

# Fiji Focus



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## BRIDGING Fiji's future

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama opened the Stinson Parade and Fletcher Road bridges in Suva, saying the developments would help ease the traffic congestion experienced in and around the capital city, Suva. The bridges were built with a \$30million grant provided by the government of the People's Republic of China. Both bridges were opened on the same day after traditional iTaukei ceremonies. PM Bainimarama thanked China for being a steadfast development partner for Fiji.

FULL DETAILS ON PAGES 4-5. Photo: ERONI VALILI

# Strong Growth

## EIGHT YEARS OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS, FIJIANS BENEFIT

PRASHILA DEVI

**F**IJIANS are getting the benefit of eight years of consecutive economic growth in the form of better road networks to travel in and electricity in the most rural and remote parts of the country.

In recent weeks Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama opened a number of rural electrification projects in areas like Nasautoka, Naveicovatu, Naqia, Navuca, Sauva and Vunarewa with many

of these projects costing in the millions. However, as the Head of Government highlighted, while some of these projects might be small, its impact on the lives of ordinary Fijians outweighed the value of getting the infrastructure on the ground because it opened a whole new world for these villages and settlements. "Eight straight years of growth for the Fijian economy have meant eight straight years of rapid and unrelenting progress for our nation, eight straight years of unprecedented infrastructure

development and eight straight years of better opportunities for all of our people, especially young Fijians," Prime Minister Bainimarama said. The Government has earmarked many major capital projects for 2018 and these include:

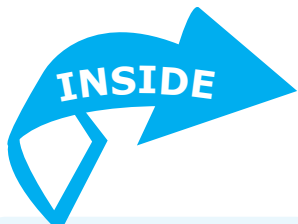
- \$70million to upgrade and expand roads and roundabouts in the Suva-Nausori-Lami corridor where nearly a third of the Fijian population lives;
- \$31m this financial year towards replacing 16 critical bridges all over Fiji,

with another 30 planned to be replaced over the next five years;

- \$42.6m allocated for rural electrification projects;
- \$9.5m to construct footpaths to allow Fijians to walk safely about their communities; and
- \$4.5m to construct streetlights in Wainibokasi, Vuci, Nadera, Nadawa, Nasinu, Dobuilevu, Kalokalo and Crescent Road

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#### QUOTE OF THE WEEK



Voreqe Bainimarama.

*Eight straight years of growth for the Fijian economy has meant eight straight years of rapid and unrelenting progress for our nation, eight straight years of unprecedented infrastructure development and eight straight years of better opportunities for all of our people, especially young Fijians.*

Prime Minister  
Voreqe Bainimarama

#### NUMBERS

**884,887**  
is Fiji's total  
population  
compared with  
**837,271** in  
the 2007 Census.

#### TWEET OF THE WEEK



UN Climate Change @UNFCCC

*Just over a week ago, the @UN Climate Conference #COP23 wrapped up in Germany, having produced many new climate action initiatives, commitments & partnerships:  
<http://bit.ly/BonnCOP23>*

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# New rules for taxi permits

PRIYANKA LAL

THE Government will continue to work towards lifting and standardising the Land Transport Authority (LTA) customer service facilities and delivery across the country.

Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations Jone Usamate, in his capacity as acting Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, said the LTA had undergone several changes to ensure transparency and accountability.

While speaking at the opening of the LTA new Suva Express Office located at the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPf) Plaza last Friday, Minister Usamate said part of the changes was the amendment in the Land Transport (Public Service Vehicles) Regulations.

The Land Transport (Public Service Vehicles) Regulations amendment outlined the process of acquiring new taxi permits.

"In the interest of more transparency, LTA will call for the applications of the new taxi

permits, and these which will be reviewed by five individuals forming an independent selection committee," Minister Usamate explained.

"Once the successful applicants are selected by the independent committee only then their applications will be put in the barrels for draw to establish the new taxi permit holders."

The authority has already announced the transport zones and would soon call for the new taxi permit applications.

Meanwhile, highlighting some of the achievements of the organisation in the past year, LTA board chairman Vijay Maharaj said staff had undergone various training to ensure improved customer service delivery.

Some of the training administered include the first hybrid training for technical officers that was held last November, the Motor Vehicle Levy Collection processes training for 80 customer services officers and the Japan Vehicle Export Inspection Centre training whereby 10,719 vehicles were inspected.



Students with the school curriculum: Introduction to Elections: A Learning Module for Year 10 Social Science students. Photo: PRIYANKA LAL

## Students to learn about elections

PRIYANKA LAL

THE Attorney-General and Minister for Education, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, has highlighted the need for Fiji's young population to be empowered in all spheres of national development.

The A-G said this at the handing over of curriculum materials on election for Year 10 students in Suva this week.

The "School Curriculum: Introduction to Elections: A Learning Module for Year 10 Social Science Students" materials were developed as part of the Fijian Elections Office (FEO) voter education programme.

"The recent census figures reveal that half of our population is below the age of 27.5 years, which means they need to be empowered.

They need to be made aware of the democratic processes that lead to them being governed by different political parties. This is a great source of empowerment for them," the A-G said.

The curriculum materials include a textbook, a teacher's manual, a mock election kit of a different design and a full-time dedicated website for the voter education programme.

The two-week course book developed by the FEO consists of five lessons, which culminates with a mock election.

The FEO printed 20,000 copies of Student's Workbook and 2000 copies of the Teacher's Manual, which will be distributed to 16,105 students in 178 secondary schools throughout Fiji from Term One this year.

The office will provide each school a ballot box, ballot papers and a voting screen.

The Fiji Electoral Commission chairperson, Suresh Chandra, said the curriculum would provide training to 16 year olds about the Fiji's electoral process.

"In two years, these 16 year olds will join the over 620,000 already registered Fijians as voters. This curriculum is aimed at giving a hands-on experience to students who have not yet reached the age of 18 to actually learn how to cast a vote," Mr Chandra said.

Supervisor of Elections Mohammed Saneem said short trainings would be conducted for Social Science teachers across the country to ensure there was consistency in the delivery of the curriculum content.

## Teachers 'appointed on merit'

PRIYANKA LAL

ATTORNEY-GENERAL and Minister for Education Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum has clarified that the recent "English Proficiency Test" undertaken by teaching applicants was not administered on a pass or fail basis.

The A-G, while speaking at a press conference in Suva last week, said the Ministry of Education would make all appointments, transfers and promotions in a transparent fashion and on the basis of merit.

As part of the Government's commitment to the open-merit recruitment guidelines, an English Proficiency Examination was administered by the Ministry of Education, with guidance from the Civil Service Reform Management Unit, as part of the first-ever comprehensive assessment of merit for teaching applicants.

