Fijians, young and old alike,” PM Bainimarama said.

Of the assistance concentrated towards the province over the years; \$53 million was dedicated to recipients of Social Pension Schemes, Poverty Benefit Schemes and Disability Schemes, \$27 million in free education



PM Bainimarama and Ro Teimumu during the opening of the Rewa provincial council meeting
Photo Ilisapeci

grants and transport assistance, \$2m was invested into the health sector of the province, \$1 million was used to provide solar home systems, grid extensions, and wiring for homes, and \$1 million was invested into Rural Water Schemes, to name a few.

PM Bainimarama also spoke about the 2022/2023 National Budget that was an-

nounced last week and outlined the different initiatives by Government – \$180 payment for tertiary school students and social welfare recipients, one dollar per day per child, and the fact that the new budget invests in roads, bridges, and jetties, in water and electricity access, and telecommunications.

Kadavu provincial council meeting officiated by Prime Minister Bainimarama

Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama opened the Kadavu Provincial Council Meeting at Tavuki Village on the island of Kadavu recently. In his address, Prime Minister Bainimarama outlined the Fijian Government's assistance for the province of Kadavu throughout the years in terms of infrastructural development, free education, and medical assistance to name a few, for \$55.6m from 2014 to 2021. He stated that the construction of roads and bridges on the island received the highest amount of assistance at \$23m. The Fijian Government had also provided \$8.63m in education funding for the province – this also included purchasing boats and engines for the transportation of

school students. He commended villagers who have set up businesses around the island using the available resources in Kadavu, one being Mr Taniela Kama of Tavuki Village, a farmer who uses organic fertiliser on his farm and also supplies fresh eggs to different village shops around the island.

“The Tavuki villager has been farming for the last 10 years and was assisted by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2011 with a shed, 300 layer birds, and chicken feed to kick-start his poultry business, valued at \$26,000,” Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

He encouraged villagers to venture into farming vegetables such as lettuce, ginger, broccoli, and livestock farming, as these are

profitable for the local and overseas markets.

The people of Kadavu were also reminded of the dangers of substance abuse and the use of marijuana. The head of the Fijian Government also urged village elders to continue to remind their people of the effects of consuming such drugs. Commissioner of Police, Brigadier-General Sitiveni Qiliho, who was also present, advised those present to be vigilant in being aware of the utilisation of their land.

The village of Tavuki now has proper running water, which was commissioned by Prime Minister Bainimarama yesterday (4/07/22).

The meeting was in Tavuki Village with representatives from the different districts on the island of Kadavu.



PM Bainimarama with the representatives during the Kadavu provincial council meeting . Photo Ilisapeci

Budget Acknowledgement By The Ministry Of Women, Children, And Poverty Alleviation

Minister for Women, Children, and Poverty Alleviation, Rosy Akbar has lauded the new budget as a compassionate and rewarding budget, which considers the needs of the most vulnerable in our population, while providing opportunities for the economic empowerment of families and individuals, through social protection and within the grant system.

“This budget has been designed to encourage empowerment and inclusion. The Ministry of Women, Children, and Poverty Alleviation has been allocated a total budget of \$147.7 million for the upcoming fiscal year. We would like to thank the Minister for Economy and his team, for supporting the Ministry’s submission as a service-oriented Ministry, allocating resources for assisting the most vulnerable and maintaining support for gender equality, empowerment, and preventing violence against women and girls”.

“Under social protection, we have received allocations for the Poverty Benefit Scheme (\$34,000,000), Child Protection allowance (\$13,741,621), Social Pension Scheme (\$55,000,000), Food Voucher for Pregnant Mothers (800,000), Allowance

for Persons with Disabilities (\$10,788,541) and the Bus Fare Program for Older Persons and the Disabled (\$10,000,000). Our Older Persons were not forgotten, as we have been allocated \$120,000 to establish the National Council for Older Persons as a statutory body, which will provide a catalyst for promoting the issues and concerns of our senior citizens”, Minister Akbar said.

Minister Akbar stated that the Ministry will continue to reform and digitalise the Department of Social Welfare and the new Department of Children.

“We are excited to announce the new budget line to establish the Department of Children, reinforcing our commitment to strengthen child protection systems nationally and to streamline and improve the delivery of child services. The specialisation of child protection roles will be the foundation for the professionalisation of this sector. We want to ensure that the children of Fiji have the best child protection system we can provide and this is a very important step forward in that direction”.

Minister Akbar added that the Ministry is also grateful to the Government for responding to the circumstances that the poorest of the poor are experiencing, providing the \$180 assistance scheme



Minister for Women Rosy Akbar , Supporting families through the Social Protection Scheme. Photo Supplied

for 6 months, which will benefit all recipients, including children.

“Again this proves the Government’s commitment to early childhood development, in commitments to health, nutrition, and child protection”.

“We are pleased to note that disabilities and gender budgets have been mainstreamed across Government and within financial institutions like the Fiji Development Bank.

Fiji has taken the lead in gen-

der transformative Institutional Capacity Development across government, a program that is ongoing this year and we can see the results in gender-responsive budget allocations and the commitment of development partners.

Fiji took the lead in terms of government responses to gender-based violence during the pandemic and the Ministry continues to be resourced to prevent violence against women and girls.

We have received resources

for grants to women’s institutions (\$400,000), NGO grants, and support for the DV helpline (\$200,000), DV shelter, and DV fund. Women’s Economic Empowerment (\$100,000) was not overlooked, with resources allocated across the Government and funds of \$300,000 allocated to re-invigorate women in the informal sector. Fijians from the business sector to the grassroots have been considered in this thoughtful budget”, she explained.

Fiji and Egypt discuss oceans



Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum and The Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, His Excellency Mahmoud Mohammed.

Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum received a courtesy call from the Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, His Excellency Mahmoud Mohammed recently

During their meeting, the A-G highlighted Fiji’s increased vulnerability to climate change and the recent mitigation and adaptation strategies undertaken by the Fijian Government.

He emphasised the importance of accessing affordable climate finance and the support of bilateral partners, to assist Fiji in delivering its climate change commitments at the upcoming COP27 that will be held in Egypt.

Discussions between the two also included the inclusion of Oceans as priority area of discussions at the COP27 and the nexus between oceans and climate change, including irretrievable loss and damage.

Fiji and india renew commitment for greater development



Permanent Secretary of Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs, Yogesh Karan, met the Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India Saurabh Kumar

The Permanent Secretary of Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs, Yogesh Karan, met the Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India Saurabh Kumar ahead of the 5th Fiji and India Foreign office consultation, recently.

In welcoming his counterpart, Permanent Secretary Karan thanked Kumar and his delegation for their first official visit to Fiji, to attend the 5th Fiji-India Foreign Office Consultation.

He added that India’s increased levels of cooperation with Fiji illustrate the strong partnership and bonds of friendship between the two nations.

India was one of the first countries to provide direct support to Fiji with life-saving vaccines and further assisted Fiji’s national response to the COVID-19 pandemic through provisions of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and medical supplies.

The cooperation opportunities in build-

ing resilient economies through climate and pandemic challenges, investment in health, education, trade and investment, renewable energy, agriculture, sugar industry, infrastructure, education, empowerment of women and children, and cultural exchanges, were discussed in detail at the meeting.

The agenda also included discussions on increasing collaboration to tackle the crisis caused by the impact of climate change, which has been further exacerbated by the impacts of the pandemic and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Discussions included Fiji-India collaboration in the lead-up to the 12th World Hindi Conference to be held in Fiji and hosted by the Fijian Government.

As the world’s largest democracy, India has also assured Fiji of its support for the upcoming elections in Fiji.

In conclusion, Karan thanked Kumar and his team for their swift assistance in the successful coordination of the

5th Fiji-India Foreign Office Consultation. He said the discussions reflected the two countries shared commitment to enhancing cooperation, which will materialise into tangible actions and return of investment for Fiji and India.

In response, Kumar extended his appreciation to the Fijian Government for the warm hospitality and for successfully hosting the 5th Fiji-India Foreign Office Consultation.

He said India stands by Fiji and is ready to support Fiji at all levels, particularly with Fiji’s efforts to advance national and regional development.

He commended Prime Minister Bainimarama for his decisive leadership on issues of climate, global peace, and security and for strengthening solidarity. He congratulated the Fijian Government for the progressive actions taken to revive the tourism industry and rebuild the economy, in the face of climate change and the pandemic.



Blue Pacific Village

A hub for cultural exchange, Blue Pacific Village is a testament of shared history in the Pacific.

While promoting dialogue that strengthened Pacific solidarity at the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) meeting from July 11-14, 2022, the Village also promoted the rich diversity of the Pacific Island nations.

Member countries of the PIF converged to showcase their respective diversity in culture, shared their expectations from the PIF meeting and the significance of Blue Pacific Village.

Lilieta Soakai who hails from Tongatapu Island in Tonga showcased handicrafts that reminds her of her homeland.

"I am showcasing our traditional attire and some things that are of value like handicrafts that women make called Koloa," she said.

"I shared what materials our Koloa is made of, what certain things mean and what we wear them for.

"I have also shared my history, some of our displays have landmarks so I have just been explaining that to the people."

Sharing her expectations from the PIF

meeting, Soakai said she wanted the leaders to be engaged and active in addressing climate change.

"The whole point of regionalism is working together for the betterment of everybody and not just a few," she said.

"For Tonga, a lot of people depend on subsistence fishing, and whenever something happens in the ecosystem, it also affects everything so people can't really support themselves the same way they did.

"The climate change issues were also made worse by COVID-19, we don't have access to the same resources that we had before."

For Jeffrey Falag from Yap Island in the Federated States of Micronesia, the Village was a chance to educate people on their existence.

"For me, it feels like a way to introduce people to Micronesia because not many people here know Micronesia, this was one of the great ways to show people that we exist," he said.

"We are showcasing some local handicrafts such as ropes that are used to build houses and canoes, turtle and shark carvings, hand-

made soaps and home-grown black pepper which is known as one of the best pepper in the world because it has a very distinctive taste."

Mr Falag said Micronesia had a lot of small atoll islands and rising sea level was an issue whereby people needed to move but they did not have enough land.

Deavina Ken of Micronesia said she wanted the PIF meeting to retain the Pacific Way.

"I want this family to mandate so that when we bring our voices to the international level, we are seen as collective and a greater voice," she said.

She said her expectation was addressing challenges related to climate change and deep-sea mining.

Meanwhile, Maraia Tela of Vanuabalavu Lau thanked the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts for organising the event.

"For me it's a joy to meet different nationalities and admire their culture," she said.

"Climate change is a very big issue and we need to build better sea walls to avoid land erosion."



USA prepared to become a Pacific partner like never before - PM

FELIX LESINAIVALU

THE United States of America has long been a Pacific power which shows that America is prepared to become a Pacific partner like never before.

This was highlighted by Fijian Prime Minister, Voreqe Bainimarama, during his address on the United States Treaty during the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting at the Grand Pacific Hotel recently.

PM Bainimarama was welcoming Vice President of the United States of America Kamala Harris, as she joined the meeting virtually.

"I am sure that everyone gathered here today can agree that it would be a significant milestone in the relationship between the US and Pacific Parties," PM Bainimarama

said.

"The Treaty offers the United States an unparalleled platform to strengthen its relationship with the Pacific Islands Parties; to balance its various strategic interests in the Pacific region; and broaden our cooperation across regional security, responsible fisheries management, and economic development."

Vice President Harris, in her remarks, said they will request to triple the funding for economic development and ocean resilience in the Pacific, from the United States Congress.

"An increase from \$21 million per year to \$60 million per year for the next 10 years."

"These funds will help strengthen climate resilience; invest in marine planning and conservation; and combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing; and enhance maritime security."

On the South Pacific Tuna Treaty, Vice President Harris believes "it is a cornerstone of the political and economic cooperation, and looked forward to concluding negotiations".

"President Biden and I consider our relationship with all of you to be a true partnership and a friendship based on mutual respect, mutual trust, and mutual benefit."

"We will engage transparently and constructively, which means we will listen, collaborate, and coordinate at every step of the way."

Vice President Harris said they will also work to empower a strong and united Pacific Islands Forum, which will strengthen the Pacific voice on the world stage as they continue to work together.

New future of uncertainty faces the Pacific – Fiji President

The Pacific faces a new future of uncertainty as free and sovereign nations, says President of Fiji Ratu Wiliame Katonivere as he hosted the leaders gathered in Suva for the Pacific Islands Leaders Forum.

"Today most of us are free and sovereign nations and we face a new future of uncertainty as we stand prominently on our own feet- but knowing also that we have so many enduring partners who support our aspirations for a resilient and secure future."

Further addressing the leaders, His Excellency said the Blue Pacific faces deep and growing threats arising from climate change.

"Climate change now threatens the very existence of our island nations," His Excellency said.

"So many of our communities are on the move - forced by the dramatic and growing impacts of the climate crisis. Our oceans are threatened like never before - and with that the very essence of life across the Blue Pacific."

"In this urgent call to duty; I wish all leaders well in your deliberations during this 51st Pacific Islands Forum."

His Excellency also extended the best wishes of the Pacific to the government and people of Kiribati on the anniversary of their independence.

We remain hopeful that we can meet soon to talanoa and find a way forward in resolving the impasse before us."

President of Fiji
Ratu Wiliame Katonivere



Navigate way forward as the Pacific Family

PRASHILA DEVI

“THERE is only one way forward if we are to navigate the waters ahead and that is together as a family, united.”

This was highlighted by Fijian Prime Minister and chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Voreqe Bainimarama during the traditional welcoming ceremony of the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders held at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Suva recently.

“Our connections are indeed anchored in the ancient past where our ancestors once sailed and traded, bringing us together as peoples of the Pacific.”

“These connections anchor our unity today, giving us common identity and purpose and bringing us together to take on the challenges of our own time.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama added the Pacific Islands Forum remains critical to fostering unity at the regional level, while at the same time giving Pacific leaders a powerful means to define the strategic response to ever-evolving threats and opportunities.

“I encourage us to consider our shared strengths – from a growing blue economy to sustainable tourism, I make this point regarding our vulnerabilities, because ultimately, I believe that the “strategy within the strategy” must be about ensuring that we are sovereign, secure, and prosperous, and that no external entity has strategic control over any of us – whether through coercion or any other means.”

“This 51st Pacific Islands Forum is an opportunity for us to set a stake in the ground. It is an opportunity for us to declare that as a family united, we will come together, we will seize our shared opportunities, we will leverage our

shared strengths and resources, and we will address our challenges together.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama said it was an opportunity to declare that business as usual can no longer be their way, and to the youth, that they will fight for their survival, their security, and their prosperity.

“It is an opportunity for us to declare to the world around us, that we are the Blue Pacific Continent. We are the world’s blue beacons of sustainable development — our voices must be heard and our examples should be followed. We have indeed much to learn from the world — and they have much to learn from us.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama said the PIF meeting was designed to ensure to re-establish the Pacific bond and that he looked forward to the meeting.

PM acknowledges role of CROP

PRIME Minister and the chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Voreqe Bainimarama, acknowledged the long history of political, technical and scientific cooperation between the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific Island countries.

As Prime Minister Bainimarama opened the PIF Leaders Dialogue with Heads of CROP at the Grand Pacific Hotel last week, he said, “Collectively, we realised early on the benefits of pooling our expertise and resources to drive our sustainable development, provide essential services and manage our natural resources. In simple terms, working

together”.

“This is indeed the essence of our Blue Pacific narrative, and the 2050 Strategy – stronger together,” PM Bainimarama said.

He also stated that as development challenges such as climate change and ocean health intensify, Pacific Islands resources were stretched following the COVID-19 pandemic, and as the regional partner landscape gets complex and crowded, the purpose of the CROP remains vital.

“We must bring the science, coordination, political agreement, and the international advocacy to bear to drive our collective interests.”

news@govnet.gov.fj



Fijian Prime Minister and chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Voreqe Bainimarama during the traditional welcoming ceremony of the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders held at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Suva recently

Looking forward, our 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and related Review of Regional Architecture provides the key platform for strengthened and cohesive delivery by our CROP agencies,

PM Bainimarama said.

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FELIX LESINAIVALU

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Fijian Prime Minister, Voreqe Bainimarama, during his address on the United States Treaty during the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting at the Grand Pacific Hotel recently.



MARITIME ESSENTIAL SERVICES CENTRE TO BETTER MONITOR FIJIAN WATERS



FELIX LESINAIVALU

“This Maritime Essential Services Centre is set to become a crucial pulse point from which we will be able to better monitor Fijian waters; secure our Blue Economy from internal and external threats.”

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama during the launch of the RFMF–RFN Maritime Essential Services Centre at the Grand Pacific Hotel said, “The centre will house the Republic of Fiji’s Naval Headquarters, the Fiji Hydrographic Office, the Fiji Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, the Fiji Maritime Fusion Centre, and the 3DP Suva Coastal Radio”.

“The creation of the Maritime Centre is estimated to be completed in 2024 and will inject around \$56.2 million dollars into the Fijian economy, creating more than 445 jobs across the nation.”

PM Bainimarama also thanked the Australian Vuvale for their on-going support saying, “Your efforts towards helping Fiji advance securely and sustainably -- and your invaluable friendship”.

“Improved surveillance also translates into more efficient search and rescue operations, improved coastal radio transmissions, more thorough hydrographic survey services, and greater maritime security.”

“Not least of which is the fulfillment of our obligations under various international laws and conventions and regional arrangements.”

PM Bainimarama said Fiji is investing heavily in our Blue Economy – in which we intend to create 100,000 new jobs by 2050 – more than a tenth of our current population.

“We recognise fully that any ocean economy depends on a secure ocean above all else.”

“As a Large Ocean State, our ocean is the beating heart of our way of life, our livelihoods, and our society.”

PM Bainimarama said he is proud to launch of the construction of a historic project that will help Fiji better protect the beautiful, life-sustaining Blue Highways of our homeland.

PIF SG COMMENDS PRIME MINISTER BAINIMARAMA FOR UNITING THE PACIFIC FAMILY

At the historic launching of the first ever “2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent,” the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Mr. Henry Puna commended Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Chair and Prime Minister Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama for his exemplary leadership in strengthening the Pacific region’s solidarity.

Mr. Puna thanked Prime Minister Bainimarama for his unwavering support and commitment in uniting the Pacific Family and providing a vision and way forward for the region, to work together and build a resilient and inclusive Blue Pacific Continent.

“Let me thank the Prime Minister and Forum Chair for his stewardship of this august body of the course of the past 12 months. We have had our own challenges as a family, and of course we have had to continue to deal with broader issues such as COVID 19.

“However, Chair, you have brought our family back together, and you have driven this organisation to produce a blueprint for its long-term survival and prosperity. The leadership you have shown these past months, is the sort of exemplary leadership that we will require as we voyage into the future as one family, guided by our north star.

“When our great, great grandchildren look back in time, I am confident that they will identify this moment as the point in time where we as a region decided to change our course, our direction, and our destiny for the good of our people,” SG Puna said.

He assured Prime Minister Bainimarama of the Forum’s commitment to the effective implementation of the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy.

“On this front, I am also pleased to be joined by my fellow Heads of CROP Agencies. Because, together, our shared promise is that we will work together as regional agencies; we will marshal our collective resources; and we will align our agencies to support the vision and the objectives of the 2050 Strategy. This is indeed our shared commitment to Leaders, to Members, and to the wider people of the Blue Pacific Continent.”

Fiji assumed the Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum in August 2021, under the leadership of Prime Minister Bainimarama.

Support for a Stronger and More Resilient post-pandemic Fiji

FIJI has secured approximately FJ\$218 million (US\$100m) support from the World Bank to recover from the immense shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic that exacerbated the impacts of recent natural disasters.

In a statement, the World Bank announced that the Board of Executive Directors has approved the budget support.

The Fiji Recovery and Resilience Second Development Policy Financing is the second of a two-part series of budget support to promote a private sector-driven recovery, strengthen climate resilience, improve the management of public finances and mobilize tax revenue.

“The pandemic has had deep and lasting impacts on all countries; yet tourism-reliant economies like Fiji have felt these impacts disproportionately,” said Stephen Ndegwa, World Bank Country Director, Papua New Guinea and Pacific Islands.

“This financing builds on our earlier support for delivering increased jobs. We now have an opportunity to not only support Fiji’s recovery, but to also prepare Fiji to better take advantage of opportunities in the future.”

The reform program supported through this operation boosts Fiji’s recovery and resilience, including through:

- Engagement of women’s groups and local communities to rehabilitate degraded lands, especially forests and coastal areas, and improve their ability to manage climate-related risks and disasters;
- Strengthening of institutional arrangement for delivering early warning systems for natural disasters;
- Further efforts to spur investments and expand the use of digital payments;
- Further strengthening of management of public finances and debt while increasing tax revenue.

Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum said, “The climate crisis is upon us and intensifying and every dollar spent now on adaptation will spare us from far higher costs in the years to come. Fiji is not wasting this vital window to prepare our people and communities — in fact, our entire recovery is purpose-built around resilience and long-term economic stability and sustainability”.

“This support from the World Bank will have an immediate impact on equipping Fiji to withstand future shocks – whether they be climate change, pandemics, or global conflicts.”

The new support includes US\$50 million (FJ\$109 million) on highly concessional terms from the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank’s fund for the world’s most in-need countries.

The balance of this new support will be through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), which provides loans to middle-income and creditworthy low-income countries, as well as by coordinating responses to regional and global challenges.

(Source: World Bank)

G20 called to strengthen NDCs

BUILDING a secure planet with sustainable food and nutrition and resilient climate starts with us.

This was the strong message delivered by the Fijian Prime Minister and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIFs), Voreqe Bainimarama at the second session of the G20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia recently.

In his address at the Food and Energy Security session, the Prime Minister Bainimarama said some common challenges faced by the Pacific, saying that parallel to the effects of the global pandemic and conflict, the Pacific nations bear the crushing burden of the climate crisis – the most serious long-term threat to our food systems.

“Sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion, ocean acidification, and land degradation could starve us out within decades and that suffering will not be felt in isolation,” he said.

“The Pacific Ocean covers 30 per-

cent of the earth’s surface and supplies 60 percent of the global tuna catch alone. If you eat food or breathe air, you need to care what happens to the Pacific.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama also took the opportunity to highlight some of Fiji’s commitments towards climate change and ocean and sustainable development.

“By 2030, Fiji has committed to protect 30 per cent of our ocean and produce more than 160,000 metric tonnes of sustainable farmed and harvested ocean products. We are doing our part, but we need every country to do theirs.”

“The growing gap in finance for ocean science, governance, and management must be filled. Climate and economic pressures, as well as Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing pose huge threats and we demand that our waters and sovereignty be respected by all nations.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama also called on the G20 nations to strengthen their nationally determined contributions.

“It is time to step up ambition and action to cut carbon emissions. Climate action is not just transformational for your countries, but lifesaving for your people and mine,” he added.

“The Pacific is doing its part. Thanks to the support of development partners, we are financing renewal energy transitions, including in regional shipping. We are also working on climate-related legal, policy, regulatory, and institutional reforms.

“But, we need secured investment to finance our transition and to construct, climate-proof and manage infrastructure that can reliably and affordably support our economies,” Prime Minister Bainimarama added.

(Source: Office of the Prime Minister)



Prime Minister Bainimarama at the G20 meeting in Bali Indonesia. With him is Permanent Secretary for the Prime Minister’s Office, Yogesh Karan and Ambassador Amena Yauvoli, Fiji’s ambassador to Indonesia.

Protecting our ocean is crucial-PM Bainimarama

Fiji “means business” when it comes to protecting our ocean’s health.

At a side-event on “Sustainable Ocean Economies that can drive a Blue Recovery and Sustainable Development” held in Lisbon, Portugal recently, Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama said there was an urgent need for every nation to follow our actions on protecting our ocean.

In his capacity as chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, he said funding ocean ambition in the Pacific can take our nations from the frontline of the climate crisis to the cutting edge of ocean innovation.

“But without collective action, the Blue Pacific’s single effort won’t cut it. It is not enough for the world to support us, although we truly need the world’s support. The fact is that we need all nations to follow our actions.”

On the home front, he also outlined some of the major commitments towards sustainable ocean management.

“To meet our commitment to sustainably manage our ocean by 2030, with 30 per cent as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), I announced that expands within our Lau seascape, which together account for eight per-

cent of Fiji’s ocean, will become an offshore MPA by 2024,” Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

“By 2030, we will ban virtually all single-use plastics and recycle all PET bottles; deepening ocean literacy will be a mandatory objective within our national curriculum and we will slash carbon emissions of our domestic shipping sector by 40 per cent.”

“After fully mapping our entire 1.3 million square kilometre EEZ by 2025, we will achieve total real-time surveillance of Fiji’s waters and by 2030, we will produce more than 160,000 metric tonnes of sustainably farmed and harvested ocean product, supporting over 53,000 new jobs on our way to supply half of all blue foods from sustainable fisheries by 2035.”

“By 2050, Fiji will be a net-zero society. Our fisher-folks will have access to transport powered by sustainable



PM Bainimarama speaks at the Blue Recovery and Sustainable Development held in Lisbon, Portugal

propulsion – be it wind, electricity, hydrogen, or other hybrid solutions. The Pacific at large will be traversed by green shipping fleets – lowering the energy intensity of global trade. All fishing nets in Fijian waters must be bio-degradable and we intend to create 100,000 new blue economy jobs—more than a tenth of our current population.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama said that Fiji intends to add 100,000 to our blue economy by 2050.

(Source: Office of the Prime Minister)



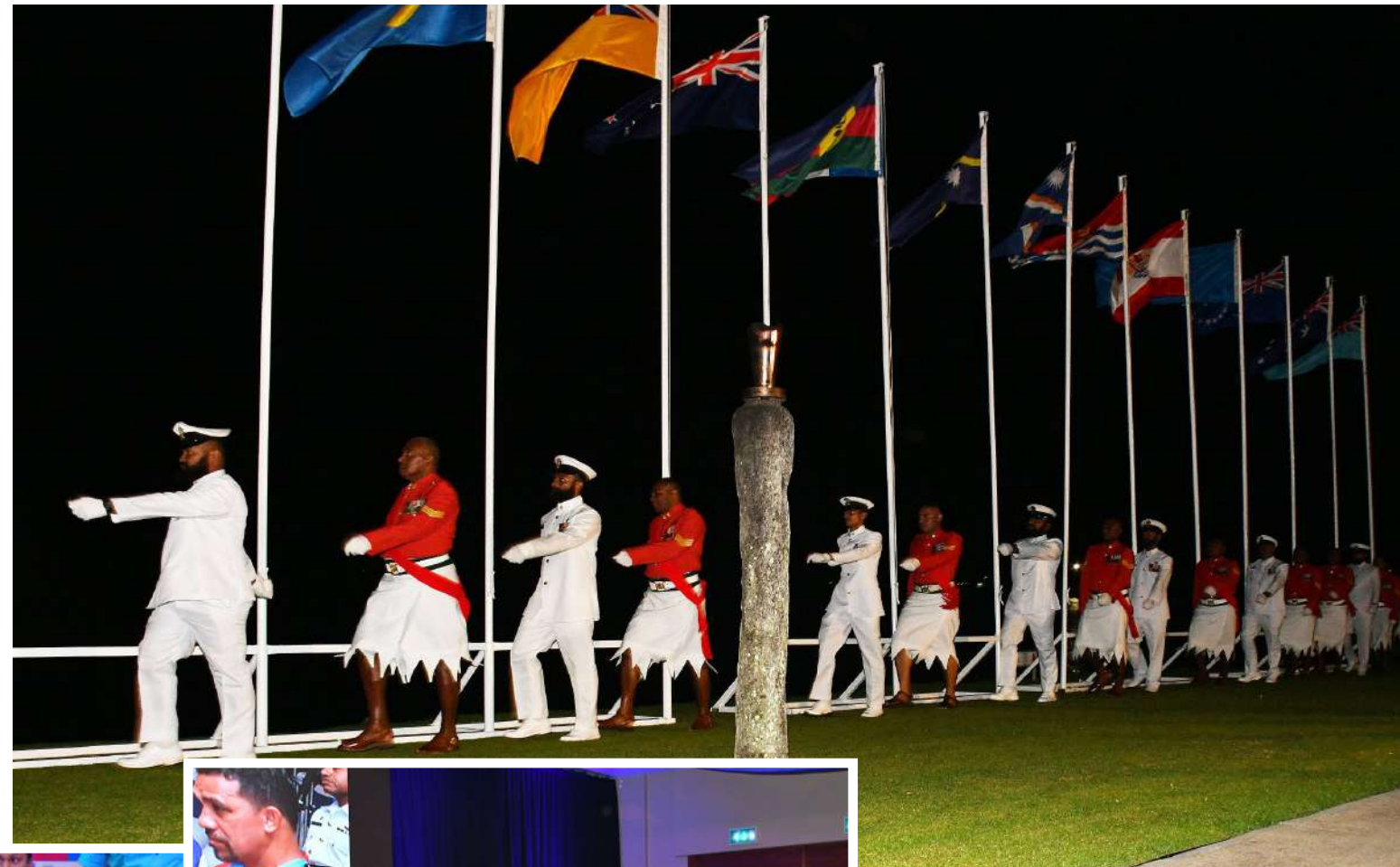
Farewell Dinner for 51st PIF

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama hosted a farewell dinner for the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders at the Grand Pacific Hotel last week.

"While our time together may be drawing to a close, I do believe without a doubt that these past few days have seen the deepening of our solidarity," PM Bainimarama said.

"Earlier this afternoon, we witnessed the launch of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. The ceremony held a poignant message. It reflected our deep appreciation for the past while signalling a bold challenge and new promise for our future."

The Strategy emphasises that the Blue Pacific is about the Pacific peoples, their future, shared values, and talents. It is about people who know their needs and potential; who plan and own their development agenda; and who act collectively for the good of all.



Photos: Ilisepeli



PIF chair attends PACP Leaders Meeting

Prime Minister and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) chair, Voreqe Bainimarama, joined the Secretary-General of the PIF, Henry Puna, and the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders at the Pacific Group of the African Caribbean Pacific Leaders (PACP) Meeting in Suva last week.

The meeting was the first official engagement of the Leaders as part of the 51st Pacific Island Forum Leaders meeting convened yesterday in Suva. In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Bainimarama said the 51 PIFLM celebrates 50 years of Pacific regionalism and it was also setting the course for the future of our Pacific regionalism, through the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.



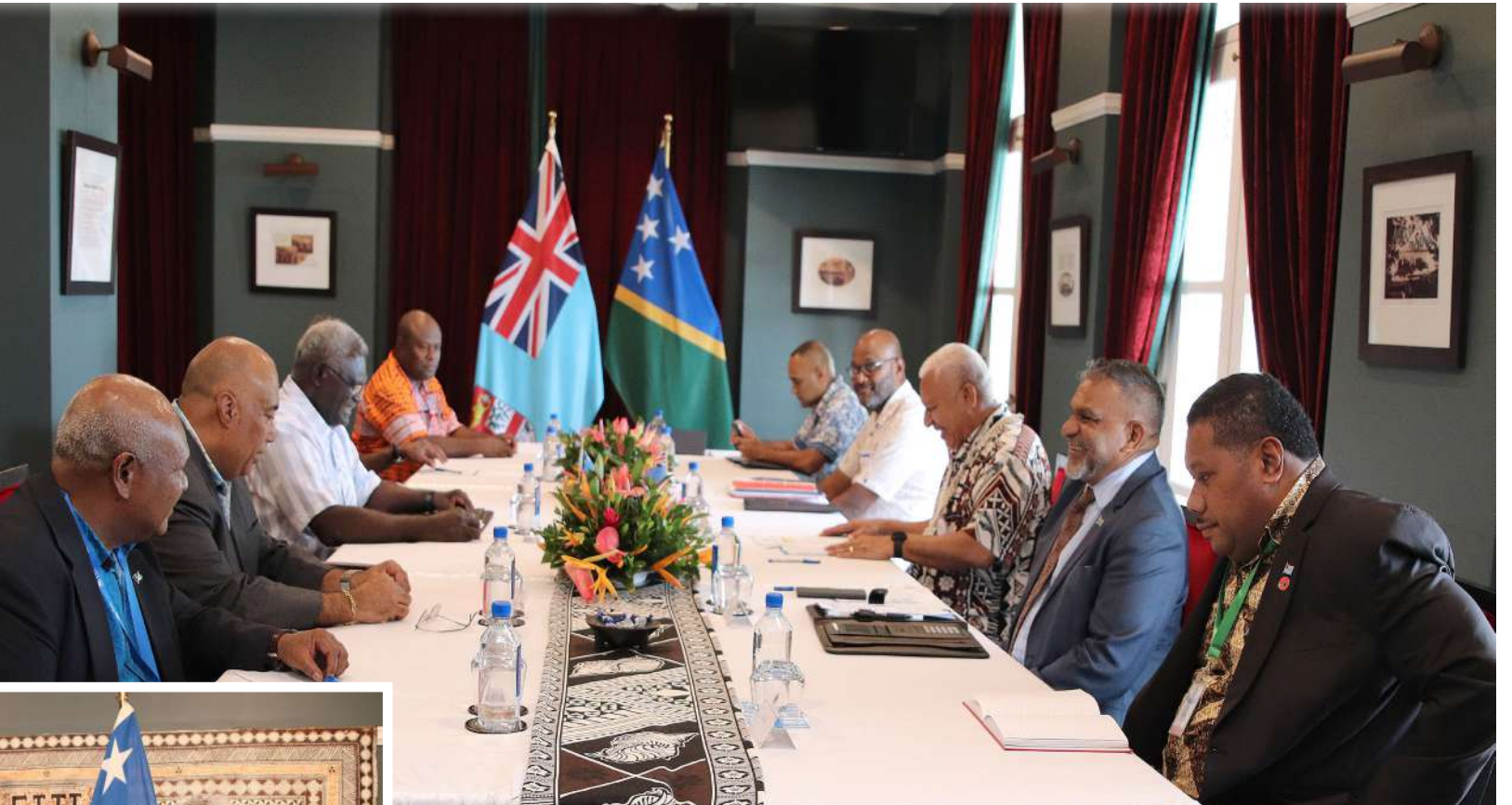
Photos: Ilisepeli

PM Bainimarama meets with Pacific leaders

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama held bilateral meetings with leaders from Pacific island who were in Fiji to attend the 51st session of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting held in Suva last week.

Prime Minister Bainimarama met his Vanuatu counterpart, Bob Weibur, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, James Marape and Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare.

The chair of the PIF met also met with his New Zealand counterpart, Jacinda Ardern.



Photos: Supplied

Farmers should make use of Government subsidies



The Fijian Government will continue its assistance towards the sugar cane industry as explained in the Budget 2022/2023

DIPESH KUMAR

SUGARCANE farmers should make use of the subsidies provided by the Government as this has increased his cane production this year.

This was the sentiments expressed by Krishna Kumar, 67, from Arolevu Nadi as the cane production in his farm has increased by 50 percent due to subsidies and good weather.

“This year has been a successful harvesting season because there has been no cyclone this year. Also, we have been getting Government subsidies.”