The A-G said the main purpose of the assessment was to provide benchmark data to help measure the effectiveness of professional development programmes that will be carried out throughout the year.

The assessment covered four relevant categories: qualifications, experience, knowledge of contemporary teaching and learning strategies and English proficiency.

"The results from the assessment will better enable the Government to ensure all appointments are made on the basis of merit. The results provide a clear picture of where we need to target investment in the professional development of our teaching staff," the A-G said.

He assured all teachers that the Government remained committed to their professional development and would invest in programmes to support them in educating young Fijians.

"The assessment was carried out to ensure that all teaching applicants met baseline proficiency requirements prior to being appointed to teaching positions. Only teaching applicants who have met the proficiency requirements have been appointed to teaching positions in Term 1," the A-G said.

A second round of assessment was administered for those who were unable to sit for the first round or who previously applied and were unsuccessful at being appointed to a teaching position.





# \$70m to upgrade roads

NANISE NEIMILA

GOVERNMENT has set aside \$70million to upgrade and expand roads and roundabouts in the Suva-Nausori-Lami corridor, home to a third of Fiji's population.

Prime Minister Bainimarama, while opening the Stinson and Vatuwaqa bridges last week, said the Government was improving the lives of all Fijians with a commitment of building a foundation of road infrastructure for all.

He reassured all Fijians that the Government's role was to ensure that infrastructure and amenities were built for the future.

"We've set aside \$9.5m to construct footpaths to allow Fijians to walk safely about their communities. Another \$4.5m construct streetlights in Wainibokasi, Vuci, Nadera, Nadawa, Nasinu, Dobuilevu, Kalokalo and Crescent Road," Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

"Our work isn't only being carried out here in the capital. We've budgeted \$3m this financial year towards replacing 16 critical bridges all over Fiji, with another 30 planned to be replaced over the next five years.

Prime Minister Bainimarama adds that all this development was part of Government's strategy to make Fiji a stronger, more prosperous and more

unified nation by connecting Fijians to one another, opening up areas of the country to the rest of Fiji and the world, and giving them access to infrastructure that can be depended on for generations.

Fiji Roads Authority chief executive officer Jonathan Moore said FRA would support the Fijian Government's efforts to improve the network of roads around the country.

"Today's opening of the two major bridges in the capital shows the commitment of all stakeholders and Fijians need to understand that despite the duration of work all infrastructure needs to be up to par," Mr Moore said.



Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama and Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum with young entrepreneurs during the Young Entrepreneurship Scheme or "YES" at Grand Pacific Hotel in Suva. Photo: ERONI VALILI

## YES gives leg-up to young entrepreneurs

PRIYANKA LAL

PRIME Minister Voreqe Bainimarama has called on Fijian youths to become job creators rather than just job seekers to provide their fellow citizens with new and exciting opportunities.

Prime Minister Bainimarama, speaking at the launch of the Young Entrepreneurship Scheme or "YES" in Suva, said the initiative targeted the development of young business entrepreneurs with innovative ideas intended to promote and harness the talents of young Fijians.

"We want our young people to think outside the box, and make Fiji a hub of innovation for the Pacific and the world. We want them to be leaders in business, civil society and government, putting their ideas at the forefront of Fiji's development, with their entrepreneurial spirit carrying our nation into the future," he said

"That is what the YES initiative is all about. At the heart of this programme is a profound belief in the unique perspective brought by young Fijians and in their understanding of what our marketplace needs, both now and in the years ahead."

As part of the launch, Prime Minister Bainimarama presented certificates to five youths who had already begun the programme of mentorship through the YES initiative, which will continue over the next month.

The five winning entrepreneurs, Si-



Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama talks to young entrepreneurs. Photo: ERONI VALILI

wan Narayan of Lautoka, Sandhiya Gounder of Nadi, Rovial Kumar from Votualevu, Atunaisa Rainima from Tailevu and Vincent Padiachy of Labasa would later be eligible to receive a grant funding of up to \$20,000 to pursue their business ideas.

Siwan Narayan, 23, aspires to launch a business to construct small family homes to expand access to affordable housing options for Fijians.

University lecturer 30-year-old Sandhiya Gounder looks forward to beginning a hydroponic farm in Fiji, an innovative method of growing plants instead of soil using mineral nutrient solutions.

Similarly, Geospatial Science student

Rovial Kumar aspires to start an agribusiness by applying organic farming techniques to grow seeds and leverage technology to promote more intelligent farm planning.

Cautata, Tailevu youth Atunaisa Rainima wants to start a lawn and landscaping services business that converts garden refuse into cooking gas while Vincent Padiachy of Labasa dreams of venturing into bee farming to produce honey milk flavoured ice cream.

These five innovative entrepreneurs were selected by the YES judging panel after demonstrating they not only had great business ideas, but a game plan to turn those ideas into profitable businesses.

## Bureau releases 2017 census results

THE Fiji Bureau of Statistics has completed the 2017 Census and has published detailed and updated statistics on Fiji's population and population distribution by age, sex and geographical location.

Key highlights from the available statistics are as follows:

- Fiji's total population stands at 884,887 compared with 837,271 in the 2007 census. This is an increase of 47,616 or 5.7 per cent. The average annual population growth is 0.6 per cent, because of low birth rates and out migration.

- The median age of population is 27.5 years. This means that half of our population is below the age of 27.5 years.

- Sixty-nine (69) per cent of Fiji's population is below the age of 40.

- Men make up 50.7 per cent of the population, while women make up 49.3 per cent. While the proportion of males was higher below the age of 59 years, the female population was higher in the age groups above 60, indicating greater female longevity.

- Fifty-five point nine (55.9) per cent of Fiji's population reside in urban areas, an increase from 50.7 per cent in 2007. The urban population stood at 494,252, an increase of 69,406 (16.3 per cent) from 2007. This is attributed to extension of town boundaries and movement of people from rural to urban areas.

- Forty-four point one (44.1) per cent of Fiji's population reside in rural areas, down from 49.3 per cent in 2007. Rural population stood at 390,635, a decline of 21,790 (5.3 per cent) from 2007.

- The unemployment rate was down to 4.5 per cent, the lowest recorded in 20 years. This is lower than the 5.5 per cent unemployment rate estimated from the 2015-2016 Employment and Unemployment Survey.

- The Labour Force Participation Rate (labour force/ population aged over 15 years) is 57.1 per cent.

- 62.7 per cent of the population aged 15 years and older reported to having bank accounts. This represents a total of 392,148 individuals.

- 13.7 per cent of population aged three and above reported at least one functioning challenge (disability). The international benchmark is 15 per cent.

Full information on the available statistics can be found at [www.statsfiji.gov.fj](http://www.statsfiji.gov.fj).

Other information from the census is still being compiled and will be released progressively over the coming months.

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# Bridges ease

The newly-opened bridge at Stinson Parade in Suva. Photo: ERONI VALILI



Local construction workers join their Chinese counterparts at the opening of the Vatuwaqa bridge last week. Photo: ERONI VALILI

NANISE NEIMILA

THE opening of the new bridges at Stinson Parade and Fletcher Road, Suva, will now ease traffic congestion for daily commuters. While opening the two bridges in Suva last week, Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama said Fiji was rapidly becoming a more modern and prosperous society. “Eight straight years of growth for the Fijian economy have meant eight straight years of rapid and unrelenting progress for our nation, eight straight years of unprecedented infrastructure development and eight straight years of better opportunities for all of our people, espe-

cially young Fijians,” PM Bainimarama said. “I know that spending time stuck in traffic can feel like the furthest thing from progress. It keeps us away from our families and it keeps from being productive. That is why, as Fijians are earning more, spending more and travelling more often, we have undertaken such an ambitious slate of roading infrastructure development.” Prime Minister Bainimarama highlighted to Fijians present that the Government was choosing to put the money and time in right now, to build infrastructure that can withstand severe weather and other climate-related im

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# traffic congestion

The newly-opened bridge at Stinson Parade in Suva. Photo: ERONI VALILI

FROM PAGE 4

pacts that can meet the needs of our growing economy and that will support everything our nation will achieve in the years to come.

“In Vatuwaqa, the old Fletcher Bridge was in no condition to support what Suva and Nausori needed. The structure was rapidly deteriorating when it should not have and it could not carry the stress of heavy vehicular loads.

“The same could be said of the old Stinson Bridge here in the harbour.

“They were both on the verge of collapsing, even though they were originally designed to have stood strong for far longer.”

The Prime Minister thanked the Government of the People’s Republic of China for being a steadfast development partner for Fiji since 2007.

China’s counsellor to Fiji, Gu Yu, commended the partnership between the Fijian Government and Chinese Government.

The two projects were successfully completed through a \$30million grant from the Chinese Government.



Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama cuts the ribbon officially opening the new Stinson bridge as Fiji Roads Authority chief executive officer Jonathan Moore and members of the public look on. Photo: ERONI VALILI





## Visa free entry to Argentina

**F**IJI and Argentina have signed the “Agreement on Waiver of Transitory Visas for Holders of Ordinary Passport” in September last year.

This as the two nations marked more than 40 years of diplomatic relations.

After the signing, both countries completed all domestic processes and procedures and the agreement came into effect in January 2018.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs permanent secretary Ioane Naivalurua said “the visa free entry of Fijians into Argentina and vice versa will encourage increase in opportunities for trade, investment, sports particularly rugby and tourism,”

“The visa free entry into Argentina will encourage Fijian businesses to explore possibilities for expanding business and trade to South America. This will encourage visits by sporting teams and tourism activities between both countries thus, solidifying cultural and people-to-people relationships.

“The visa free entry into Argentina is another milestone achievement for the Fijian Government and further strengthens Fiji-Argentina bilateral relationship and enhances Fiji’s foreign policy to reach out to all the corners of the world and consolidate on Fiji’s position as the hub of the Pacific.”

Mr Naivalurua thanked the Argentine Government for its support and co-operation in opening its borders to Fijians.

Argentine Ambassador to Fiji Hugo Javier Gobbi said, “It is the first bilateral agreement and shows the recent development in our bilateral relations. The agreement creates stronger bonds of friendship between the two countries and provides further opportunities for tourism, trade and investments”.

Fijians wishing to travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina, could easily connect from Auckland, New Zealand.

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## Express office enhances LTA services

PRIYANKA LAL

**T**HE new Suva Express Office of the Land Transport Authority’s (LTA) will provide more efficient, customer-friendly and easily accessible services to the authority’s customers.

This was highlighted by the Minister for Employment, Productivity, Industrial Relations, Jone Usamate, in his capacity as acting Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, during the opening of the new office in Suva situated in the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) Plaza last week.

Minister Usamate said the new office was opened at a time when there was an increase in demand for LTA services as the public continued to invest in the transport sector, for which they required fast, efficient and easy access to LTA services.

“Suva-based customers will now not have to travel far, instead they can access express LTA services at the new Suva Express Office,” Minister Usamate said.

“On an average, the LTA Valelevu office serves more than 300 customers per day so LTA services in the heart of the city make things easier for the public.”

The Suva LTA Express Office will be operational from Monday to Friday from 8am to 4.30pm and from 9am to 1pm on Saturdays.

Payment of vehicle inspection fees, vehicle registration fees, drivers’ licence renewal, payment of tax infringement notices, search records, booking for the Defensive Driving Course as well as the payment of the motor vehicle levy under the new Accident Compensation Commission Fiji (ACCF) are some of the services available at this office.

“The LTA will collect the levies in line with its existing vehicle registration process. This MVA Levy is cheaper than the previous Compulsory Third Party fees,” Minister Usamate said.

LTA has 20 offices nationwide and to make its services more accessible and visible to the members of the public, plans are in the pipeline to establish more offices, according to demand in various areas.

Lautoka is expected to have an LTA Express Office soon.

# Teacher contracts for divisional offices



Attorney-General and Minister for Education Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum during the handing over of voter education materials in Suva last week.

PRIYANKA LAL

**O**FFER letters and contracts for teachers will now be released to divisional education offices around the country.

Attorney-General and Minister for Education Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, speaking during a press conference in Suva last week, said the age old practice of graduate teachers lining up at the Marela House to confirm their appointments would not happen going forward.

The A-G said for the first time, teaching staff can pick-up letters and contracts at the divisional offices that covered the address listed as their nominated home address.

“Applicants need no longer travel to Suva to pick up these items.

“That was the old way that took up undue time and resources, and that system had no place in the 21st century,” he said.

“Teachers don’t have to spend money coming to Suva to get their letters, wait until 10pm, stay at somebody’s house and incur all those costs.

“This is an archaic way of doing things and the head office did not think outside the box. This will no longer take place.”

The A-G will work with the IT team at the Education Ministry to see how best the IT system could be used to “make tests and assessments of teachers and various communications available to

teachers online. We want to ensure that our teachers get on speed with the available technology,” he added.

The ministry will take on a number of other reforms throughout the academic year to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative processes.

“We need to streamline the recruitment process via an online application process and enhance communications by providing online communication options for teaching staff,” the A-G said.

“The ministry will establish a more transparent and accountable transfer policy by the end of the year that is more fair and accessible for teaching staff.”

*We need to streamline the recruitment process via an online application process and enhance communications by providing online communication options for teaching staff*

Attorney-General and Minister for Education Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum





# Call for action, clean economies

PRASHILA DEVI

**P**RIME Minister and Conference of Parties 23 president Frank Bainimarama reiterated his call to countries to away from “dirty economies” and “dirty investments”.