Mr Kumar said he has been recipient of cane planting and ploughing grant and if it weren't for the grants farmers would have had to leave sugar cane farming.

“This is the only Government that has provided so many subsidies and also gave us cane planting grants. Sugar cane farming is our backbone and with this I was able to build my house educate

my three kids.”

Mr Kumar said that even though the prices of weedicides and fuel has gone up, farmers should not be disheartened because there are always drawbacks in farming.

“Make use of the subsidies. Even the fuel price has risen, however, the mechanical harvesters provided by the government over the years has really helped us because we can't find laborers to cut cane.”

Mr Kumar has been looking forward to the coming budget as he hopes that the Government will divert the land ploughing grant to weedicides grants.

“If the Government takes the land ploughing grant and gives subsidies on weedicides then it will be cheap. There would be no weed in the cane field. If there is weed in the field event, the harvesters don't want to cut the cane.”

Sharing similar sentiments, Mohammed Janiff of Lomolomo, Lautoka said that cane production has not been up to their expecta-

tion year.

“This year the production has been a bit low because our farm is in a flat area and we had a lot of rain and also a lot of weeds grow so the laborers are not able to work on the field.”

Mr Janiff said without the grants their production would not be at a stage where it was now.

He said their cooperative had bought a mechanical harvester for which the Government had provided \$90,000 in the form of grant.

He hopes that in the future the Government will help them with the transportation of cane as they will be fully equipped.

“When we bought the harvester, the rate was \$17.50, now because of the fuel price now its \$21.61, and hiring laborers to cut cane is more expensive, before it was \$20 and now its \$30.”

Mr Janiff said that he normally produces around 200 tonnes of cane and with the help of this Government he will be able to increase this number in the future.

New classroom block for Nasau Youth Training Centre



Minister for Youth Parveen Kumar participates in a ground breaking ceremony at Nasau Youth Training Centre.

DIPESH KUMAR

THE Embassy of Japan to Fiji has provided a grant of FJ\$257,007 (US \$115,125) to the Nasau Youth Training Centre for the construction of a new classroom block in Sigatoka recently.

The new block will hold around 30 students and was in line with the new programme that was to be introduced next year.

The new programme ‘Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation’ will offer Certificate I to the students.

School manager, Avnit Narayan, said that with the construction of this new classroom block, students will enter a new programme through which they will be able to help their community.

“As you know there's a lot of disasters happening in Fiji, I think this training will help them, they will come here and learn about disaster risk management.”

“At the moment we have seen that educated people normally move away from their village, there are people living in the village who are not really that educated, so I think these students will learn this new program and its techniques and they can go back and use these methods to prevent the happenings of disasters in their own villages and communities.”

The training centre has around 70 students and it offers two training programmes, which includes carpentry, joinery and organic agriculture and was accredited by the Fiji National University in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and OISCA ‘Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement’.

Mr Narayan said that the new program was a hope to the students as these programmes was for those who had dropped out of school.

“Our main focus mostly is on the youths of today because as you see students are getting out of school in their early ages. This initiative is for the youth and for the betterment of their future.”

Speaking at the ground breaking ceremony, the Minister for Youth and Sports, Parveen Kumar said that the new facility will be a timely boost to the current facility.

“This funding is being used to provide an additional learning space to the current facilities for the new program on ‘Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation-Certificate I.’

“I also take this opportunity to thank the Government of Japan for their contribution to this initiative. Most of you are aware that Sigatoka is known as the salad bowl of Fiji because of its agricultural project. Therefore, our Nasau Youth Training Centre cannot be in a better place for the purpose of training our youth in the best possible farming practices.”

The project was expected to be completed by November this year.



Youth in Ba commended for their hard work



Minister for Youth and Sports, Parveen Kumar, officially handed over the grant to members of five youth groups at Nanuku Village in Ba recently.

ABOUT 120 young Fijians are the new beneficiaries of the Youth Farm Initiative Grant, a programme under the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

This comes after the Minister for Youth and Sports, Parveen Kumar, officially handed over the grant to members of five youth groups at Nanuku Village in Ba recently.

The five youth groups are Makosoi Youth Club, Nanuku Youth Club, Rara Youth Club, Leinatabua Youth Club and Tukuraki Youth Club

Minister Kumar said the assistance will not only

benefit the youth but their families, community and nation at large.

A few of the youth, who were graduates from the Ministry's Youth Training Centre in Sigatoka, have helped in the construction of about nine houses in the village.

He said the Tukuraki Youth Club was a model of resilience in the way they have bounced back from numerous natural disasters.

The Tukuraki village had relocated as their old location was frequented by landslides.

(Source: Ministry of Youth and Sports)

Young man hails programme for addressing gender inclusivity

JOSAIA RALAGO

A FARMER has hailed the Duke of Edinburgh International Award (DEIA) programme for addressing gender inclusivity within the youths in their village.

Silio Joji, who hails from Dogoru village in the interior of Macuata, said since the inception of the DEIA initiative for their youth club, the young men and women have been sharing roles.

“As a part of the activities we have undertaken for the programme, we have been introduced to work that were once only entrusted with women, and vice versa,” Mr Joji said.

He added that these included the art of weaving, baking for men, and farming for

their women.

“The art of weaving which has always been exclusive to women is something we can carry out now as young men in an iTaukei community,” Mr Joji said.

“For the young women in our club, they were taught the intricate details of farming and how to be successful individuals in agriculture.

“This is very important as this not only ensured gender inclusivity but also gender equality for all of us, as we are equipped with the knowledge on how to be better at what was once considered “only for men” or “only for women”.”

He added that these allowed them to value



The Minister for Youth and Sports Parveen Kumar Bala with members of the Blackstone Youth Club of Dogoru, Macuata. Photo JOSAIA RALAGO

one another and the roles they have played for a long time in society.

Minister for Youths and Sports, Parveen Kumar, while officiating at the DEIA presentation in Labasa, said young people need experiences outside the classroom to become committed, responsible and fulfilled citizens of Fiji.

“The award’s non-formal educational model provides an alternative way for young people to gain a sense of self-esteem and achievement,” Minister Kumar said.

“This is very important during this impor-

tant stage of growing up from youths into adulthood.

“The Government recognises that young people will take over key leadership positions in the not-too-distant future and we are committed to the development of young Fijians.”

The Ministry of Youth and Sports since the early 1990s has been the National Award Operator coordinating the program in conjunction with the Ministry of Education through the participating secondary schools and youth clubs.

Northern women excited for lifting of ban on beach-de-mer trade

JOSAIA RALAGO

RINIETA Vonu, 42, had to get up in the wee hours of the morning to prepare her children for school before she departs her island home for Labasa Town.

Mrs Vonu, who is originally from Sogobiau in Nadogo but now resides on Kavewa Island with her family, leaves her home at 4am with other villagers on a fiberglass boat.

The beche-de-mer trade which has been banned for the past five years was lifted by the Government on July 1 until October 31, 2022.

She was one of the many that flocked to the Commissioner Northern’s office for a fishing license that would allow her to be involved in the beche-de-mer trade.

“We have all come here for a license because beche-de-mer used to be a major source of income for us in the islands, which had enabled us to put our children through school and helped us attend to our church, Vanua and family responsibilities,” Mrs Vonu said.

“The cost of living has increased from sugar, flour and even fuel which have

caused a rise in the cost of bus fare and boat fare from the island.

“This avenue which we once used to generate income will greatly assist us in meeting our day-to-day needs.”

The mother of six said that as qoliqoli owners they appreciated the Government’s vision in protecting fishing grounds through the implementation of such bans.

“We also appreciated the Government’s efforts in allowing for such a ban for a number of reasons, one which is the protection of our fishing grounds through the restocking of beche-de-mer and there is a need for this so we could protect the qoliqoli for the future generation,” Mrs Vonu said.

She added that after the five-year ban, the price of beche-de-mer was higher and for that they were grateful.

In a statement the Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport permanent secretary and the Chair of the Licensing Committee, Shaheen Ali said the decision was made to support Fijian communities that rely on beche-de-mer as a source of income.



Rinieta Vonu (left) and Selita Tituka with their licenses. Photo JOSAIA RALAGO

Sugar cane farmers urged to diversify

JOSAIA RALAGO

THE Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport Faiyaz Koya has called on Northern sugar cane farmers to diversify and explore other local and international markets.

After visiting three sugar cane farming cooperatives in Labasa recently, Minister Koya, while speaking to the farmers, said diversification did not necessarily mean to purchase another plot of land but to cultivate other crops on the same of piece of land.

He said while the sugar industry was there where the farmers continue to survive and thrive, it also had its setbacks.

“In order to help them and also to help the economy, we are also asking these particular cooperatives to diversify and to look at other avenues within agriculture where they can succeed because of their hard work,” Minister Koya said.

“There are some things we take for granted that are not so readily available in Australia and New Zealand that could fetch a great price.

“Our turmeric for instance is actually wonderful, it is quite strong, and it fetches quite a substantial amount of money in Australia.”

He added that there were many avenues for export that were not being used by Fijians that needed to be utilised.

“There are many pathways that have been cleared but still not being utilised by Fijian farmers, in terms of export commodity that can actually go out to Australia, New Zealand, the USA etc.,” Minister Koya said.

“We want these cooperatives and even individual farmers to utilise these pathways and come to us for assistance and find out what is needed in different countries.”

“Even countries like Singapore are ready to accept Fijian good- even the organic products that we promote quite a lot - so there are lots of avenues that we can look into.”

He said the Fijian Government was ready to help and guide farmers who are interested to diversify and export.

Minister Koya added that the presence of the tourism industry was another market that these farmers could explore when they diversify.



Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport Faiyaz Koya visiting three sugar cane farming cooperatives in Labasa recently. Photo JOSAIA RALAGO



Ratu Inoke commissioned as new High Commissioner to New Zealand

FIJI'S new High Commissioner to New Zealand, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, was commissioned by the Head of State, the President, Ratu Wiliame Katonivere, at State House last week.

President Katonivere congratulated Ratu Inoke on his new diplomatic assignment and wished him all the best for the new role.

In turn, the new High Commissioner said it was an honour for him to represent Fiji in New Zealand and further develop the relationship between the two countries at all levels.

He further thanked Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama for the opportunity to serve in New Zealand, a country that has long-standing

historical links with Fiji.

"I would like to negotiate on increasing the number of Fijians currently allowed to participate in the Registered Seasonal Employer Scheme (RSE), there are now over 400 labourers from Fiji that are involved in this scheme in a season. We are keen to explore new sectors of employment within RSE given the demand for skilled labour from Fiji," Ratu Inoke said.

He said the longstanding relations and bonds of friendship that were further elevated with the signing of the Duavata Partnership formally signed in March this year, by Prime Minister Bainimarama and New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nanaia Mahuta;

provided an exciting framework for growth and development in the next few years.

He pledged his commitment to strengthen all levels of engagement and advance both national interests and that of the Blue Pacific.

"I look forward to building on the momentum created by the recent signing of the Duavata Partnership, to further advance collaboration between Fiji and New Zealand in the key areas: Partnership, Democracy and Values, Economic Resilience, Security, Social Well-being, and Climate Change and Disaster Resilience."

(Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)



Fiji's new High Commissioner to New Zealand, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, after being commissioned by the Head of State, the President, Ratu Wiliame Katonivere, at State House recently. **PHOTO: ILISAPECI TUIVALE**

Island nations urge Commonwealth leaders to bolster ocean climate action

SMALL island nations are calling for strengthened global support for the ocean and climate change action, just days before Commonwealth leaders convene in Kigali, Rwanda, to decide on the group's priorities for the next two years.

In sessions held last week, heads of government discussed issues such as shared climate ambitions, financing climate, ocean action, and rebuilding sustainable green and blue economies in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, among other key items on the agenda.

During a breakfast meeting co-hosted by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Fijian Government along the margins of the summit, Fiji's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Jitoko Tikolevu addressed an audience of mainly envoys from fellow island nations.

"The ocean and climate are inextricably interconnected and the health of our oceans dictates the livelihoods of millions of people around the world, from the Pacific to the Atlantic. The

challenges facing our oceans and their resources are diverse and complex, yet our answer is simple, we need action," Mr Tikolevu said.

He added that the ocean's function as a 'carbon sink' and a source for nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation, warrants more acknowledgement in climate negotiations, which focus mainly on reducing carbon emissions.

A roundtable discussion was also held with representatives from the Pacific, Caribbean, and Indian Ocean about actions being taken to address ocean and climate change issues and how the Commonwealth can support them.

Head of Oceans and Natural Resources at the Commonwealth Secretariat, Dr Nicholas Hardman-Mountford, said, "The harsh reality of climate change is that it affects all sectors of society, and all realms of the planet, including the ocean. The climate crisis is also an ocean crisis. Action Groups under the Commonwealth's flagship ocean programme, the Blue Charter,

are responding to climate change under their respective themes."

The Commonwealth Blue Charter is a historic commitment by 54 countries to work together to find solutions for global ocean challenges.

Since its endorsement at the last Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in April 2018, at least 16 countries have stepped forward to champion ten thematic Action Groups, comprising like-minded members willing to share knowledge and align strategies to tackle issues such as marine plastic pollution, unsustainable coastal fisheries and disappearing coral reefs.

The Action Group on Ocean and Climate Change is championed by Fiji

Last week's discussion at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) was a lead up to the United Nations Oceans Conference held in Lisbon, Portugal this week.

(Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)



Fiji's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Jitoko Tikolevu addresses a breakfast meeting co-hosted by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Fijian Government. **Photo: Supplied**

Fiji and Timor Leste aims to strengthen bilateral relations

PRIME Minister Voreqe Bainimarama recently met with the Foreign Affairs Minister for Timor Leste, Adaljiza Magno, in Vienna, Austria where he expressed Fiji's keenness to explore areas of bilateral engagement.

This engagement would be particularly on regional cooperation in areas such as health, fisheries, gender, climate change and biodiversity conservation.

Prime Minister Bainimarama said at the meeting that the common membership of the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) was a strong start to advance towards a Tourism Industry that prioritises sustainability and local communities whilst ensuring business competitiveness.

While speaking about the issue of nuclear disarmament, Prime Minister Bainimarama congratulated the Government of Timor Leste for being the latest country to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and also promoting universal adherence to the Treaty.

On the prospect of sustainable development, the Prime Minister informed Minister Magno that Fiji was building back better from the pandemic,

through investing in climate-resilient and sustainable infrastructure and disaster readiness, with a renewed focus on environmentally sustainable development and conservation.

As Small Island Developing States, Fiji and Timor Leste share similar experiences and challenges, however, the Prime Minister said that he confident that by working together, we can achieve equitable and fair outcomes and ensure that we are not left behind in the development race.

Minister Magno, in her response, conveyed her appreciation to the Prime Minister for the opportunity to meet and discuss issues of mutual interests and bilateral cooperation.

The Minister said Timor Leste welcomes the idea of more collaborations especially, in the area of defence and security, training opportunities and people to people exchanges, among other important issues.

She said Timor Leste looks forward to Fiji's bilateral support and cooperation on issues of mutual interests in the future.

(Source: Office of the Prime Minister)



Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama recently met with the Foreign Affairs Minister for Timor Leste, Adaljiza Magno, in Vienna, Austria. **Photo: Supplied**



New Road from Tawake to Wainiika



The A-G Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum and the women of Tawake during the budget consultation in their village earlier this year.

PHOTO: NANISE NEIMILA

JOSAIA RALAGO

Fijians in the district of Tawake in Vanua Levu are enthusiastic about the prospects of the Lagi-Tawake Road upgrade and road construction from Tawake village to Wainiika.

Mata-ni-tikina Tawake Netani Ritamusu said they were elated as road reaching up to their village have been the dreams of their forefathers.

"I was overjoyed because now access to goods, services and even travelling will be made much easier for the 2,000 in our far-flung district," he said.

"The Lagi-Tawake road was recently constructed by the Government and it had made travelling much easier for us, even though it still gets affected during wet weather.

"Right now with the increase in the price of fuel, the other four villages up the coast like including Wainiika, Vatu, Nagasauva and Yasawa pay \$200-\$300 to get to their villages from Wainigadru landing."

He said the upgrade of the current road and the construction of a new road to Wainiika would open doors of opportunity for them.

"There is a water source between Tawake and Wainiika that would be able to supply water to the entire Udu area especially for communities that have been relying on boreholes," Mr Ritamusu said.

"The construction of this road would make this possible and we are grateful to the Government for hearing our cries."

The A-G and Minister for Economy Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum had travelled all the way to Tawake for the budget consultation and this was one of their areas of concern.

"It was actually quite recently that this Government cut the sole road that led to Tawake Village. Many communities in Fiji are still unconnected, Sir," the A-G said.

"They have no road access and rely entirely on waterways for travel. With the rising cost of fuel, it is exorbitantly expensive to even bring your fish from Udu Point to anywhere to a road access.

"Mr. Speaker Sir that will allow all those isolated villages we have heard directly from, to be connected."

Government has allocated \$15 million to help fulfil its commitment to connect rural communities to economic centres and key public services.

200 awards for short courses

In an effort to ensure the Fijian economy does not suffer from shortage of skilled workers, the Government has extended its support towards the human resources sector.

In the 2022-2023 financial year, the Government will provide 200 awards as one-off grants for up to \$500 per student for those who do not meet the eligibility for scholarships and study loans.

While speaking on the initiative after the budget announcement on July 15, 2022, Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts, Premila Kumar said Fijian workers were moving to Australia and New Zealand that created a deficit in the labour market and the only way they could fill that was through increasing scholarships and loan programs.

"We have to go back to what is happening globally, there is a great resignation that has taken place in America," she said.

"People in America have resigned from the jobs that has created a vacuum in the market.

"When there is shortage of skilled workers, the economy suffers, and we are in the preparatory phase, we want to ensure that our economy doesn't suffer."

Minister Kumar said the grant would also incentivize not only the business community, but also incentivize the unemployed and make them interested in doing some basic courses.

Attorney-General and Minister for Economy Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum said these students are those looking to enter the job market with skills that could earn them a decent living instead of facing unemployment.

"This grant funding will help them obtain micro-qualifications in a construction-related skill course over a period of two weeks to one month," he said.

"Once that education is completed, they can go on to become tile layers, painters, cabinet makers and joiners, block layers, plumbers, and other professions that are critical to the national network of modern infrastructure we are building every day.

"Not to mention, these same students can go on to study diplomas and certificates in more advanced areas once they acquire enough practical experience."

Youth hails Budget

JOSAIA RALAGO

A youth group in Cakaudrove has hailed the Fijian Government for deciding to amend the 2004 Illicit Drugs Act to pave the way for industrial hemp as announced during the 2022-23 Budget.

Loa Youth President Tevita Madigibuli said this announcement represented a ray of hope for the men in his community as it would present a source of income for their families and their community.

"This is great and we fully support this because our community is a part of the

Golden Triangle, infamous for its drug trade," Mr Madigibuli.

"We have seen many members of our community being punished by relevant authorities for illegal cultivation all in their attempt to provide for their families.

"We are grateful to the Attorney-General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum for coming down to meet us, consult with us and for genuinely listening to our concerns."

The A-G while announcing the budget said Industrial Hemp Export was a lucrative and largely untapped resource in the global economy due to misconcep-

tion about what it really is.

"Industrial Hemp is not the same thing as marijuana as we call it in Fiji as it contains very low level of THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol)," the A-G said.

"We will be working closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to arrange for the Fiji National University Agriculture School to grow these industrial hemp seeds.

"Once we have those in hand we will be able to distribute these seeds to farmers whether in Kadavu or anywhere else in Fiji."

He said that they planned to import

the industrial hemp seeds from Canada which has some very high quality hemp in the world.

The A-G had visited Loa Village as one of the rural areas he visited for the 2022-23 Budget Consultations apart from Tawake on the Northern tip of Vanua Levu.



Loa Youth President Tevita Madigibuli while speaking at the Budget Consultation in his village earlier this year

Investor Confidence

FELIX LESINAIVALU

THE level of investment made by Lion One Pte Limited truly reflects investor confidence in Fiji which will aid in the country’s economic recovery.

This was highlighted by Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources, Jone Usamate, during the renewal of the special mining lease (SML62) documents to Lion One Pte Limited, recently.

Lion One Pte Limited was initially granted SML62 in 2015 for a 10-year term. Within the initial 10-year term, Lion One Limited has invested over FJ\$140 million in terms of exploration drilling and progressing mine development or construction in preparation for mine production.

The company in terms of the regulatory aspects of the operations as well as technical input to ensure the company attains its targets as per its obligations or commit-

ments made via its renewal application.

“I take this time to congratulate Lion One PTE Limited for the SML62 extension and also extend my appreciation to the Mineral Resources Department’s technical team for undertaking its vigorous assessment of the renewal application and confirming the extension of the mining lease,” Minister Usamate said.

“This renewal will ensure that Lion One injects an additional FJ\$50m-\$100m in capital investment to complete mine development and undertake its first gold pour by the last quarter of 2023.”

Lion One Pte Limited chief operating officer, Patrick Hickey, was thankful to the Fijian Government for the renewal of the special mining lease.

“We have invested \$140 million dollars and we have another \$50-\$100 million we have to invest with zero revenue, so this is a very hard business and that is why we need the support from Government.”



Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources, Jone Usamate with Lion One Pte Limited chief operating officer, Patrick Hickey following the renewal of their mining lease at Tuvatu.

More than \$6M paid in accident compensation this year

SHEENAL CHARAN

DESPITE the challenges brought by COVID-19, the Accident Compensation Commission of Fiji (ACCF) continues to compensate Fijians.

The commission has so far this year paid out \$6,610,500 in compensation to victims of motor vehicle, employment, and school accidents.

ACCF chief executive officer, Parvez Akbar said out of this, \$3,757,500 was paid out for motor vehicle accidents, \$2,652,000 was paid out for employment accidents and \$201,000 for school accidents.

“For motor vehicle accidents, \$1,350,000 was paid out for death related cases and \$2,407,500 was paid out for injury related cases,” he said.

“For employment accidents, \$300,000 was paid out for death related cases and \$2,352,000 for injury cases while \$201,000 was compensated for school accidents.”

Mr Akbar said for injury cases, \$4,298,000 was paid out to 390 cases of the private sector while \$432,000 were paid out to 48 cases of the public sector.

“\$1,875,000 was paid for 25 death cases of the private sector and \$1,425,000 to 19 death cases of the public sector.”

The CEO said ACCF had processed around 220 applications where there was no entitlement to compensation due to one of the exclusions applied, the accident may have occurred before the establishment of the Accident Compensation Scheme and there was no permanent incapacity.

Health Ministry strengthens prevention approach for fire incidents

SHEENAL CHARAN

THE Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) continues to create awareness in communities to help prevent deaths and people being admitted in hospitals due to severe burns.

The MHMS head of wellness, Dr Devina Nand highlighted that every year on an estimate, 180,000 deaths are caused by fire incidents mostly in low to middle-income countries.

Dr Nand said the Health Ministry was working with its partners on identifying risk factors that lead to burns and addressing them.

“We carry out programmes in communities or workplaces which highlight the causes of burns and its prevention,” she said.

“We also provide Australia-New Zealand standard training to our staff.”

“Those who harm themselves are associated with mental stress, the Ministry of Health is working with its partners like Empower Pacific and others to improve mental health issues.”

Dr Devina said according to statistics, females had higher rates of death from burns compared to males

“It is believed that cooking is done by mostly women which makes them more exposed to fire,” Dr Nand said

“Those women who wear loose clothes are more at risk because their clothes

can ignite fire.

“Some of the other reasons of burns are electric burns, chemical burns and open flames.”

Dr Nand said the combined effort of the health authorities and the general public in advocating safety practices and the importance of mental health could minimise the risks of fire incidents.

“Our society needs to understand that not only women but anyone can face mental stress and how they can help them,” she said.

“The Ministry of Health is working on reducing depression and anxiety in the society by providing help by working with social welfare and other partners in the society to reduce depression.”

Dr Nand said most fire incidents took place in homes and workplaces which can be prevented.

“If someone gets fire on their clothes then the burning process can be stopped by using the stop, fall and roll method, using a fire extinguisher or applying a blanket,” she added.

“But the most important action is to use cool running water to reduce the temperature of the burn for at least 20 minutes.

“We can reduce the significant number of burns in our country by abiding by the health and safety regulations, keeping children away from fire hazards and safe cooking methods.”

| Statistics on Total Compensation Payments from 01 January 2018 to June 2022 | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Particulars | Death | | Injury | | Total | |
| | Amount Paid | No. of Applications Paid | Amount Paid | No. of Applications Paid | Total Amount Paid | Total No. of Applications Paid |
| Motor Vehicle | 13,875,000.00 | 185 | 8,637,500.00 | 690 | 22,512,500.00 | 875 |
| Employment | 2,625,000.00 | 35 | 5,542,500.00 | 519 | 8,167,500.00 | 554 |
| School | - | 0 | 550,500.00 | 77 | 550,500.00 | 77 |
| Total | 16,500,000.00 | 220 | 14,730,500.00 | 1286 | 31,230,500.00 | 1506 |

BULA VIP LOUNGE OPENS IN LAUCALA BEACH

FELIX LESINAIVALU

“LIKE many other businesses, built on commitment, a business as young as the Bula VIP Lounge, needs to have a good support system.”

During the opening of the Bula VIP Lounge in Laucala Beach, Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport Faiyaz Koya said over the last few weeks, Fiji has seen a number of businesses opening around the country which indicates investor confidence, as the economy makes progress.

Minister Koya added businesses cannot forget the indirect benefits the new establishment has on the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) who are supporting and supplying food and essential items to the business.

Bula Lounge founder Melvin Pratap said he has more business ventures and plans to open a new branch in Nadi in the near future.

“I am very happy to open this lounge which cost around \$100,000 and this is my third lounge in Fiji, the other two being in Nausori and at Waimanu Road Outrigger Roof-top.”

Mr Pratap added that with the opening of the new lounge, together with his other business, Japanese Auto Trading Pte Ltd, they have created a total of 25 jobs for Fijians.

Minister Koya added the location of the Bula VIP Lounge in the bustling location of Laucala Beach was fitting and

that he was sure the lounge will be an added establishment for the community of Laucala Beach to try out.

“On top of that, we cannot forget the indirect benefits the new establishment has on the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) who are supporting and supplying food and essential items to Melvin’s business – whether

it is someone supplying eggs and even delivering trucks.”

Minister Koya said the pandemic has taught Fijians to adapt to new situations.

“So I commend Mr Pratap and the team at “Bula VIP Lounge” for creating an experience to be explored and enjoyed by everyone.”



Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport, Faiyaz Koya with staff of the Bula Lounge following the launch of their new business.

Australian PM at APTC Aged-Care Pilot Training Session

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese took a tour of the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) Aged-Care Pilot Training session during his visit to Fiji recently.

Prime Minister Albanese was accompanied by the Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations, Youth and Sports, Parveen Kumar and had the opportunity to meet with the Aged-Care students of APTC and observe in-class demonstrations on personal care, use of equipment as well as occupational health and safety when dealing with human lives.

This Aged-Care pilot training session was conducted to meet the Australian qualification industry standards for the delivery of the practical components of the training and also increase qualified Fijian aged-care workers under the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme.

Prime Minister Albanese was very impressed with the demonstrations conducted by these students and also applauded the work done by the institution in preparing these students for employ-

ment opportunities in the Aged-Care industry.

Upon completion of the Aged-Care course, this will open up new opportunities for Fijians, particularly women, to find employment in Australia, learn new skills and support their families.

The pilot is supported by interested aged-care employers through the Fijian Government’s National Employment Centre.

The Australian Government is expecting to expand and improve Australia’s labour mobility programmes which will result in more employment opportunities for Fijians as well as improve our economy.

Minister Kumar thanked the Australian Prime Minister for his continued support towards the Fijian Government, particularly under the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme, and for strengthening ties under the Vuvale partnership which illustrates the strong Fiji-Australia family bond.

(Source: Ministry of Employment, Industrial Relations and Productivity)



Minister Bala and Australian Prime Minister Albanese with a participant for the Aged-Care Pilot Training session in Suva recently.

Youth should make the most of opportunities – Vanualailai

FELIX LESINAIVALU

YOUNG Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) recipient Christopher Vanualailai had advised youths to make the most of the opportunities provided by Fijian Government while receiving a grant of \$30,000.

Mr Vanualailai, owner of High Flyer Enterprises Pte Limited, will introduce the much-needed Environmental Monitoring business to service Fiji and the Pacific.

And according to Minister Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport, Faiyaz Koya, there was a huge demand for this technical service and highlighted the gap in the local market for such expertise that led to heavy reliance on foreign companies to provide key environmental

services.

“I am thankful for this opportunity and I am sure to make the most of the grant provided by Government,” Mr Vanualailai said.

Minister Koya said, “Government has invested over \$100 million into our MSMEs. The YES Programme is one such initiative through the Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport, targeting the development of young entrepreneurs with innovative business ideas”.

“I am told that through our Monitoring exercise of our past 10 recipients, we have close to 90 per cent success rate. In fact, these Fijians have already created more than 30 jobs.”

A total of \$60,000 was given as a grant to two YES recipients recently, Mr Vanualailai and Dhirish

Kumar who received \$30,000 each.

Mr Kumar owns a paintball business in Suva and the grant would help his business grow.

“A simple message to our aspiring and upcoming entrepreneurs, continue to harness and work on your craft. Don’t give up and keep striving.”

“If we look back at the last two years, a lot has changed. Not only have we seen significant changes at a macro-level, but at a micro-level too,” Minister Koya said.

He added that in all “we’ve lost, “we’ve learnt how to seize opportunities”.

“Opportunities driven by the growing need to address challenges in a more unconventional way. That means, game-changing creativity and optimising existing businesses.”



Recipients of the government grants at the handover event for MSMEs.



PRIME MINISTER AND CHAIR OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LAUNCHES THE 2050 STRATEGY FOR THE BLUE PACIFIC CONTINENT

Pacific Confident of the 2050 Strategy

FELIX LESINAIVALU

“OUR people are youthful and innovative, our cultures provide natural resilience and social protection to buffer the shocks we face.”

Fijian Prime Minister and chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Voreqe Bainimarama highlighted this during the first Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Dialogue with the Associate Members and Forum Observers at the Grand Pacific Hotel, recently.

“Our connections are anchored in the ancient past where our ancestors once sailed and traded, bringing us together as peoples of the Pacific. These connections anchor our unity today, giving us common identity and purpose.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama added he was confident the 2050 Strategy would serve as the Pacific's "North Star" for the decades to come, providing a long-term vision and a sense of shared trajectory in the key themes and strategic pathways that it sets out.

“The success of the 2050 Strategy begins and ends with us, Leaders. If our ancestors were the architects of Pacific regionalism, we are its custodians. It is the quality of our dialogue, debate and the direction that we offer that will determine the success of the Strategy, and the direction of Pacific regionalism more broadly.”

PM Bainimarama said the 51st Forum was an opportunity for the leaders to put a stake in the ground.

“It is an opportunity for us to declare – that as a family united, we will come together, we will seize our shared opportunities, we will leverage our shared strengths and resources, and we will combat our challenges together.”

"I acknowledge again the breakdown in our connections over the past two years. My hope is that through our dialogue mechanism, and the resolutions that we are working towards, that you continue to find value and indeed belonging within the Forum family."

The Fijian Head of Government said there “are lessons we can learn from our predecessors, starting with the nurturing of our relationships with Pacific Leaders”.

Meanwhile, PM Bainimarama launched the

2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent at
the PIF Secretariat.

“The 2020 strategy is about us, our peoples, our planet, our place, and our prosperity, in essence, it is about who we are.”

Prime Minister Bainimarama added the strategy was about the Pacific's past, present, and future and it was also about working together as communities, countries, and as one Blue Pacific continent.

“The 2050 strategy is about what we share in common, our challengers, our opportunities, and what we need to do together.”

Noda Viti

DEI KA VAKAUKAUWATAKI NA RAWAKA VAKAILAVO



Na vunilawa ka Minisita ni Ilavo Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum era kacivaka na tuvatuva vakailavo ni matanitu 2022/2023

ILISAPECI TUIVALE

Mai kacivaka na matanitu edua na tuvatuva ni veika vakailavo vou me baleta na veiqaravi ni 2022/2023. Ka levu tiko ena tuvatuva ka vakailavo oqo na kena vakadeitaki na rawaka vakailavo ni matanitu ka vakina na kena vakadro-droi sobu kivei keda kece na lewenivanua. Oqori na nodra vakadeitaka na daunibisini nodra cakacaka, oira na liuliu ni veivanua

ni cakacaka me baleta na vakatuburi ni rawaka vakailavo, me vakalevutaki kina na cakacaka ka saumi vinaka talega na tamata cakacaka. Ni oti na rua na yabaki sa oti ena gauna ni mate dewa COVID-19 na matanitu ko Viti esa vakadeitaka talega na nodra veitabana ni rawaka vakailavo me vaka na kena vakaqacotaki na bisinisi kei na buli ni cakacaka kei na nodra saumi ka vakatuburi talega na isau ni tamata. Sa tubu tiko na bula vakailavo ni matanitu ena 12.4% ena dua na tagede ni tubu sab au tiko

vinaka saraga.

Sa na solia na matanitu na ilavo ni veivuke kivei ira na lewenivanua ka tiko ena ruku ni \$50,000 na nodra rawaka.

Ena tabana ni vuli na matanitu esa vakalevutaka na veivuke ni sikolasivi veira na gone ka 165 na sikolasivi ena vuli qasenivuli.

Esa na soli talega e 1milioni vei ira na marama daunibisini. Esa kau laivi talega na VAT ena isau ni kakana

Oqo ena 21 na kakana volitaki ena sitoa

me vaka na suka, falawa raisi, tini ika, waiwai ni vakasaqa, potato, varasa, kakali, sicu medra na gone, sucu pauta, sucu suasua, dhal, ti, Masima, sovu, sovu pauta, pepa ni vakalailai, vauvau nodra na marama, wainimate ni barasi bati, kerosene kei na gas ni vakasaqa.

Wilika ena fiji.gov.fj na kena ivakamatailalai na tuvatuva ka vakailavo oqo 2022/2023



Ena palimedi ena gauna era kacivaka kina na tuvatuva vakailavo 2022/2023



Paraiminisita Voreqe Bainimarama kei na Minisita ni Ilavo, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum.



KEIMAMI NA QARAVI KEMUNI



Ko Minisita Akbar kei nodra Vunivola Tudei, Jennifer Poole

Keimami na qaravi kemuni me vaka nio kemuni na neimami itavi. Oqori na mala ni vosa nodra na Minisita ni Marama, Gone kei na Valuti ni Dravudravua, Rosy Akbar ena nodra laki vosa veu ira na gone era susugi ka tuberi voli ena vale ni veivakarautaki se juvenile boys home e Suva.

Na neitou inaki mera laurai vinaka na gone oqo ka mera rogoci talega ena nodra tagi ka mera kauwaitaki me vaka sa qarava tiko na matanitu.

Era laki veisiko voli na Minisita ena Fiji Juvenile Rehabilitation and Development Centre e Suva ka laki sotavi ira talega na gone cauravou era vakarautaki voli kina.