Speaking at the One Planet Summit in Paris, France, last month which marked the second anniversary of the Paris Agreement, the Head of Government said it was well known that the global financial markets responded to opportunity.

“And it is our job to seize this moment to accelerate the profound shift that is already taking place in global investment, away from the dirty economies towards the new, better, smarter, cleaner economies of the future,” Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

He commended the Grand Coalition that was formed in Bonn, Germany, during COP23 where the national governments were joined by local and regional governments, civil society and the private sector.

Building on this, Prime Minister Bainimarama highlighted four key points on what should be the course towards accelerating action on climate change.

He said there was a need to have better access to the public finance that was being mobilised through the formal mechanisms of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including the Green Climate Fund which needs to flow faster through a less bureaucratic and more streamlined system.



Prime Minister and Conference of Parties 23 president Frank Bainimarama speaks at the opening of the One Planet Summit Paris last month.

There was a need to bring together private and public climate finance because there were trillions of dollars sitting with private investment institutions, pension funds, investment banks and insurance looking for opportunities to earn return on these funds, he said.

“We must unlock that finance for our common cause. While there has been encouraging progress to date, the private finance that has supported climate solutions has been largely at the project level, and not broader institutional investment,” Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

He said the trend whereby private and public finance were moving away from fossil fuels towards climate smart investment opportunities needed to evolve.

However, Prime Minister Bainimarama said that as the global financial community moved away from dirty investments, there should be scalable and clean alternatives into which money could flow.

He urged governments and private sector must work together with a sense of urgency and caution to unlock trillions of dollars of private sector capital that can be mobilised to solve the challenge.

“We need to ensure that all nations and especially developing countries have in place the necessary laws, governance and investment policies to encourage private investment to flow in a way that finances NDC (nationally determined contributions) implementation and adaptation,” Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

## Push for climate smart agriculture

**F**ARMERS have been urged to be mindful of the impacts of climate change and to practice climate smart agriculture to address them.

While meeting and holding informal discussions with respective crop and livestock farmers of Tailevu during his Central Division tour last week, Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management Inia Seruiratu stressed this.

Minister Seruiratu emphasised the importance of applying the best agricultural practices to mitigate the effects of climate change.

“Weather patterns are changing and as farmers you need to adjust with it. I am talking



Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management Inia Seruiratu with farmers during the Central Division tour in Tailevu last week.

about climate smart agriculture because unfortunately the weather is beyond our control and Tropical Cyclone Winston in 2016 was a sign of the impacts of climate change and we need to adapt with it,” he said.

Minister Seruiratu acknowl-

edged the integral role of farmers in providing nutrition in feeding the country, but reiterated the significance of taking action now to safeguard farmers’ interests to cope with the changing weather patterns.

Farmers who remain in the

sector were also acknowledged.

“We need farmers, unfortunately in Fiji today, not a lot of people are interested in farming and that is one of the challenges now,” he said.

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## Focus on marine products’ longevity

**I**N its bid to meet international obligations and to provide longevity, the Ministry of Fisheries has placed a ban on harvesting, purchase, sales and export of live coral and aquarium rock.

Ministry permanent secretary Sanaila Naqali announced the ban, which meets the requirements of international obligations, last month.

As per the ban, companies are to adhere to the following:

- All harvesting, purchasing and sales of live rocks and live coral are now banned and no export permits will be processed by the ministry;

- The CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Scientific Committee (SC) to submit to the Management Authority (MA) on January 8, 2018, that live coral and livestock was given a zero quota for 2018; and

- The Ministry of Fisheries and the Fiji CITES MA and SC, will support the development of other sustainable options, particularly the development of farmed or cultured coral.

A similar prohibition had been placed on the harvesting, purchase, sale and export of sea cucumber in September by the Minister of Fisheries, Semi Koroilavesau.

As of September 8, 2017, the ministry advised sea cucumber stakeholders that export will only be granted for stocks that were being held with processing facilities, but that the approved companies had until November 2, 2017, to clear remaining stock.

“All stocks left after November 2 (2017) will be sealed by the Ministry of Fisheries and will not be exported.”

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Fiji's young climate change advocate Timoci Naulusala with women of Nasautoka Village during the commissioning of the rural electrification project at the village. Photo: PRIYANKA LAL

# Power projects helps 6000 households

PRASHILA DEVI

**M**ORE than 6000 households will receive electricity this year through the Government's Rural Electrification programme that has been allocated a funding of \$42.6million.

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama said the Government allocated this sum to carry out the massive rural electrification, which will involve grid extension.

Speaking at the launch of the electrification of Nasautoka in Tailevu that lit up the homes of families by connecting five villages and three settlements to the national grid last month, the Head of Government said 289 families have benefited from the project that has cost just

over \$1.7m. "Now that you've received access to electric power, this community has not only been made safer at all hours of the day, you now have access to an entire world of new possibilities," he said.

Prime Minister Bainimarama highlighted how the Nasautoka community can stay active long after the sunset, allowing children to study into the night and have more family time without relying on "inefficient diesel generators or lantern lamps to keep the lights on."

"And this is only one part of our larger Korovou to Rakiraki Grid Extension under development by my Government," he said.

Nasautoka was one of the many rural electrification projects Prime Minister Bainimarama launched over the span of

one month, which as he explained was the duty of the Government of the day as mandated by the Fijian Constitution.

However, he pointed out that Government's responsibility does not end with only making the services available, but making those services accessible and affordable.

"My Government has a network of support in place to assist Fijian families earning less than \$30,000 a year and using 100 kilowatt hours or less electricity a month. Such households are entitled to a 50 per cent subsidy on their electricity bills."

He urged those who qualified for this subsidy programme, to apply at any Fiji Electricity Authority offices around the country.

## Mobile App promotes language

PRASHILA DEVI

**T**HE iVolavosa Vakaviti App launched by Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs Voreqe Bainimarama will be a useful tool for the young iTaukei speakers and non speakers wanting to learn the language.

Prime Minister Bainimarama, while officiating at the launch of the Volavosa Vakaviti Application dictionary in Suva, encouraged "everyone to continue learning, preserving, and spreading the iTaukei language".

He said the Government remains committed to strengthening Fiji as a multiracial society as it strived to pay homage to the cultures and backgrounds that make Fiji a



Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama, while officiating at the launch of the Volavosa Vakaviti Application dictionary in Suva, encouraged "everyone to continue learning, preserving, and spreading the iTaukei language".

truly inclusive and welcome society where everyone could all call themselves Fijians.

"It is what makes our nation great. In that vein of inclusivity it is important to note that the iVolavosa App will not only benefit iTaukei language speakers," Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

"It will allow fellow Fijians that speak other languages to better understand the complexities of the iTaukei lan-

guage, thereby fostering relationships among all Fijians and encouraging social inclusivity."

He reminisced over how during the 23rd session of Conference of Parties (COP23) which Fiji presided over, the greeting 'Bula' was written on walls and uttered by many world leaders during the Talanoa style of discussions.

Prime Minister Bainimarama said the App was a testament

of the Government's commitment to technological advancement and to bridging the "digital divide" by providing all Fijians with the necessary tools to succeed in a dynamic 21st century economy.

The iVolavosa App (application) can be downloaded from Google Play Store for Samsung phones and will be available for Apple iPhones in the near future.

The print version of the dic-

## PM: Make Fiji safe, productive

ISAAC LAL

**P**RIME Minister Voreqe Bainimarama is urging all Fijians to work towards making Fiji a safer place to live and an inclusive society for all.

He made the comments while officiating at the Ram Leela show at Tuva, Nadroga, recently where he urged Fijians who were present to put in extra effort in making Fiji the best place to live in.

"We must continue our work to make Fiji a better, safer and more inclusive nation. We must continue the sound financial management and planning that has carried our economy to such success and we must continue opening doors of opportunity for our young people, through free education, subsidised bus fares for school children, and record funding towards scholarship programmes," he said.

"We must continue our work to create a more knowledge-based society, one that rewards on the basis of merit, and merit alone and we must continue to hold our great belief in what this nation can accomplish, as we strive to make every year an even better year to be a Fijian."

Speaking at the role play of the life of the Hindu God Rama, the Fijian Head of Government says that Fiji was blessed to have a variety of cultures, something which was unique.

"We are lucky to call home a nation so rich in different cultures and religions and I am especially grateful that in Fijian society we so openly share in the traditions and celebrations of our fellow Fijians, as we do so today in welcoming the Ram Leela Festival," he said.

"While it has not always been an easy journey, today, that diversity is our nation's greatest strength and our unity has emerged as the foundation for the great progress we've made for Fiji over the past decade."

He added that the story of Lord Ram was a story of teamwork, unity and camaraderie.

These values, he says, have built the Fiji we know and love today, values that bond us together in our great jour-



## India gives \$2m grant

PRIME Minister and Sugar Voreqe Bainimarama received a grant of nearly \$2.2million from the Government of India as a show of confidence in Fiji's sugarcane industry reforms.

The grant has been earmarked for the purchase of new cane farming machines and equipment.

The Indian High Commissioner to Fiji, Vishvas Sapkal, presented Prime Minister with a cheque at the Office of the Prime Minister in Suva.

Prime Minister Bainimarama, in thanking the Indian Government for the grant, said it was reflective of the strong relations shared between the two countries, and of India's confidence in the Fijian Government's reforms and the overall direction of Fiji's sugarcane industry.

"All the machines that Fiji purchases through this grant will help our cane farmers become more efficient, and in effect, better adapt to a changing economy and climate," Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

"This grant is about more than just machinery and more than just dollars and cents. It is a sign that the reform programme that we are carrying out within the Fijian sugarcane industry is attracting support from the international community, and that it is worth investing in. The future is bright for Fiji's sugarcane industry, and this grant is proof."

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# \$1.32m grant to improve drainage

PRIYANKA LAL

A GRANT by the Government of \$1.32million to 11 municipal councils will ensure drainage maintenance works are carried out within town boundaries.

This follows the signing of Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) between the Ministry of Waterways and 11 municipal councils in Suva last week.

While speaking at the signing, Minister for Waterways Dr Mahendra Reddy said the Government was committed to addressing drainage issues within towns and cities.

"These grant funds are shared among 11 town and city councils for maintenance of drainage activities as per submissions from municipal councils and clearance by the Ministry of Local Government," Minister Reddy said.

### Grant disbursement to the municipal councils:

Nasinu Town Council	-\$476,000
Nausori Town Council	-\$80,847
Sigatoka Town Council	-\$32,201
Nadi Town Council	-\$352,000
Lautoka City Council	-\$40,000
Ba Town Council	\$32,300
Tavua Town Council	-\$12,290
Rakiraki Town Council	-\$212,000
Labasa Town Council	-\$48,400
Savusavu Town Council	\$21,954.11
Levuka Town Council	\$15,000

quittal reports from respective municipal councils".

"The municipal councils must utilise the grant as efficiently and effectively as possible and must take action to improve its efficiency and effectiveness as required by the Government," he added.

Nasinu Town Council chief executive officer Lute Berends said while they would carry out work on 24 drainage projects, priority would be given to Nadawa and Nadera areas.

"We have already tendered the works, and now we are in the process of selecting the contractors. When we have the right mix of contractors, we will start the works. Low-lying areas of Nadawa and Nadera will be a major focus. We have projects in all seven wards," Mr Berends said.

The council was expected to begin works in February.



Minister for Local Government, Housing, Environment, Infrastructure and Transport Parveen Kumar during the handing over of new ambulances to NFA at the Suva Fire Station at Walu Bay, Suva.

## Ambulances boost fire services

PRIYANKA LAL

THE Fijian Government remains committed to fully funding the operational expenses for the National Fire Authority's (NFA) ambulance services with the provision of \$1.6million.

Minister for Local Government, Housing, Environment, Infrastructure and Transport Parveen Kumar highlighted this at the recent handing over

of three new Government-funded ambulances to the NFA at the Suva Fire Station at Walu Bay.

The three new ambulances will boost NFA's capacity to effectively respond to fire and emergency incidents.

The ambulances, purchased from Vision Motors, were manufactured in China at a total cost of \$269,400.

Equipped with the basic essential ambulance apparatus,

two of the new ambulances would be stationed at the Korolevu and Korovou fire stations while one would be operating from the Suva Fire Station to cater for emergencies and road accidents.

Minister Kumar said the additional vehicles would increase the number of ambulances operated by the NFA to nine.

"Over the past three years, statistics have revealed that the NFA attended to 9611 ambu-

lance calls which averages at 3200 calls per year or 266 calls per month and it is pleasing to see the recognition and response of the people towards NFA's emergency ambulance service provision," Minister Kumar said.

There are six ambulances in NFA's fleet located in Nausori, Suva, Valelevu, Sigatoka, Ba and Labasa.





# Special sugarcane payment for growers

ISAAC LAL

**S**UGARCANE farmers in the cane belt areas of the country received a special cane payment of \$3.05 per tonne this week to bring the final cane payment for 2016 to \$82 per tonne.

The final cane payment for the 2016 season (including this top-up) will thus increase to \$82 per tonne compared with \$76.66 per tonne in the 2015 season.

Fiji Sugar Corporation chief executive officer Graham Clark said the special 2016 cane top-up payment was further support for cane farmers flowing from the ongoing commitment assured by Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama.