Oqori na vanua evakarautaka na matanitu

mera laki maroroi, susugi ka tuberi kina na luveda ka ra beitaki ena lawa ena yabaki lalai tekivu ena 14-18 na yabaki ni bula. Nikua era lewe tinikadua kecekece na gone cauravou era tiko kina.

Kuria ko Minisita Akbar ni kena dau yaco vei ira na gone eso na itovo vakaloloma ka lolovira edau vakavuna nodra vakaleqai na ituvaki ni rai kena vakasama ni itabagone tabu saka yani. Era dau qai vakacacani sara vakalevu ena gauna era dau laki sogoti kina ena vale ni veivakarautaki.

Sa ka bibi kina na itavi nodra dau vuli me vukea nodra itovo ka bulia vou edua na rai se vakarau ni vakasama ka rawa ni dolava vei ira na katuba vou ni bula. Ka sa bibi talega kina na nodra itavi na itubutubu.

Lagiti na itabagone ma Ba



Minisita Kumar kei ira na itabagone

ERA lagiti na itabagone mai Ba ena nodra sasaga me baleta Youth Farm Initiate grant me vaka nira ciqoma kina e 120 na itabagone na veivuke.

Na Minisita ni ITabagone kei na Qito, Parveen Kumar era a wavoki voli mai Baka laki solia kina na veivuke ni matanitu. Era lewe kece na soqosoqo ni tabagone era ciqoma na veivuke ni matanitu mai Nanuku Ba. Oqo na vei soqosoqo era ciqoma na veivuke ko Makosoi Youth Club, Nanuku Youth Club, Rara Youth Club, Leinatabua Youth

Club, and Tukuraki Youth Club. Kuria na Minisita ni veivuke oqo esega walega ni baleti ira na itabagone ka baleti ira kece na nodra vuva.

Eso veira na itabagone era sa tauri vola oti mai Sigatoka ena Tabana ni Vuli nodra na ITabagone ekeya era sa vuke oti na kena tara e 9 na vale ena loma ni koro.

Na Tukuraki youth club edua na sabolo vinaka me vaka nira sa toma tiko nodra bula ni oti na kena tarai ira na leqa tubu koso.



Isevusevu ni timi ni yalewa ni Viti ena qito na caqeti ni polo se soka.



Peresitedi Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere ena soqo ni visiko nodra na timi ni yalewa ena soka.

ERA laki cabora na nodra isevusevu na timi ni marama ni Viti ena qito na soka kivua na Peresitedi Ratu Wiliame Katonivere. Vosa vakayalo qaqa taki iratou na leweni timi na Peresitedi mera qito vinaka ka vakayacora vina-ka nodra itavi vei Viti.

Era solia nodra vosa ni veitokoni kei

na veitokoni ni matanitu kei na vanua o Viti nira na tokoni tiko na nodra leweni ni timi ni soka ni yalewa.

Era na laki vakaitavi tiko ena Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) Women's Nations Cup ka na vakayacori tiko ena noda vanua e Suva.

Veisautaki na itovo ni veiqaravi ena tabana ni veivakacacacakataki



Vunivola Tudei ni Tabana ni Veivakacacacakataki, Osea Cawaru.

NA veibolebole eso ka kauta mai na mate dewa ni COVID-19 esa dua na vuna na kena sa veisautaki na walewale ni veiqaravi ena tabana ni veivakacacacakataki me dewa yani kina veiqaravi vakamonalivaliva ka kilai ena vosa na e-mediation. Oqori sa qarauni kina me toso tikoga na veiqaravi se vakacava na bolebole e sotavi.

Na Vunivola Tudei ni Tabana ni Veivakacacacakataki, Osea Cawaru era vakaraitaka tiko na tikina oqori ena nodra laki vulagi dokai ena vuli

siga tolu ni Online Mediation and Cross Border Mediation.

Era vakarautaka na vuli oqori na Singapore Mediation Centre ka liutaka na kena ivakalesilesi ko George Lim. Oqo edua na gauna vina-ka vua na matanitu ko Viti baleta na bolebole sa curuma tuoqo na veiqaravi vakamatani-ka mera rawa ni vuli ka vakaiyaragi tari na kena dau ena tabana oqo me rawa ni dau vakacavari vinaka na veimataqali kudru era dau sotava se laveti cake yani kina nodra vanua.



Porokaramu na watidra na liuliu ni veimatanitu



Noda kana na wati ni liuliu main a pasivika ena itikotiko nei Peresitedi ni Vanua ko Viti.

JOSEFA ULUILAKEBA

ERA vakarautaka edua na kedra vakasigalevu na watidra na liuliu ni veimatanitu main a Pasivika na Radini Vanua Adi Filomena Dikumele Katonivere ena soqo ni ika 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting ka vakayacori tiko ena noda vanua.

Eka ni marau ka dokai vei ira na nodra mai ciqomi ira ena nodra vale vakamatanitu ena vukudra na Peresitedi kei Viti, Ratu Wiliame

Katonivere.

Vakatokai na porokaramu oqo ena senikau na seniuci ka nodra isalusau ka dau yaga vakalevu me isaluwaki ni waiwai ni yago se wainimate ka vakakina ena salusalu.

Kuria ko Radini vanua nodra vakavinaka vei ira na vakarautaka na porokaramu oqo me vaka na Blue Pacific Village ena nodra vuku me mai vakaoqo ena kena irairai kei na maqosa.

E TIKO NODA ITAVI TIKO TALEGA VEIKEDA NA YAYA E GANITA: PM



JOSEFA ULUILAKEBA

ERA vakaraitaka na liuliu ni Matabose ni Veimatanitu Cokovata ena Pasivika, Paraiminisita kei Viti, Voreqe Bainimarama ni sega walega nida duavata na veimata nitu ena pasivika era dui tiko na nodra itavi ka vakakina ni tu vei ira na yaya se yau me taqomaki kina na waitui ena Pasivika se Blue Pacific Wall of protected ocean. Era sa uqeti ira na lewe ni matanitu kei ira na liuliu ni matanitu ena Pasivika

Mera duavata ena sasaga ni taqomaki ena 100na pasede na waitui- nikua esa taqomaki rawa e 30%.

Na wasewase ena Pasivika ena yacova na vanua me dau vakarautaki kina na kakanasasalu ka gadreva na vuravura. Na kena sasaga taki na 2050 Strategy edua na icavuikalawa ni sasaga oqo.

Vakaraitaka ko Paraiminisita Baini-

Ko ira na ivakalesilesi ena boseka marama ni kua e rauta ni 3 na pasede ni waitui era sa taqomaki. Oqo sa ivakaraitaki ni sa dodonu me yaco na veisau me baleta ni sa sotavi tiko na leqa tubu kei na bolebole ena noda gauna e matada ni kua

Kuria ko Paraiminisita Bainimarama ni oira kece na veimatanitu wilikina oira na kena liuliu era kila vinaka ni waitui enodra ivurevure levu ni yau levu na veimatanitu kei na tamata me vaka ni noda itovo ni bula. Oqo edua na tikina levu ka bibi dodonu me sa toka ena 2050 strategy koya sa navuvi tikoqo.

Marautaka ko Paraiminisita Bainimarama nodra tokoni Peresitedi Whipps mai Palau ena kena laki tavoci na Duavata ni Lawa baleta Deep-Sea Mining kelikeli ena boto ni sauloa ni waitui. Oqori esega ni dodonu me vakayacori ena noda pasivika se vanua ni vurevure ni ilavo ena pasivika.

Tarai cake tikoga na vuli ni kawa kei Viti ni mataka



PM Bainimarama kei na liuliu ni matanitu mai Niu Caledonia

JOSEFA ULUILAKEBA

TUKUNA na liuliu ni matanitu Paraiminisita Voreqe Bainimarama ka liuliu talega ni matabose ni veimatanitu cokovata ena Pasivika ni ka dokai ka marautaki vei Viti ni mai vakayacori ena noda vanua na 51 ni boseka liuliu ni veimatanitu ena Pasivika se Pacific Islands Forum Leaders. Vakaraitaka ko PM Bainimarama ni ko Viti esa tu vakarau me ciqoma ka veitalanoataka na vei ulutaga lelevu ka tara tiko na Pasivika nikua. Kidavaki ira na liuliu ni veimatanitu ko PM Bainimarama ka kaya kina ni Pasivika esa tu rawa na veiblebole ka sotava tiko ena veisiga ka sa qai mai vakalevutaka walega na mate dewa ni COVID-19.

“Sa keimami vakadeitaka na neima-

mi tu vata vaka dua na vuvale dina ni keimami se vakila tikoga na revurevu ni mate dewa,”kaya ko PM Bainimarama.

“Sa na qai vakatau tikoga vei keimami na liuliu ni veimatanitu ena neimami vakatulewa ka nuitaki ni keimami nanumi ira tiko na lewenivanua ena Pasivika ena vei ulutaga kei na vakatulewa keimami vakayacora”

Na 2050 Strategy ka dodonu me tavoci ena boseka oqo ena vakadova edua na tuvatuva me baleta na Pasivika ena loma ni 30 na yabaki mai oqo ka vakaukauwa taka na vei qaravi vakamatanitu ena gauna bolebole eda sotava tiko nikua ena Pasivika kei Vuravura levu. Vakadeitaki ira ko Paraiminisita Bainimarama me baleta na veiwekani vakavuvale ena Pasivika

Saini ko Viti kei Solomoni ena taqomaki ni waitui



PM Bainimarama kei na liuliu ni matanitu mai Solomoni Manasse Sogavare.

JOSEFA ULUILAKEBA

ERAU saini ko Viti kei Solomoni ena veidinati ni kena taqomaki na waitui se yalava ni veilakoyaki kei na vakayagataki ni yau bula ena loma ni waitui me vaka e volai ena United Nations Conventions on the Law of the Sea.

Vakaraitaka ko Paraiminisita Bainimarama ni veidinati ka sainitaki oqo esa vakadeitaki rau na matanitu erua ena dua cavuikalawa vou ka taqomaki kina na nodra waitui kei na sasalu ka vinaka veirau. Na veidinati oqo esa vakadeitaka ni nodrau yalava se yalayala ni vanua e vaka-

deitaki tuga veitalia na tubu ni wai vumai na draki veisau ka vakakina na kena revurevu ena yalava ni vanua.

Vakaraitaka na Paraiminisita ni Solomoni, Manasseh Sogavare ni veidinati oqo esa dolava edua na tabani veva vou ena nodrau veiwekani me baleta na waitui ena loma ni Pasivika ena rai ni 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy.

Ena loma ni pasivika e rauta ni 48 kece na veiyalayala ni vanua ka semati ira na veimatanitu ia e 35 na walega na veidinati esa sainitaki rawa. Namaki ni ran a sainitaka na kena vo ni matanitu.



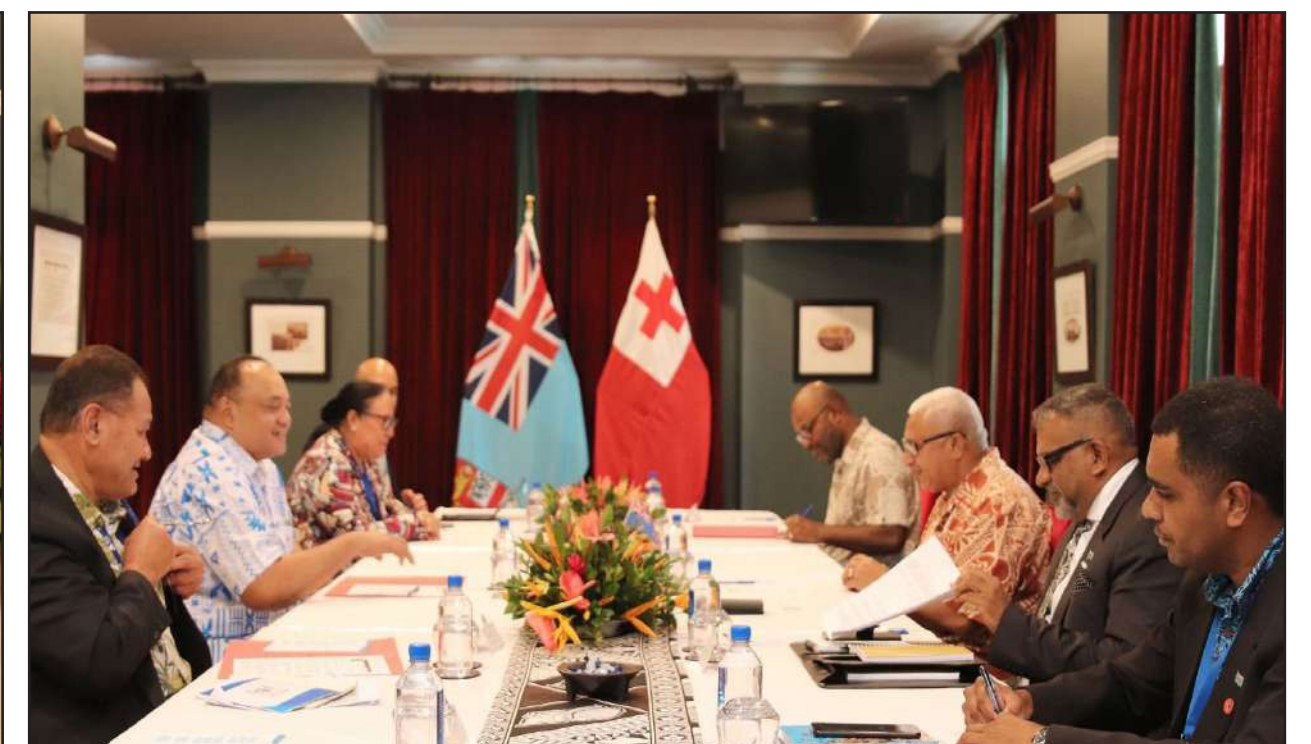
Vakayakavi kei Peresitedi

Era laki vakayakavi kei na noda Peresitedi Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katoniver na liulu ni veimatanitu mai na Pasivika.

Era kidavaki na liulu ni veimatanitu main a Pasivika ena dua na vei qaravi vakavanua.



Rau sota na liulu ni matanitu mai Tonga kei Viti



Paraiminisita mai Tonga matanitisiga ko Sovaleni Hu'akavameiliku, na noda liulu ni matanitu Paraiminisita Voreqe Bainimarama

Lagiti na veivuke kei Niusiladi

ILISAPECI TUIVALE

NODRA veivuke na matanitu ko Niusiladi ena nodra vukei na marama kei na gone ena noda vanua esa ra mai lagita na Minisita ni Marama, Gone kei na Valuti ni Dravudravua, Rosy Akbar. Vakaraitaka na tikina oqo ko koya ena nodrau veitalanoa kei na Paraiminisita ni Niusiladi, Jacinta Ardern.

Vakaraitaka ko Minisita Akbar ni doka ka ciqoma ko Viti na veivuke nei Niusiladi me vaka ni sa tiki tikoga ni veiqaravi raraba ena Matabose Cokovata kei Vuravura ena nodra tuvaturvaka ni veiqaravi lewa matau ka wili kina na noda veivakatorocaketaki vakatautauvata.

Kuria ko koya ni ko ira na marama era dau oca taka na veiqaravi ni vuvale ka laurai ni ra sotava vakalevu na dredre ena gauna ni veitauvi mate taka COVID-19



Paraiminisita Jacinta Ardern mai Niusiladi kei rau na vunivola tudei ni tabana vakamatanitu.

Marautakina veivuke vakailavo

ILISAPECI TUIVALE

ERA vosa vakavinakataka na matanitu ko Niusiladi ena veivuke vakailavo era sa vakayacora tiko mai ena noda vanua na Minisita ni Veika vakailavo, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum. Oqo ena nodra sotava na Paraiminisita kei Niusiladi Jacinta Ardern.

Vakabibi ena gauna ni COVID-19 ka sa vukei kina na matanitu ko Viti merawa ni vakayacora kina na nodra veiqaravi kivei ira na lewe ni vanua ena noda vanua era sotava vakabibi na ldeqa tubukoso oqo ena vakaleqai ni nodra cakacaka kei na vurevure ni rawaka vakailavo. Era vukei talega na ilavo ni vakaduri bisinisi lalai.



PM Ardern mai Niusiladi kei na dua na nodra ivakalesilesi.

Sotavi na liuliu ni Matanitu Cokovata mai Urope.

ILISAPECI TUIVALE

ERA mai sotava na Liuliu ni Veimatanitu Qali ki Peritani Patricia Scotland na noda Vunilawa ka Minisita ni Veika Vakailavo, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum. Erau veitalanoa ena ulutaga ni ni cakacaka vata kei na vakatubuilavo ena vanua ganita ka me rawa ni qarauni kina na lewa matau ena veivakatorocaketaki. Lagita na matanitu ko Viti, ko Scotland ena gauna dredre e lako curuma ka vakakina ena kena lewa matau taki na veiqaravi ni matanitu kei na lewenivanua.



Vunilawa Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum kei na marama Commonwealth Secretary General, Patricia Scotland.



2050 Strategy edua na cavuikalawa levu ni Pasivika

JOSEFA ULUILAKEBA

Na 2050 strategy e ivola dusidusi ni veigauna sa tu eliu, tukuna ko Paraiminisita Bainimarama baleta ni sereki kina nai tuvatuva me baleta na veivakatorocaketaki ena yaco ena noda pasivika ena loma ni 30 na yabaki mai oqo.

Kuria ko Paraiminisita Bainimarama ni ko keda ena pasivika sotakaya tiko oqo na bolebole ni kena sa vakatuburi na sau ni bula ka sega ni vakatautaki vei keda.