“The payment is in line with the announcement in October last year, of a final special cane payment to growers for the 2016 crop, to be paid out before the school term in January 2018,” he said.

“There will be no deductions from this special cane payment and all payments will be disbursed directly to growers, either by cheque or directly into their bank accounts.”



Sugarcane farmers in the cane belt areas of the country have received a special cane payment of \$3.05 per tonne last week to bring the final cane payment for 2016 to \$82 per tonne. Photo: ISAAC LAL

Mr Clark added that growers, who had existing crop liens with the Sugar Cane Growers’ Fund, would be paid (free of deductions) via the grower’s fund, who will make the deposits directly into the growers’ bank accounts.

“Support for cane farmers remains significant under all programmes initiated by Prime Minister Bainimarama through the Ministry of Sugar Industry,” Mr Clark said.

“It is particularly pleasing to note the

ongoing positive results becoming evident from the material increase in the area planted supported by the cane planting grant system, as well as the meaningful lift in fertiliser and weedicide application facilitated by these two additional support programs.”

He said repairs to cane access roads funded by the Ministry of Sugar Industry would be ongoing to ease cane deliveries from farmers in the 2018 season.

## Public discusses draft policy

**S**TAKEHOLDERS and members of the public recently had the opportunity to raise issues and suggestions on the Draft National Employment Policy at consultations in Nadi and Sigatoka.

Led by the Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations Jone Usamate, the draft policy will identify and implement ways on employment in Fiji in line with our National Development Plan Development Goal 8, which was “inclusive and sustainable economy and decent work for all”.

The interactive sessions with hoteliers, construction companies, youths and the vanua who were present allowed the ministry and the attendees to further gain knowledge on the policy which would form the nucleus for the Fijian workforce.

“This stakeholder awareness and consultation is critical in order to discuss issues, gaps, opportunities on the Policy before its endorsement and implementation,” Minister Usamate said.

“This policy allows the unemployed to choose freely their employment preferences, whether to join the formal employment service or self-employment service, foreign employment service or to become a volunteer including becoming a professional sportsperson.”

The policy was formulated as a result of robust analysis and consultations around the country and aims to enhance the dynamics of the labour market.

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Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama during the commissioning of Vunarewa community’s rural electrification project in Nadi. Photo: ISAAC LAL

# PM highlights Govt service standards

ISAAC LAL

**O**UR work isn’t only about making services available, it’s about making those services accessible and affordable, says Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama.

He was addressing a gathering at a rural Nadi community recently.

The Fijian Head of Government said this was a critical aspect of his Government’s reforms and vision for the Fi-

jian people.

“Our work isn’t only about making services available, it’s about making those services accessible and affordable,” he reiterated.

“The Government has a network of support in place to support Fijians in every aspect whether its education, rural development, infrastructure, social welfare among others.”

These networks, he said, allowed the country’s rural and maritime areas to become the

fabric for the country’s economic growth and shared resources and wealth.

“It has meant building a solid foundation of essential services, so that Fijians in these communities can go beyond worrying about finding water, keeping the lights on at night or staying connected with the rest of our nation,” Prime Minister Bainimarama said.

The Prime Minister was in Vunarewa to commission the community’s rural electrifi-

cation project for 19 homes, connecting them to the national grid.

“You’ve seen first-hand how beneficial electric power can be in raising standards of living. Now, that ease and reliability have made their way directly to your community and every member of your families can keep the lights on without having to rely on inefficient diesel generators or lantern lamps and your entire community can stay active

long after the sun has set, your children can study into the night and you can spend more time with your families and loved ones,” Prime Minister Bainimarama added.

The project was undertaken as part of a massive programme of rural electrification the Government has been funding throughout the country with a \$42.6million budgetary allocation to electrify homes in rural areas across Fiji.



# Launch for get ready campaign



Minister for Health and Medical Services Rosy Akbar, second from left, Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development, NDMO permanent secretary Meleti Bainimarama, right, with UNICEF and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community representatives during the launch of the Get Ready, Disasters Happen campaign.

THE Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, recently launched its “Get Ready, Disasters Happen” campaign.

The campaign was part of efforts to remind Fijians to be more vigilant in their emergency preparedness measures, especially during our festive season.

Officiating at the launch, Minister for Health Rosy Akbar said, “The Get Ready Disasters Happen or Get Ready Campaign is a multi-media campaign that had been ini-

tially developed and rolled out in 2013.

“It is extremely timely to have the Get Ready Disasters Happen campaign that targets disaster preparedness leading to an overall reduction in disaster-related casualties, illnesses and incidents of violence and abuse,” Minister Akbar said.

Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development, NDMO permanent secretary Meleti Bainimarama said, “I am excited because it is one of the largest and most comprehensive media campaign packages that has been put together in Fiji to encourage all Fijians

to prepare better and safely recover from disasters”.

Based on the three key disaster phases of Prepare, Stay Safe and Recover, Mr Bainimarama said the mass media package was not produced overnight and was made successful through technical and communication support from UNICEF and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

UNICEF Representative Sheldon Yett said, “Emergency preparedness is critical and we fully support the Government of Fiji in its efforts to ensure that all levels of society

– in every community, household and indeed – for every child in Fiji, are ready for any disaster”.

Mr Yett added that, “The Get Ready. Disasters Happen campaign was not just about creating awareness, but about strengthening community resilience and working together to stay safe in the event of any disaster”.

“SPC is proud to partner NDMO, UNICEF and the Ministry of Health in developing and launching the Get Ready Disasters Happen campaign,” SPC’s Geoscience,

Energy and Maritime Division, Pacific Community director Andrew Jones said.

“The Pacific is a region of severe and inevitable meteorological and geological hazards and so all Fijians need to take action towards preparing themselves for disasters. Preparation can be the difference in surviving a disaster.”

Mass media products of the Get Ready Disasters Happen campaign has been rolled out on television, radio, social media, and print media.

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## MICRO AND SMALL BUSINESS GRANT 2017-2018

### EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR NEW APPLICANTS

The Fijian Government is continuing its most successful initiative, the Micro and Small Business Grant Scheme. Micro and small businesses that are eligible for the grant will receive up to \$1000 to expand their existing business or to initiate new business activities.

Therefore, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism is calling on new applicants for the Micro and Small Business Grant Scheme, for the 2017-2018 financial year.

The Grant is to encourage small-scale economic activities and will be targeted at individuals who have particular skill sets, including but not limited to, handicrafts, poultry business, small-scale fruit, vegetable sellers, bee-keeping and livestock farming or any other innovative field.

The Grant will allow micro and small enterprises to boost their income capacity and improve the standards and quality of their products and services. It will also provide a solid platform to secure further funding from financial institutions and encourage equal business opportunities and growth.

The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, in partnership with the Fiji Development Bank, will provide the application form and the criteria from Monday, 4 December 2017, at the following locations:

1. Ministry of Industry, Trade & Tourism, Level 3, Civic Towers, Victoria Parade, Suva.
2. Fiji Development Bank, 360 Victoria Parade, Suva.
3. FDB Branches: Ba, Labasa, Lautoka, Nadi, Nausori, Rakiraki, Savusavu, Seaqaqa, Sigatoka, Nabouwalu and Taveuni.
4. Department of Co-operatives Business: Lami training centre, Sigatoka, Lautoka, Labasa and Savusavu.
5. NCSMED Offices: 82 Robertson Rd Suva, Vaileka House Rakiraki and Ground Floor Macuata House – NDP Office.
6. Office of the Provincial Administrator and District Office: Ba, Bua, Cakaudrove, Kadavu, Lau, Lomaiviti, Macuata, Nadroga, Naitasiri, Namosi, Ra, Rewa, Serua, Tailevu.
7. Application forms can also be downloaded from the website [www.mitt.gov.fj](http://www.mitt.gov.fj)

Completed application forms with all the requirements can be lodged at your nearest FDB Branch or at the Ministry’s Headquarters at Level 3, Civic Tower, Victoria Parade, Suva or mailed directly to the Ministry or FDB Head Office to:

The Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism  
P. O. Box 2118  
Government Buildings  
Suva

The Chief Executive Officer  
Fiji Development Bank  
P. O. Box 104  
Suva

Applications can also be submitted online via [www.yes.gov.fj](http://www.yes.gov.fj)  
Applications close on Friday, January 26, 2017. Past recipients of this grant need not apply, as the Ministry will only consider new applicants. Late applications will also not be considered.

Hon. Faiyaz S. Koya  
Minister for Industry, Trade, Tourism, Lands and Mineral Resources





# Eutelsat seals TV deal

**W**ALESi, the Government's Digital Television infrastructure management company, signed a multi-year, multi-transponder agreement with French company Eutelsat Communications later last year.


This will for the first time expand free-to-air television throughout all of Fiji.

The agreement covers C-band capacity on the EUTELSAT 172B satellite to complement terrestrial coverage of the Walesi digital television platform.

Eutelsat's new, all-electric satellite, now in full commercial service, will allow Walesi to provide digital free-to-air television via a Direct-to-Home (DTH) platform that will serve even the most remote deep rural and maritime areas of Fiji beyond range of terrestrial networks.

The DTH platform will initially provide access to six digital free-to-air channels—with capacity for the channel offering to further expand—that will be accessible via Set-Top Box.

"This universal satellite coverage will be transformational for Fiji in three ways: it will provide better access to information to all Fijians, especially those in remote deep rural and maritime communities; it will further Fiji's standing as an



## FACT BOX

### ABOUT EUTELSAT COMMUNICATIONS

Founded in 1977, Eutelsat Communications is one of the world's leading satellite operators. With a global fleet of satellites and associated ground infrastructure, Eutelsat enables clients across Video, Data, Government, Fixed and Mobile Broadband markets to communicate effectively to their customers, irrespective of their location. Over 6,600 television channels operated by leading media groups are broadcast by Eutelsat to one billion viewers equipped for DTH reception or connected to terrestrial networks. Headquartered in Paris, with offices and teleports around the globe, Eutelsat assembles 1000 men and women from 32 countries who are dedicated to delivering the highest quality of service. Eutelsat Communications is listed on the Euronext Paris Stock Exchange.

international telecommunications hub for the entire Pacific region; and it will fortify the climate resilience of our infrastructure," Attorney-General and Minister for Communications Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum said.

"This is just the beginning; going forward, our partnership with Eutelsat will allow the Government to fulfil our vision of providing video, data, and voice access to every community in Fiji."

Michel Azibert, Chief Commercial and

Development Officer of Eutelsat added: "This agreement reflects not only the value of our new EUTELSAT 172B satellite in complex geographies such as Fiji, but also the immediate impact of satellite broadcasting for nationwide coverage of digital TV. We are delighted to be working with Walesi to promote access to free-to-air television for all and to be part of the effort to bridge the digital divide."

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Director Communications and Walesi acting chief executive officer Shivnesh Prasad explains to Nakorokula villagers the various aspects of Walesi TV. Photo: ISAAC LAL

## Digital switch starts

NANISE NEIMILA

**F**IJI'S switch from analogue TV services to digital began last month after the Attorney-General and Minister for Communication, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum formally launched Walesi Digital Television Director Communications and Walesi acting chief executive officer Shivnesh Prasad said digital television services would be provided in two forms, through terres-

trial and satellite, to the most remote parts of Fiji.

"This universal satellite coverage will be transformational for Fiji in three ways: it will provide better access to information to all Fijians, especially those in remote deep rural and maritime communities; it will further enhance Fiji's standing as an international telecommunications hub for the entire Pacific region; and it will fortify the climate resilience of our infrastructure," Mr Prasad said.

"Fijians will now be able access multiple channels and will be able to watch channels of their choice, namely FBC, Fiji TV, Parliament and Hope TV."

Mr Prasad adds that Fijians

will have a wide choice in content, meaning that there will be eight free-to-air channels all around Fiji once they purchase a set top boxes at any registered outlet.

"We have registered outlets like Courts, Vinod Patel, Telecom Fiji Limited and Tappoo and the retail price for the set top box should not be more than \$99.95."

However, as part of Government assistance Fijians who qualify for the electricity subsidy, with less than \$30,000 household income, are eligible to a free set-top box.

There were many other factors, Mr Prasad said, that makes switching to Walesi digital television more viable especially in terms of ser-

vices and energy efficiency.

"Another way we are being energy efficient is by consolidating infrastructure on site. Walesi will host services from different broadcasters so they can turn off their towers," he explained.

Currently, all the three television stations operating in the country have their own towers and once they all switch to Walesi, Mr Prasad said this would mean instead of three generators, there will be only one used hence helping Fiji meet its commitment to sustainability.

Initially there will be 17 new transmitter sites across Fiji to ensure wider coverage.

Mr Prasad said some of the other benefits of going digital include the efficient use of



### WHAT IS WALESi?

Walesi is Fiji's digital television service. Walesi provides a platform that delivers high-quality digital content from Fiji's broadcasters directly to your home. Your new Walesi Set Top Box will bring you all your favourite channels, as well as new Walesi exclusive channels.

There are a couple of important things about Walesi you need to know:

1. To get started watching Walesi, you will need to buy an official Walesi Set Top Box (STB). If it's not an official Walesi STB, you will not be able to tune into our great line up of channels.

2. Walesi is broadcast over the UHF (ultra high frequency) spectrum. That means you need a television antenna that can pick up UHF frequencies.