Kauwaitaka vakalevu ko koya na veitalanoa ni kena sa tarai keda tiko na drake veisau kei na vei leqa tubu koso mai na veivanua ena veiyasai vurvura sa yaco tu nikua ka vakavuna me kaukauwa cake na noda vakila na kena revurevu.

Eda vakanuini kina dua na vuravura dei ka sega ni yavavala ka sa nuitaki kina ni sa vukei keda na ivola dusidusi oqo ena noda raiyawa kei na vakatulewa lewa matau taki keda.

Eda na cakacaka vata kina keda wasea vata vaka matau na noda iyau me rawa ni kautikeda kina veigauna sab era mai.

Vakaraitaka na veitikina oqo ko PM Bainimarama ena nodra talanoa kei ira na liuliu ni matanitu ka vaka kina oira na surety mai ena boseka oqo.



Ira na liuliu ni veimatanitu ena boseka ni veimatanitu ena pasivika.



GADREVI NA CAKACAKA VATA

JOSEFA ULUILAKEBA

Na 2050 strategy ena gadreva saraga na cakacaka vata kei na duavata ni veiqaravi kei ira kece sara na na veitabana.

Oqori na nodra mala ni vosa na liuliu ni matanitu Paraiminisita Voreqe Bainimarama ka liuliu talega ni boseka ni Matabose cokovata ni veimatanitu ena Pasivika ena nodra vosa tiko vei ira na liuliu ni veimatanitu ena Pasivika.

Oqori ena ika 51 ni Pacific Islands Leaders Forum

ka vakayacori ena noda vanua ka kuria ko koya ni nodra veitokoni na veitabana soqosoqo ena taudaku ni matanitu kei ira na soqosoqo dau veivuke ena veivakatorocaketaki ena nuitaki vakalevu me tosoi kina na cakacaka ena Pasivika.

Na tabana ni veiqaravi tu vatakiyoya, bisinisi se soqosoqo ena taudaku ni veiqaravi vakamatanitu ena veivuke ena sasaga oqo ni kena vakatoroicaketaki na vei matanitu ena Pasivika.

Kuria ko PM Bainimarama ni ran a veivuke talega na soqosoqo ni veimatalotu kei ira nan a dau veivuke ena vei ira na lewenivanua.



Ira na ivakalesilesi mai na Pasivika.

Noda Viti

Gauna vou ni veilecayaki eda sotava nikua : Peresitedi

Na pasivika nikua esa sotava tiko edua na gauna vou ni veilecayaki dina ga ni da sa mai rawata na bula sautu nit u vakaikeda vakamatanitu.

Vakaraitaka na tikina oqori na Peresitedi kei Viti Ratu Wiliame Maivalili ena nodra vosa tiko vei ira liuliu ni veimatanitu ena Pasivika era mai sota tiko ena boseka ni Matabose ni veimatanitu cokovata ena Pasivika ena kena lima saga vulu ka dua ni yabaki.

Kuria ko Peresitedi Ratu Wiliame ni ra kila vinaka na liuliu ni veimatanitu ni tu na veisoqosoqo eso era via vukea na sasaga ni veimatanitu ena Pasivika.

Vakaraitaka ko Peresitedi Ratu Wiliame ni noda Pasivika Karakarawa se Blue Pacific esa donuia tu nikua niuqawaqawa kei na ririko levu vumai na draki veisau.

Na draki veisau kuria ko koya esa kauta main a vakarerevaki ni bula ena veivanua ena pasivika ka sa vakavuna mera vei tosoyaki tiko na lewenivanua me baleta na drake veisau kei na dredre era curuma. Sa sotava tiko na Pasivika edua na gauna vakadomobula ka vakarerevaki ena gauna vou oqo ka sa itavi ni liuliu ena veimatanitu mera vakadeitaka na ilakolako oqo ka mera vakatulewa lewa matau baleta na Pasivika kei kena veigauna mai muri.

Nuitaka ko koya nira na tiko ena dua na talanoa vinaka na liuliu ni veimatanitu ena gauna era tiko kina ena noda vanua me vaka nida lewena kece na Pasivika ka wasea vata na kena yau bula levu ni waitui ka semati keda kece vakadua na wasewase.

Kuria ko koya ni gauna e tekivu kina na soqosoqos se matabose ni veimatanitu ena Pasivika era donuia kina ena gauna oya na bolebole ni rawata na bula sautu kei na tu vakaikoya mai vei koloni.



Yalataka ko Viti kei Tonga me vakaqacacotaki nodrau veiwekani vakamatanitu

JOSEFA ULUILAKEBA

ERA ciqoma na Paraiminisita mai Tonga matanitisiga ko Sovaleni Hu'akavameiliku, na noda liuliu ni matanitu Paraiminisita Voreqe Bainimarama ena nodra gole mai na boseka ni matabose cokovata ni veimatanitu ena Pasivika.

Era sa yalayala talega kina na liuliu ni matanitu erua mera vakaqacacotaka na veiwekani vakamatanitu ena noda vanua. Oqo ena veitabana sara ni veiqaravi vakamatanitu me vaka na veitaqomaki, vuli, cakacaka kei na veiqaravi ni veika ni rawaka vakailavo kei na veivakatorocaketaki.

Vakaraitaka na tikina oqori ko PM

Bainimarama ena nodrau sota kei PM Hu'akavameiliku, ka kuria ni dau raica ko Viti na bibi ni veiwekani kei Tonga. Solia talega nodra nosa ni vei lagiti ena nodra mai digitaki na Paraiminisita kei Tonga ko PM Hu'akavameiliku ka vaka kina nodra lolosi ni leqa mai sotavi ira ena gauna ni volcano.

Veitalia sarana bolebole e sotavi tiko ena gauna oqo na itavi ni liuliu ni veimatanitu era mai sota ena boseka ni ika 51 ni Pacific Islands Forum Leaders mera vakadeitaka nodra duavata vaka tamata ena Pasivika ena gaunisala kei na itovo kilai kina na Pasivika.

VOQA NI DAVUI

Radio Fiji One
Moniti - Tusiti
8.30pm [15 na miniti]

Radio Fiji One
Vukelulu - Lotulevu
8pm [30 na miniti]

Radio Fiji One
Siga Tabu
9.05am [30 na miniti]

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फीजी दर्पण

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अर्थ-व्यवस्था मंत्री तथा अटेनी जेनरल अईयाज़ सईयद खईयूम हालही में 2022-2023 राष्ट्रीय बजट की घोषणा करते हुए

चित्र: संसद भवन

उम्मीदों भरा बजट

रोनल देव

अर्थ-व्यवस्था मंत्री तथा अटेनी जेनरल अईयाज़ सईयद-खईयूम का कहना है कि विश्व भर में आर्थिक चुनौतियों के बावजूद इस 2022-2023 राष्ट्रीय बजट से देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था में और भी सुधार होने की उम्मीद है जबकि हम इस महामारी से निकलकर आगे बढ़ रहे हैं। स्थानीय अर्थ-व्यवस्था में इस साल मज़बूत पलटाव होने की उम्मीद है जबकि लगातार पिछले तीन सालों से अर्थ-व्यवस्था में गिरावट देखी गई जिससे कई नौकरियाँ चली गईं तथा सार्वजनिक तथा सामाजिक आर्थिक स्थिति पर असर पड़ा। 2019 में देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था में 0.6 प्रतिशत की गिरावट हुई, जबकि 2020

में 17.2 प्रतिशत की भारी गिरावट देखी गई और पिछले साल 4.1 प्रतिशत की और गिरावट हुई। लेकिन सबसे हमने अंतराष्ट्रीय सीमाएँ खोली हैं तथा पिछले साल दिसम्बर में टूरिज़म व्यवसाय को पुनः शुरू किया तबसे हमारी अर्थ-व्यवस्था में तेज़ी से सुधार होने के संकेत मिले जहाँ इस साल 12.4 प्रतिशत सुधार होने का अनुमान है। अगर गौर किया जाए तो पिछले दो सालों से भारी गिरावट के बाद फीजी ने इससे पहले कभी भी इतना भारी सुधार नहीं किया था। अगले साल अर्थ-व्यवस्था में 9.2 प्रतिशत का सुधार होने की उम्मीद है जबकि 2024 में पाँच प्रतिशत का सुधार होने की उम्मीद है। यह अनुमान इस बल पर हो रहा है जबकि विदेशी मेहमानों की संख्या महामारी के

शुरू होने से पहले के मिलान में पचपन प्रतिशत तक पहुँच गया है। टूरिज़म व्यवसाय में सुधार बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण है जबकि इसका असर देश के अधिकांश अर्थ-व्यवस्था पर हो रहा है जहाँ सीधे तौर से या अन्य तौर से टूरिज़म व्यवसाय, देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था के चालिस प्रतिशत का हिसाब रखता है जिस बड़ी संख्या में विदेशी मेहमान देश घूमने आ रहे हैं, ऐसा लग रहा है कि वो इस साल किए गए अनुमान से भी ज़्यादा होगा। इस साल जून में (205,529) मेहमान फीजी आए थे जिसमें पिछले साल के मिलान में छत्तीस (36) गुना की वृद्धि हुई जो कि महामारी से पहले लगभग पचास प्रतिशत स्तर तक पहुँचा। टूरिस्टों के हमारे स्रोत, औस्ट्रेलियन बाज़ार से भारी संख्या में टूरिस्ट फीजी

आए जो कि महामारी से पहले 97 प्रतिशत स्तर तक पहुँचा। विश्व भर में जबकि सफर करने के प्रतिबन्ध लगातार डीले हो रहे हैं तथा इसके चलते टूरिज़म के मुख्य बाज़ारों से भारी संख्या में टूरिस्टों के फीजी आने की उम्मीद है। इसके अलावा मज़बूत बुकिंग के चलते फीजी एर्यावैस ने संकेत दिया है कि टूरिज़म व्यवसाय में और भी ज़्यादा सुधार होगा क्योंकि जुलाई और अगस्त महीने में वैसे भी भारी संख्या में टूरिस्ट फीजी आते हैं। फीजी का आर्थिक क्षेत्र बहुत ही अच्छी हालत में है जबकि इस साल तेरह जुलाई तक विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार यानि फोरन रिज़र्व्स तीन दशमलौ छः (3.6) बिलियन डॉलर है जो आठ महीने से ज़्यादा आयात करने के बराबर है।

ओस्ट्रेलिया के चार नियोक्ताओं ने दो सौ बत्तीस कर्मचारियों को काम के लिए चुना



रोजगार मंत्री परवीन कुमार बाला ओस्ट्रेलिया काम करने जा रहे दो सौ बत्तीस फीजीवासियों को विदाई देते हुए

चित्र : प्रदान किया गया

सोनम सामी

ओस्ट्रेलिया चार के नियोक्ताओं ने दो सौ बत्तीस (232) कर्मचारियों को पेंसिफिक ओस्ट्रेलिया लैबा मोबिलिटी स्कीम के नीचे काम करने के लिए चुना है। इन में से एक सौ छप्पन (56) कर्मचारियों को चार साल के लिए मांस के व्यवसाय में काम करना होगा जबकि छिहत्तर (76) को नौ महिनों के लिए बाग वाले व्यवसाय में

काम करना होगा। रोजगार मंत्री परवीन कुमार बाला ने अभी हाल ही कर्मचारियों को विदा करते हुए याद दिलाया कि ओस्ट्रेलिया की सरकार के साथ बुवाले साझेदारी के कारण उन्हें फीजी का प्रतिनिधित्व करने के लिए चुना गया है। उन्होंने सभी को फीजी के राजदूत के रूप में उनकी जिम्मेदारी और अपेक्षित व्यवहारों के बारे में याद दिलाया और फीजी छोड़ने और ओस्ट्रेलिया में काम करने और रहने के अपने बाकी दिनों के लिए खुद की योजना बनाने की सलाह दी।

मंत्री बाला ने इन नियोक्ताओं की हार्दिक सराहना की जिससे उन्हें रोजगार के अवसर मिला। इतना ही नहीं, उन्होंने बुवाले साझेदारी के इस पहल के प्रति उनके समर्थन की भी सराहना की जिससे हमारे फिजियन परिवारों, उनके समुदायों और फीजी की अर्थव्यवस्था पर असर पड़ता है। यह कर्मचारी कोस्टा ग्रुप, रिजनल वर्कफोर्स मैनेजमेंट और अग्री-लैबा एन्ड प्लांट-गो-पिक के साथ काम करेंगे।

अस्पताल बनाने की योजना



एक फीजीवासी अस्पताल में अपना इलाज करवाते हुए

चित्र : प्रदान किया गया

सोनम सामी

अर्थव्यवस्था मंत्री तथा अटोर्नी जेनरल अईयाज़ सैयद-खईयूम ने शुक्रवार पंद्रह जुलाई को 2022-2023 राष्ट्रीय बजट की घोषणा करते हुए स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय के तीन प्रमुख परियोजनाओं पर प्रकाश डाला जहाँ देश में तीन अस्पताल बनाने के लिए धन अलग किया गया है। सबसे पहले सावूसावू अस्पताल जो उत्तरी विभाग में है इन तीन अस्पतालों में से एक है। यह अस्पताल मुख्य रूप से सेवा प्रदान करता है लेकिन खराब मौसमों के कारण अस्पताल को भारी नुकसान पहुँचा है। गम्भीर बारिश और नाले में पानी भरने का यह नतीजा है। इस बजट में दो मिलीयन डॉलर सावूसावू अस्पताल को नया बनाने और निर्माण के लिए अलग किया गया है। सावूसावू निवासियों के लिए यह अच्छी खबर है जबकि क्षेत्र में प्रमुख निवेश हमारे छिपे हुए स्वर्ग को सामने लाएगा तथा गुणवत्ता और विश्वसनीय स्वास्थ्य सेवा सावूसावू के टुरिज़म क्षेत्र को बढ़ाएगा।

अन्य दो नए निर्माणकार्य में सी डब्लू एम अस्पताल मटेनिटी बोर्ड का निर्माण करना है और लम्बासा अस्पताल के आंतरिक कार्यों को करना है जो महामारी के कारण लंबे समय से रूका हुआ है। यह संभव नहीं था क्योंकि कोविड-19 के दौरान यह प्रतिरक्षा के लिए उपयोग किया जा रहे थे। हालांकि इन परियोजनाओं में देरी हुई है, फिर भी इनका निर्माण किया जाएगा। अगले वित्तीय वर्ष में इन दोनों परियोजनाओं के लिए \$5.2 मिलियन लगाया जाएगा। मंत्रालय नियोजित पूंजी कार्यों को शुरू करने के लिए एक उपयुक्त निर्माणकर्ता को नियुक्त करने के लिए टेन्डा निकालेगा। यह हमारे केंद्रीय विभाग और उत्तरी विभाग की गर्भवती माताओं और परिवारों के लिए अच्छी खबर है। सी डब्लू एम अस्पताल के लिए एक बिल्कुल नया हायपाबारिक चेम्बर खरीदा गया है जिसका उपयोग स्कूबा डाइविंग से संबंधित आपात स्थितियों के लिए किया जाता है- जो हमारे समुद्र में गोता लगाने वाले टुरिस्ट और समुद्र पर निर्भर फीजी आबादी के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण आश्वासन है।

आप हमारे लिए प्राथमिकता है



विमन, चिल्लन और पोवर्टी अलिविएन मंत्री रोजी अकबर ने सुवा में फीजी जुवेनाइल रिहेबिलिटेशन एन्ड डिवलपमेंट सेन्टर का दौरा करते हुए वहाँ के अधिकारियों तथा बच्चों से मुलाकात की

चित्र : प्रदान किया गया

सोनम सामी

अल्पायु न्याय प्रणाली में युवाओं को देखा, सुना और मूल्यवान महसूस कराने के लिए हम उत्साहित हैं। फीजियन सरकार का लक्ष्य है उनके जीवन में एक स्थिर आवाज़ और उपस्थिति बनना तथा एक विनम्र और प्रमानिक संरक्षण के रूप में दिखाना। अभी हाल ही विमन, चिल्लन और पोवर्टी अलिविएन मंत्री रोजी अकबर ने सुवा में फीजी जुवेनाइल रिहेबिलिटेशन एन्ड डिवलपमेंट सेन्टर का दौरा किया और इस पर प्रकाश डाला। फीजी जुवेनाइल रिहेबिलिटेशन एन्ड डिवलपमेंट सेन्टर युवकों के लिए फीजियन सरकार की राष्ट्रीय संस्था है जिन्हें कानून तोड़ते पाया गया है और जेल भेजने के बजाय इन्हें सेन्टर भेजा जाता है। यह युवक चौदह से अठारह साल की उम्र के हैं। फिलहाल के लिए जुवेनाइल सेन्टर में ग्यारह लड़के हैं। यह युवा जुर्म की सजा काट रहे हैं जबकि कई रिमांड पर हैं और सुनवाई का इंतजार कर रहे हैं। यह आँकड़े विभिन्न कारणों से बदलते रहते हैं। यह सेंटा लड़कों को विभिन्न कार्यक्रमों से सीखने का अवसर प्रदान करता है और इसलिय

उन्हें समुदाय में सुरक्षित और सफलतापूर्वक पुनः जोड़ा जाता है। बाल सुरक्षा कार्यक्रम पर बात करते हुए मंत्री अकबर ने कहा कि बाल शोषण, अपेक्षा और परित्याग ने बच्चों को प्रभावित करने वाले महत्वपूर्ण मानसिक, मनोवैज्ञानिक और भावनात्मक आघात में योगदान दिया है और स्थिति अकसर खराब हो जाती है जहाँ बच्चों को संस्थागत रूप से देखभाल और सुरक्षा, बेकाबू व्यवहार या अपराध करने के लिए किया जाता है। उन्होंने कहा कि बच्चे हमारी सबसे बड़ी राष्ट्रीय संपत्ति हैं जिन्हें भविष्य का नेता माना जाता है। उन्होंने व्यवहार में सुधार लाने और जेल में बंद युवाओं के लिए अवसर पैदा करने के लिए शिक्षा की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका पर जोर दिया। मंत्री अकबर ने उन लड़कों के माता-पिता को भी प्रोत्साहित किया जो केंद्र में हैं और उन्हें स्वीकार करने और समर्थन देने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया। “सरकारी संस्थान के रूप में हम अपनी भूमिका निभाएंगे, लेकिन माता-पिता के रूप में आपकी भूमिका हमेशा आपके बच्चे के विकास के लिए महत्वपूर्ण होगी और आप अपने बच्चों को कैसे ढालते हैं, वह जरूरी है।

फीजी-भारत ने विकास की प्रतिबद्धता दोहराई

रोनल देव

प्रधान मंत्री दफ्तर तथा विदेश मंत्रालय के पेमनन्ट सकेटरी योगेश करण ने हालही में भारत के विदेशी मामलों के सकेटरी सौरभ कुमार के साथ पाँचवे फीजी और भारत विदेश कार्यलय के परामर्श पर मुलाकात की। श्री कुमार और उनके प्रतिनिधीमण्डल का स्वागत करते हुए श्री करण ने फीजी के उनके पहले औपचारिक दौर तथा पाँचवे फीजी और भारत विदेश कार्यलय के परामर्श में भाग लेने के लिए धन्यवाद दिया। उन्होंने कहा कि फीजी के लिए भारतीय सहयोग के बढ़ते स्तर, दोनों देशों के बीच मजबूत साझेदारी और दोस्ती के बंधन को दर्शाते हैं। “भारत उन



प्रधान मंत्री दफ्तर तथा विदेश मंत्रालय के पेमनन्ट सकेटरी श्री योगेश करण, भारत के विदेशी मामलों के सकेटरी श्री सौरभ कुमार के साथ वार्ता करते हुए
चित्र: प्रदान किया गया

पहले देशों में है जिसने कोविड महामारी के जवाब में फीजी को जान बचाने वाली सुईयों के अलावा सुरक्षित उपकरण तथा चिकित्सका सप्लाई से सहायता प्रदान की थी। “इस सभा में मौसम तथा महामारी की चुनौतियों के द्वारा स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा में पुँजी लगाने, व्यवसाय और पुँजी, उर्जा के नए स्रोत का उपयोग करने, कृषि, चीनी व्यवसाय, संसाधन, महिलाओं तथा बच्चों को शशक्त बनाने तथा संस्कृति का आदान-प्रदान करके देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था को मजबूत बनाने पर मुख्यता बातें हुई। सभा में जलवायु परिवर्तन के असर से उत्पन्न संकट से निपटने के लिए सहयोग बढ़ाने पर भी चर्चा हुई जो कि महामारी के प्रभाव तथा युकेन और रूस के बीच लड़ाई से और अधिक बढ़ गया है। फीजी में होने वाले विश्व हिन्दी सम्मेलन पर भी बात-चीत हुई जिसकी मेहज़बानी फीजी की सरकार करेगी।

विश्व के सबसे बड़े प्रजातंत्र होने के नाते, भारत ने फीजी को आशवासन दिया है कि आने वाले आम चुनाव में वो फीजी को सहयोग प्रदान करेगा। श्री कुमार ने फीजियन सरकार का आभार व्यक्त करते हुए कहा कि भारत हर तरह से फीजी को सहयोग प्रदान करने के लिए खड़ा है, खास करके राष्ट्रीय और क्षेत्रीय तौर से विकास में फीजी की मदद करने के लिए। उन्होंने जलवायु, वैश्विक शांति और सुरक्षा के मुद्दों पर निर्णायक अगुवाई तथा एकजुटता को मजबूत करने के लिए प्रधान मंत्री बईनिमरामा की प्रशंसा की। उन्होंने मौसम में हो रहे बदलाव तथा महामारी का सामना करते हुए, फीजी की अर्थ-व्यवस्था का निर्माण फिर से करने के लिए टूरिज़म व्यवसाय को फिर से जीवित किया।

राष्ट्रपति ने सुई का विमोचन किया



राष्ट्रपति महामहीम रातु विलियामे कातोनिवरे, बच्चों के लिए सुई का विमोचन करते हुए
चित्र: प्रदान किया गया

रोनल देव

देश के एक लाख तीस हजार (130,000) बच्चों जिनकी उम्र पाँच से ग्यारह साल के बीच है को फाएज़ा बायोएन्टेक (BioNTech) कोविड-19 सुई लगाने से लाभ होगा जिसका विमोचन हाल ही में राष्ट्रपति महामहीम रातु विलियामे कातोनिवरे ने किया। विद्यार्थियों, माता-पिताओं तथा मेहमानों से बातें करते हुए राष्ट्रपति कातोनिवरे ने कहा कि फीजी, प्रशान्त का पहला देश है जिसने पूरी तरह से सुई लगाने वाले अभियान को अपनाया है। “देश में जब पहली बार सुई आई तो हमें हालात सामान्य होने के लिए उम्मीद की किरण नज़र आई। देश में जिन लोगों ने सुई लगाई तथा चिकित्सा विज्ञान (मेडिकल साइन्स) को धन्यवाद है जिन कारणों से देश में लोगों की ज़िन्दगी जल्द से जल्द सामान्य हुई हालांकि विपरीत परिस्थितियों तथा कोविड-19 महामारी के कारण उत्पन्न चुनौतियों का सामना करते हुए, हम एक राष्ट्र के रूप में एक साथ काम करने के किए मजबूत हुए हैं,” राष्ट्रपति ने कहा। उनके अनुसार जबसे फीजी ने कोविड-19 सुई

लगाने वाला अभियान शुरू किया था तबसे लेकर अभी तक लगभग सभी नागरिकों ने सुई का पहला डोज़ लगवा लिया है जबकि पचान्ने (95%) प्रतिशत लोगों ने दूसरा डोस लगवा लिया है। अड़तीस हजार से ज़्यादा (38,000) बच्चों जिनकी उम्र पंद्रह से सत्ताह साल के बीच है को सुई का पहला डोस और बत्तीस हजार से उपर बच्चों ने दूसरा डोस लगवा लिया है। जिन बच्चों की उम्र बारह से चौदह साल के बीच है में से पचीस हजार (25,000) से ज़्यादा बच्चों ने सुई का पहला डोस जबकि पंद्रह हजार से ज़्यादा बच्चों ने सुई का दूसरा डोज़ लगवा लिया है। “मुझे यह घोषणा करते हुए गर्व महसूस हो रहा है कि हमारे बड़े लोग तथा बारह साल से उपर के हमारे बच्चों को सफलता से सुई लगाने वाले अभियान से फीजी ने पाँच से ग्यारह साल के बीच के अपने बच्चों को कोविड-19 से सुरक्षा प्रदान करने के लिए एक और लक्ष्य बनाया है। “देश में पहली बार सुई आने वाले दिन से आज तक हमारी सुरक्षा बरकरार है, हमें सभी योग्य लोगों को सुई लगाना है तथा साथ मिलकर वायरस को फैलने से रोकना है ताकि हमारे कमज़ोर लोग सुरक्षित रह सकें,” राष्ट्रपति ने कहा।

पश्चिमी विभाग में दस किसानों की पानी वाली समस्या सुलझी



कृषि मंत्री डाक्टर महेन्द्र रेड्डी किसानों को इरिगेशन किट्स प्रदान करते हुए

चित्र: प्रदान किया गया

सोनम सामी

खेतों से पानी निकालना और उससे संबंधित परेशानी सहना अब पश्चिमी विभाग के दस किसानों के लिय पुरानी बात है। यह संभव हुआ जब दस किसानों को इरिगेशन सपोर्ट फो फार्म डिवलपमेंट कार्यक्रम के तहत जलमार्ग मंत्रालय ने कृषि मंत्रालय के साथ मिलकर इरिगेशन किट्स प्रदान किया। किसानों से बातें करते हुए कृषि मंत्री डाक्टर महेन्द्रा रेड्डी ने आशा व्यक्त की कि फीजी सरकार द्वारा प्रदान की गई इस सहायता से सही मौसम के बाद या पहले और सूखे के मौसम में भी अधिक उत्पादन होगा ताकि बाज़ार में आपूर्ति बनी रहे और टूरिज़म क्षेत्र में जो अक्सर आपूर्ति की कमी होती है खासकर के ओफ-सिज़न के दौरान वहाँ का सप्लाई भी बरकरार रहे। “जैसा कि टूरिज़म क्षेत्र ने बताया है, इन-सीज़न के समय शाख-भाजी में कोई संकट नहीं होता, हालांकि ओफ-सिज़न के समय समस्या होती है, इसिलिय हम आपको यह इरिगेशन किट्स प्रदान कर रहे हैं ताकि ओफ-सिज़न के दौरान उत्पादन हो सके और हमारे होटल व्यवसायों के आयात बिल को कम किया जा सके और सब्जियों की स्थानीय खेती को बढ़ावा दिया जा

सके। मंत्री रेड्डी ने नर्सरी सपोर्ट डिवलपमेंट और हायड्रोपोनिक्स जैसी बुरे परिस्थितियों के बावजूद कृषि स्तर पर उत्पादन बढ़ाने के लिय किसानों को दिए गए कई विकास कार्यक्रमों के बारे में विस्तार से बताया। पहले रह चुके बस चालक जो अब किसान हैं वुंदा बेक रोड, लौतोका के रविद्रा प्रकाश चंद ने कहा कि इरिगेशन किट्स भारी मदद करेगा और उन्हें अब अपने नजदीकी स्रोत से पानी निकालने की ज़रूरत नहीं होगी जबकि शारीरिक रूप से यह एक कठिन काम था। “जबकि मैंने खेती करना इसी साल शुरू किया है, मेरे पास सभी उपकरण नहीं हैं, लेकिन मुझे यह इरिगेशन किट मिलने के बाद मैं बहुत खुश हूँ और गर्व महसूस कर रहा हूँ कि सरकार ने मुझे यह सहायता दी जो मैं खुद कभी नहीं खरीद पाता, श्री चंद ने कहा। हर एक इरि-गेशन किट में एक जेटलैंड 6.5 होसपावर, दो इन्च बोटो पम्प, आठ मिटर लम्बा दो इन्च का सक्शन होस और दो सौ मिटर लम्बा दो इन्च का डिस्चार्ज होस और एक सौ दो इन्च का सौका होस(इरिगेशन होस) जो कुल एक हजार डोलर लागत का है।



प्रशान्तीय नेताओं की सभा के बाद एकता बढ़ी

प्रधान मंत्री वॉरेनो बर्डिनारामा ने हाल ही में प्रशान्तीय नेताओं के सम्मेलन के बाद नेताओं को विदा करने के लिए रात के भोज की आयोजना की। इस दौरान उन्होंने नेताओं से कहा कि इसमें कोई शक नहीं है कि प्रशान्तीय नेताओं के सम्मेलन के दौरान नेताओं के बीच संबंध और भी गहरा हुआ है। उन्होंने हाल ही लौटते हुए ब्लू पेरिफिक कोन्टीनेन्ट रणनीति के महत्व पर प्रकाश डाला और कहा कि यह प्रशान्त के लोगों, उनके भविष्य, समान्य मूल्य और प्रतिभा को दर्शाता है। यह उन लोगों के बारे में है जो अपनी जरूरतें तथा योग्यता पहचानते हैं जो अपने विकास की योजना बनाते हैं, जो दूसरों की भलाई के लिए काम करते हैं। कड़ी मेहनत करने के लिए उन्होंने टीम फीजी को भी धन्यवाद दिया।

चित्र: सूचना मंत्रालय



प्रधान मंत्री की नेतागिरी की प्रशंसा हुई

प्रशान्तीय नेताओं के सम्मेलन के समापन समारोह में फीजी के प्रधान मंत्री वॉरेनो बर्डिनारामा ने जोर दिया है दक्षिण प्रशान्तीय देशों को मौसम में हो रहे बदलाव के असर को कम करने के सहयोग की मांग करते रहना चाहिए। हमें हर एक प्रशान्तीय देश की सलाहमती के बजाय कुछ और नहीं मांगना चाहिए। इससे सभी बड़े देशों को साथ मिलकर प्रदूषण को कम करने का फैसला करना है। प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा कि प्रशान्तीय देशों को जल्द से

जल्द फ़ियूल का उपयोग करने की अदात छोड़ देनी चाहिए जिनमें कोएला भी शामिल है। यही माँग हम ओस्ट्रेलिया, निउ जीलेन्ड, अमरिका, भारत, योरोपियन युनियन तथा अन्य देश से भी करते हैं जो भारी मात्रा में प्रदूषित गैस हवा में छोड़ते हैं। फीजी खुद से भी यही सवाल करता है हालांकि हम लपरवाह ढँग से वातावरण में गैस नहीं छोड़ते हैं। चित्र: प्रदान किया गया



धार्मिक उत्सव से लोगों में एकता बढ़ती है - अटेनी-जेनरल



कई सौ की संख्या में धर्म प्रेमियों ने हालही में हवल रोड सूबा स्थित मरियमन संगम मन्दिर में आग में चलने वाली पचान्वे (95th) सालाना पूजा में भाग लिया। दुनिया भर में दक्षिण भारत से आए देवी माँ के भक्त दस दिनों तक व्रत रखने के बाद आग पर चलने वाली किया से पूजा संपन्न करते हैं। अटेनी-जेनरल अईयाज़-सईयद खईयूम इस साल वाली सालाना पूजा में मुख्य मेहमान थे जहाँ उन्होंने प्रकाश डाला कि इस तरह की सालाना पूजा हमारे लिए बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि एक राष्ट्र के रूप में वो लोगों में एकता बढ़ाती है, आराम और सात्वता प्रदान करते हैं, और हमारे आध्यात्मिक जीवन का उत्थान करते हैं, चाहे हम किसी भी धर्म के हों। उन्होंने उन पूर्वजों के बलिदान और प्रतिबद्धता का आभार व्यक्त किया जिन्होंने पचान्वे साल पहले यह सालाना पूजा शुरू की थी।

चित्र: ननिस नईमिला

लम्बासा में हुए कानिबल की प्रशंसा की गई

अटेनी-जेनरल अईयाज़ सईयद खईयूम ने इसी महीने लम्बासा में आयोजित दुआवाता काईम प्रीवेन्शन कानिबल के समापन समारोह में हिस्सा लिया और विजेताओं को पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया। अपने भाषण में उन्होंने हिस्सा ले रहे सभी प्रतियोगियों की प्रशंसा की जिन्होंने सप्ताह भर अच्छी तैयारियों की थी। उन्होंने कानिबल के आयोजकों का भी आभार व्यक्त किया जिन्होंने दो सालों की महामारी के बाद कानिबल को एक बार फिर जागृत किया। किंग्स श्रेणी में पहले रना अप मिस्टा बैली ट्रस्ट साहिल शान्डिल और किंग का खिताब तानोआ एलेक्टीक ओलिवा साएमन डेया ठहरे जबकि क्वीन्स श्रेणी में पहली रना अप मिस का खिताब मिस बुआ आशना प्रिया लाल को मिला जबकि क्वीन का खिताब मिस सावूसावू सोफिया फाताफेई के हाथ लगा।

चित्र: ननिस नईमिला





फीजी रोड्स अथोरिटी के कर्मचारी एक रास्ते का निर्माण करते हुए चित्र: फीजी रोड्स अथोरिटी

मूल भूत संसाधन में सुधार होगा

रोनल देव

नए रास्ते बनाने तथा वर्तमान के संसाधनों को सुधारने के लिए फीजी रोड्स अथोरिटी को 2022/2023 राष्ट्रीय बजट में \$376.7 million डोलर दिया गया है। तेरह मिलियन डोलर से ज़्यादा एफ आर आई का संचालन खर्च रहेगा जबकि बाकी \$362.9 million डोलर एफ आर आई को संसाधन सुधारने के लिए दिया जाएगा। उधर देश भर में लोगों के लिए साफ और सुरक्षित पानी उपलब्ध कराने के लिए राष्ट्रीय बजट में दो मिलियन डोलर से ज़्यादा निकाला गया है। वोटा अथोरिटी के संचालन खर्च के लिए \$89.2 मिलियन डोलर दिया गया

है। जबकि संसाधनों को सुधारने तथा लम्बे समय से चल रही पानी वाली समस्या सुलझाने के लिए \$115.1 मिलियन डोलर अलग किया गया है। इसके अलावा लेन्ड ट्रान्सपोर्ट अथोरिटी के संचालन खर्च के लिए 22.4 मिलियन डोलर जबकि अन्य संसाधनों के सुधार के लिए एक मिलियन डोलर से कम दिया गया है। ग्राहकों की ज़रूरी सेवा को डिजिटल मंच से प्रदान करने के लिए आठ लाख डोलर निकाला गया है। मेरिटार्डम सेफ्टी अथोरिटी ओफ फीजी को सात मिलियन डोलर से ज़्यादा दिया गया जिनमें से 5.9 मिलियन डोलर संचालन खर्च और बाकी 1.5 मिलियन डोलर संसाधनों

के लिए दिए गए हैं। घरों तक बिजली की सेवा पहुँचाने के लिए 19.3 मिलियन डोलर अलग किया गया है जहाँ अर्थ-व्यवस्था मंत्रालय एक कोन्ट्रैक्ट के तहत सीधे ई एफ एल को पैसे ताकि लोगों के घरों की वायरिंग होने के साथ-साथ बिजली की सेवा वहाँ पहुँचाई जाए। इससे उन ग्रामीण समाजों को फायदा होगा जहाँ बिजली की सेवा नहीं है। एक सौ सत्राह स्कीम लागू की जाएंगी जहाँ केन्द्रीय विभाग में पचास, पश्चिमी विभाग में पचास तथा उत्तरी विभाग में सत्राह स्कीम्स जारी की जाएंगे जहाँ 1,291 से ज़्यादा फीजीवासियों को इस कार्यक्रम से फायदा होगा।

बस के भाड़े में गिरावट से राहत मिलेगी



बस के भाड़े में गिरावट से सरकार उम्मीद कर रही है कि लोगों को कुछ राहत ज़रूर मिलेगी चित्र: प्रदान किया गया

रोनल देव

अर्थ-व्यवस्था मंत्री तथा अटेनी जेनरल अईयाज़ सईयद-खईयूम ने राष्ट्रीय बजट की घोषणा करते हुए कहा कि अगले छः महीने तक देश भर में बस के भाड़े में दस प्रतिशत की गिरावट होगी। सईयद-खईयूम ने कहा कि यह पहली अगस्त से लागू होगा। उनके अनुसार बस से सफर करने वाले कम भाड़ा भरेंगे जबकि सरकार बाकी खर्च सहेगी जिसके लिए बजट में छः मिलियन डोलर निकाला गया है। सरकार पुराने रिकोड्स तथा ई-टिकटिंग आकड़े के आधार पर बस कम्पनियों को अगस्त महीने के लिए पहले से पर्ईमन्ट

करेगी जो हर महीने दिए जाते हैं। कोविड-19 आर्थिक सहायता के उपाय जो बजट में घोषित की गई है में बिजली और पानी की सब्सिडी के साथ नौकरी के लिए सहारे की स्कीम, प्राकृतिक तौर पर नौकरियाँ, सौशल वेल्फेयर की सहायता, जेनरल प्रेटीशनस तथा मेडिकल प्रेकटिशनस तक पहुँच, यातायात के लिए सहायता जिनमें बर्डस फीस, पी एस वी ड्रायवस लाएसन्स लाएसन्स फीजी, मार्केट विक्रेताओं के लिए स्टोल फीस भरने तथा मछली मारने के लिए लाएसन्स की सहायता अगले बारह महीने तक जारी रहेगी। इसी साल पूर्व जिन खाने-पीने वाले समानों पर से वेट हटा दिया गया था वो जारी रहेगा।

देश में पुरानी गाड़ियाँ मँगाने का खर्च बढ़ा

रोनल देव

लोग अब पाँच साल से पुरानी पेट्रोल और डीज़ल गाड़ियाँ देश में नहीं मँगा सकेंगे। पाँच सालों से ज़्यादा उम्र की हाएब्रिड गाड़ियों के लिए भी यह प्रतिबन्ध लागू है। युरो पाँच की ज़रूरत को बरकरार रखा जाएगा। इस अवधि में पाँच साल से ज़्यादा उम्र की गाड़ियाँ मँगाने के लिए छूट दी जाएगी अगर सोलह जुलाई से पहले, गाड़ियों का ओडर दिया गया था, उसके लिए पैसे भरे जा चुके हैं या फीजी भेजने के लिए शिपमन्ट कर दिया गया है और इस साल के अंत से पहले फीजी पहुँच जाएगी। पुरानी गाड़ी पर डूटी बढ़ाकर एक हजार डोलर कर दी गई है जबकि नई गाड़ी पर इम्पोर्ट एक्साईस डूटी पाँच प्रतिशत से बढ़ाई जाएगी। सरकार महँगी गाड़ियाँ जो तीन हजार सी सी से उपर है के लिए हर एक गाड़ी पर दस हजार का लक्ज़री वेहिकल टेक्स लागू करेगी। मौसम में हो रहे बदलाव के असर को कम करने का प्रोत्साहन करने के लिए लोगों को बिजली से चलने वाली गाड़ियाँ खरीदने तथा चार्जिंग सेन्ट्स बनाने का सर्मथन करने की माँग कर रही हैं। सरकार हर एक गाड़ी पर पाँच हजार डोलर की सब्सिडी देगी अगर कोई स्थानीय व्यापारी पाँच से ज़्यादा गाड़ियाँ खरीदेंगे।



देश में पुरानी गाड़ी मँगाने का खर्च बढ़ गया है जबकि सरकार बिजली से चलने वाली गाड़ियों को ज़्यादा प्रोत्साहन दे रही है।

चित्र: प्रदान किया गया



धान की खेती के लिए ज़मीन अलग करें

रोनल देव

देश भर के किसान जो चाहे कुछ भी खेती करते हो, उनसे माँग की गई है कि वे फीजी में चावल मँगाने का खर्च कम करने में मदद करें और कम से कम अपनी ज़मीन का आधा अक्कड़, धान बोने के लिए अलग करें।

हाल ही वनुआ लेवू में किसानों के एक दल को पोटबल राईस मिल दान करते हुए कृषि मंत्री डाक्टर महेन्द्र रेड्डी ने ऐसा कहा। उन्होंने ज़ोर दिया कि फीजी सालाना तौर से देश में चावल लाने के लिए चालिस मिलियन डोलर से ज़्यादा खर्च करता है, जबकि किसानों के पास मौका है कि वे अपनी खपत या आमदनी कमाने के लिए धान की खेती कर सकते हैं। हम गन्ने की खेती करने वाले, डालो, कसेरा तथा शाख-शब्जि बोने वालों से माँग कर रहे हैं कि वे अपनी खेती जारी रखें लेकिन धान की खेती करने के लिए एक अक्कड़ ज़मीन अलग करें। अगर आप एक अक्कड़ ज़मीन अलग करेंगे, तो आप एक टन यानि शक हज़ार किलोग्रामत धान काटेंगे जिसे पेरने के बाद आपके पास छः सौ किलोग्राम चावल यानि दस किलोग्राम के साठ श्धज्ञत्त बेग चावल रहेगा। डाक्टर रेड्डी का कहना है कि धान बोने वाले व्यवसायिक इलाके जैसे कि वनुआ लेवू, राकीराकी तथा वा में धान की खेती भारी



कृषि मंत्री डाक्टर महेन्द्र रेड्डी हालही वनुआलेवू में किसानों को एक राईस मिल भेंट करते हुए चित्र: प्रदान किया

मात्रा में होने लगी है तथा उन्होंने कड़ी मेहनत के लिए किसानों को धन्यवाद दिया है। “धान बोने वाले इलाकों से बाहर जहाँ किसान गन्ने, जड़ वाले भोजन, गाँव में जहाँ लोग पशुपालन करते हैं तथा सिंगातोका वेली रोड में जहाँ भारी मात्रा में किसान शाख-भाजी बोते हैं, उन्हें धान बोने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया जा रहा है। हम उनसे माँग कर रहे हैं कि वे अपना उत्पादन बोते रहें लेकिन धान बोने के लिए एक अक्कड़ ज़मीन अलग कर दें। अभी कृषि मंत्रालय किसानों से कम समय में तैयार होने तथा पानी से सींचे जाने वाले धान उधाने की माँग कर रहे हैं।



प्रधान मंत्री वॉरेनो बईनिमरामा कन्दावू प्राँतिफ काउन्सल का उद्घाटन करते हुए चित्र: इलिसापेदी तिनानीसिंगाबलावू

कन्दावू को सबसे ज़्यादा सरकारी सहायता मिली

रोनल देव

प्रधान मंत्री वॉरेनो बईनिमरामा ने हाल ही तवुकी कोरो स्थित कन्दावू द्वीप में कन्दावू प्राँतिफ काउन्सल की सभा का उद्घाटन किया। अपने भाषण में प्रधान मंत्री ने कन्दावू प्राँत को पिछले सालों में मिली सरकारी सहायता पर प्रकाश डाला। 2014 से पिछले साल के बीच संसाधनों के विकास, मुफ्त शिक्षा तथा चिकित्सा की सहायता में सरकार ने पचपन (\$55.6m) मिलियन डोलर से ज़्यादा खर्च किया है।

उन्होंने कहा कि रास्ते तथा पुल बनाने में सबसे ज्यादा तईस (23) मिलियन डोलर लगाया गया है। फीजियन सरकार ने प्राँत के बच्चों की शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में आठ मिलियन डोलर से ज़्यादा की पुँजी लगाई जिनमें शामिल है विद्यार्थियों को स्कूल लेजाने के लिए नाव तथा इंजिन खरीदना। तवुकी कोरो में अब निवासियों को पीने के लिए साफ पानी उपलब्ध हो गया है जब प्रधान मंत्री ने पानी वाली एक योजना का उद्घाटन किया। उन्होंने उन कोरोवासियों की प्रशंसा की जिन्होंने उपलब्ध संसाधनों के उपयोग से द्वीप में जगह-जगह व्यापार खोला है। उनमें से एक है तवुकी कोरो के एक किसान तानिएला कामा जो अपने खेत में प्राकृतिक तरीके से बने खाद का प्रयोग करते हैं तथा द्वीप के विभिन्न दूकानों तक ताज़े अण्डों को भी सप्लाई करते हैं।

“तवुकी का यह किसान पिछले दस सालों से खेती कर रहा है तथा 2011 में कृषि मंत्रालय ने एक शेड तथा तीन सौ मुर्गियाँ तथा मुर्गियों के चारा प्रदान करके मदद की थी ताकि वो मुर्गी पालन का व्यापार शुरू कर सके। यह सहायता छब्बीस (\$26,000) हज़ार डोलर लागत की थी,” प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा।

प्रधान मंत्री ने कोरोवासियों को प्रोत्साहित किया है कि वे लेटस, अदरक, ब्रोकली जैसी शाख-सब्जि उगाए तथा पशु पालन करें क्योंकि स्थानीय और विदेशी बाज़ार में इससे बहुत मुनाफा होगा। कन्दावू के निवासियों को खतरनाक पदार्थों के गलत उपयोग तथा गाँजा के उपयोग के खतरे की भी याद दिलाई गई। प्रधान मंत्री ने कोरो के बुजुर्गों से माँग की है कि वे अपने लोगों को ऐसी दवाओं के सेवन के प्रभाव के बारे में याद दिलाते रहें।



वनुआ लेवू के एक ग्रामीन इलाके बुआ में समुद्र दीवार यानि सी वोल बनाने का काम शुरू किया गया है चित्र: प्रदान किया गया

समुद्री दीवार का निर्माणकार्य

बीस सालों से ज़्यादा समय से बूआ, वनुआलेवू के ग्रामीन इलाके में समुद्री तट के नज़दीक समुद्री दीवार सीवोल बनाने की माँग सुनी गई। प्राकृतिक तरीके से बनने वाली इस सीवोल से नवुनीएवू तथा वाईताम्बू में समुद्री तट को सुरक्षित किया जाएगा।

वोटावैस मंत्रालय द्वारा चार सौ मीटर लम्बे सीवोल का निर्माण चार हफ्ते में पूरा होने की आशा है जिससे बुआ वनुआ लेवू के दोनों तटवर्ती कोरो के निवासियों को राहत मिलेगी। हाल ही वनुआ लेवू में इन इलाकों का दौरा करते हुए कृषि तथा वोटावैस मंत्री डाक्टर महेन्द्र रेड्डी ने कहा कि आम

फीजिवसियों की जीविका को सुरक्षा प्रदान करना फीजियन सरकार की प्राथमिकता रही है।

“भले ही आप बूआ के ग्रामीन इलाकों में रहते हैं, हम आपको भूले नहीं हैं तथा मैं आपको आशवासन देता हूँ कि हम आपकी सुरक्षा करेंगे,” मंत्री रेड्डी ने कहा।

सीवोल बनने के कार्य को सबसे पहले मैं देखना चाहता था। हमे देश भर में एक सौ साठ (160) सीवोल्स बनाने हैं तथा आपके कोरो का नाम भी इस सूची में है। आपके कोरो को चुना गया क्योंकि यह नीचले इलाके में स्थित है।”

मौसम ठीक रहा तो सीवोल पर काम चार हफ्ते में खत्म हो जाएगा, आपकी सहायता के लिए धन्यवाद,” मंत्री रेड्डी ने कहा।

वाईताम्बू कोरो के मुखिया तार्ईसाके नम्बेदा ने वोटावैस मंत्रालय को अब तक हुए काम के लिए धन्यवाद दिया।

“हमारे कोरोवासी बहुत खुश हुए जब उन्होंने कोरो में समुद्र दीवार बनाने वाली मशीनें आते देखीं। हमारे बड़े बुर्जंग जो अभी भी कोरो में रहते हैं, वो बता सकते हैं कि पहले के मिलान में वहाँ कितना कुछ बदल चुका है। सरकार ने जो हमारे लिए किया है, उसके लिए हम बहुत ही शुक्रगुज़ार हैं।

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अटेनी-जेनरल अईयाज़ सैयद-खईयूम ने पिछले शुक्रवार को 2022/2023 राष्ट्रीय बजट में कुछ उपाय की घोषणा की है जिससे परिवारों की आमदनी पर महंगाई का असर कुछ कम होगा

चित्र: संसद भवन

महंगाई से निपटने के उपाय

रेनल देव

सरकार ने परिवारों की आमदनी पर महंगाई का असर कम करने के लिए 2022/2023 राष्ट्रीय बजट में कुछ उपाय की घोषणा की है। राष्ट्रीय बजट की घोषणा करते हुए अर्थ-व्यवस्था मंत्री तथा अटेनी-जेनरल अईयाज़ सईयद-खईयूम ने अठ्ठारह साल से कम उम्र के बच्चों के लिए महंगाई के उपाय पर प्रकाश डाला।

सामानों और सेवाओं के बढ़ रहे दामों से निपटने के लिए सरकार उन परिवारों के हर एक बच्चे को अगले छः महीने में एक सौ अस्सी डॉलर देगी जिनकी सालाना आमदनी पचास हजार डॉलर से कम है। हर महीने एक बच्चे को तीस डॉलर मिलेगा तथा दो भागों में एक सौ अस्सी डॉलर दिया जाएगा। उदाहरण के तौर पर अगर एक घर से पाँच बच्चों के लिए एक अर्जी लगाई गई तो

छः महीने के अन्दर उस परिवार को नौ सौ डॉलर दिया जाएगा। एक ऑनलाईन प्लेटफॉर्म विकसित किया जाएगा जो सुई लगाने वाले रजिस्ट्रेशन पोर्टल की तरह होगा जिसकी मदद से माता-पिता अर्जी लगा सकेंगे। अगर ज़रूरत पड़ी तो सरकार शायद कुछ रजिस्ट्रेशन सेन्टर्स भी स्थापित करेगी ताकि फीजीवासी खुद जाकर अर्जी लगा सकें। अर्जियों की जाँच बेर्थ रजिस्ट्रेशन नम्बर से होगी कि क्या अर्जी लगाने वाले और बच्चे की जानकारी सही है।

जिन फीजीवासियों को एनेजी फीजी लिमिटेड तथा वोटा अथोरिटी ओफ फीजी की सव्सिडी मिलती है को खुद ब खुद योग्य माने जाएँगे क्योंकि उनकी जाँच पहले ही हो चुकी है कि उनके परिवार की सालाना आमदनी पचास हजार डॉलर से कम है। जिन लोगों को पहले चरण में चुना नहीं जाएगा को अन्य प्रक्रिया से होकर गुज़रना होगा जैसे

कि आमदनी की पुष्टि करने के लिए फीजी रेवन्यू एन्ड कस्टम्स सेविस तथा फीजी नेशनल प्रोविडन्ड फण्ड दफ्तर या जो लोग अनऔपचारिक क्षेत्र में काम करते हैं को वैधानिक घोषणा करनी होगी।

अर्जी लगाने वाले सफल लोगों को एम-पैसे या माए केश अकाउन्ट से पैसे दिए जाएँगे। लगभग दो लाख छात्रों को इस सुविधा से लाभ होगा।

इसके अलावा सौशल वेल्फेयर, सरकारी पेंशन तथा आफटा कैया फण्ड से सहायता पाने वालों को भी छः महीने के अन्दर एक सौ अस्सी डॉलर डॉलर दिया जाएगा। यह पई मन्ट भी दो भागों में होगा।

इस सुविधा से लगभग एक लाख फीजीवासियों को लाभ होगा। सभी टेशरी विद्यार्थी फिर चाहे वे टेल्स या टोपस स्क्रीम से फायदा उठा रहे हैं को अगले छः महीने के अन्दर एक सौ अस्सी डॉलर का

पईमन्ट दो भागों में दिया जाएगा। लगभग तीस हजार विद्यार्थियों को इस स्क्रीम से फायदा होने की आशा की जा रही है। फिलहाल, सरकार ने बेरोज़गारी की सहायता के रूप में असर पड़े लोगों को महामारी की शुरुआत से अभी तक चार सौ बत्तीस मिलियन डॉलर से ज़्यादा लागत नकद सहायता दी है।

इनमें शामिल है कोविड-19 बेरोज़गारी स्क्रीम के नीचे एफ एन पी एफ मेम्ब्रा बेलन्स में दो सौ पाँच मिलियन डॉलर से ज़्यादा जमा करना, फीजीवासियों को सीधे दो सौ सत्ताईस (\$227.3) मिलियन से ज़्यादा लागत नकद देना जिनमें एक राउन्ड में नव्वे डॉलर देना, दो राउन्ड्स पचास डॉलर प्रदान करना, दो राउन्ड तीन सौ अस्सी डॉलर देना तथा एक राउन्ड सौ डॉलर प्रदान करना। हर वर्ग के चालिस हजार से ज़्यादा फीजीवासियों को इससे लाभ हुआ है।