The vast majority of indoor antennas will not work, even if they read "made for Digital TV." When in doubt, always look for the "Walesi Approved" sticker and ask your installer to present their "Walesi Approved Installer" card.

### WHY WALESi?

Watching your favourite programmes in sharp, clear digital quality is an unbeatable television experience.

Not only will your shows come to life with crystal clear visuals and rich sounds, Walesi gives viewers more choices, with double the number of free to air channels and no fees or contracts.

With Walesi, free to air television really means free. All you need is an affordable Walesi Set Top Box from an authorised Walesi retailer. Courts, Telecom Fiji Limited (TFL), Tappoos or Vinod Patel.

### BENEFITS OF WALESi

With Walesi, premier quality and a wider range of free to air channel selection are only the beginning.

The Walesi Set Top Box opens up a whole new world of digital video, allowing viewers to record live television so they can play back their favourite programmes whenever they want.





# Future brighter with Walesi TV



Attorney General and Minister for Communications Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum with children of Nakorokula after the launching of Walesi Digital TV. Photo: ISAAC LAL

ISAAC LAL

**F**OR many years Fijians living in rural and maritime areas were denied a chance to connect to the outside world.

However, the recently-launched Walesi Digital Television platform has now provided that much-needed impetus for Fijians in these areas to be on the same page as their countrymen in urban and peri-urban areas.

“What your government has done is we have empowered you and you children through the access of information channels accessible to Fijians, whether they live in Nadroga or Rotuma, or Kadavu or Lomaiviti or Lau – they will gain participation and knowledge through this platform,” the Attorney-General and Minister for Communications Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum said.

Walesi provides digital TV services through a set-top box which allows Fijians in all communities to access eight (free-to-air) television channels with crystal clear sound and picture quality.

“My children last saw television in Lautoka five years ago and now we are able to provide them that small leg-up to further their knowledge through the television,” Nakorokula, Nadroga farmer Rakesh Kumar said.

“We never had television in this part of the mainland and it was extremely hard for our children because they were missing out on a lot of educational programmes.”

The Kumar family moved to a farming community just on the outskirts of Nakorokula Village after leasing some land in 2012.

“I used to live in Lautoka and everything was normal. However, I loved toiling the land and thus the reason we moved here. I realised that no channels were accessible here. However, after the setting up of my Walesi set-top box, I am now able to provide my chil-



Director Communication and Walesi acting chief executive officer Shivnesh Prasad (right) says Walesi satellites would be used to provide digital TV services to the most remote parts of Fiji. dren the same services that children in Nadi, Suva, Nausori or any other areas in Fiji have access to.”

The A-G, while launching Walesi at Koroivolu Park in Nadi, said the platform would ensure every Fijian had access to information and stayed informed about national news.

The free-to-air channels include FBC, FBC 2, FBC Plus, Fiji TV, Channel 2, Mai TV, Hope Channel and the Parliament channel.

“This universal satellite coverage will be transformational for Fiji in three ways: it will provide better access to information to all Fijians, especially those in remote deep rural and maritime communities; it will further Fiji’s standing as an international telecommunications hub for the entire Pacific region; and it will fortify the climate resilience of our infrastructure,” the A-G said.

“This is just the beginning; going forward, our partnership with Eutelsat will allow the Government to fulfil our vision of providing video, data, and voice access to every community in Fiji.”

“One of these new eight-channel television stations will specifically be

for educational purposes so that every child around Fiji can watch the very same programme at the same time and learn all the things that are being taught, together,” the A-G said.

He said additional help from the educational programmes would immensely help students.

“This means greater accessibility for schools in the remote areas. We want to launch educational programmes because as we said before there is a deterioration of the English language in Fiji,” the A-G said.

“So we want a student who may be in a remote school in Yasawa or up in Lau or up in the interior of Bukuya to be able to access these educational facilities and programmes just as a student attending school in Nadi.

“The idea is to provide what we call an equalising effect in our society and that is very important to all ordinary Fijian.

“Access to information is very important and indeed very powerful. Everybody in Fiji needs to be able to access news, needs to be able to access information and of course, needs to access entertainment too.

“With this number of channels that

will now be made available and in particular the Public Service Broadcast arrangement we have with FBC, we will be able to run educational programmes.

“We have people living in deep, rural Viti Levu, down in South of Lau, up in Cikobia, in Rotuma, in northern Yasawa’s who had to subscribe to get television before. This is now going to be a thing of the past with this new free to air television.”

Another Fijian who was also the beneficiary of the launch was Joseva Korovula of Nakorokula Village in Nadroga, who says their prayers have surely been finally answered.

“We have always felt like the forgotten children of Fiji, but the launch of Walesi TV in our village has changed everything,” Mr Korovula said.

“We have always travelled more than six kilometres to watch rugby matches and other important programmes, but the launch of Walesi has certainly allowed us to view these programmes from the push of a button at our homes.”

“Our women will be able to learn new cooking methods and other new things through the various programmes while our youth will be able to train the right way as many want to become professional rugby players so it is a blessing that Walesi was launched in our village.”

The A-G announced the special deal the Government was providing for those earning incomes from \$30,000 and below.

“If you fall in this range, you can take your electricity bill and go to any of the outlets that are offering these services of providing the set-top boxes and once they confirm your details, you can take one home for free.

“We want to make it available for everyone in Fiji.”





# Fiji eyes China trade

THE Fijian Government remains fully committed to developing new markets and building new trade relations by engaging with China.

Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism permanent secretary Shaheen Ali, speaking at the New Year's reception hosted by Trade Commission/Consulate General of Fiji in China, highlighted the major inroads made between Fiji-China relations - including trade.

More than 30 prominent Chinese businesses attended the reception, which included the Wanda Reign Hotel, Wyndham Silkroad (Fiji) Pte Investment Limited, distributors of Fijian beer and Pure Fiji beauty products.

Mr Ali said China had been and would always remain a friend of Fiji and the Fijian Trade Commission/Consulate

General in Shanghai had been dedicated to promoting bilateral trade, investment and tourism between the two countries.

"To continue and extend the momentum that has been created in 2017, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, in collaboration with the Trade Commission/Consulate General will redouble our efforts to bring in more Fijian made products and services to the Chinese market," he said.

Mr Ali acknowledged the dedication and efforts of the Trade Commissioner/ Consul-General Yolinda Chan and her team in creating awareness of the opportunities of doing business in Fiji.

"Key investments in sectors such as tourism, real estate development and manufacturing are due to the initiative of the Trade Commissioner and her

team. Their efforts of promoting the Fijian Made brand has contributed to the introduction of premium products such as beer, beauty products and bottled water, in the Chinese market," Mr Ali said.

He encouraged Chinese businesses to use the services of the Trade Commission/Consulate General and the Ministry.

"The office will provide trade and investment related advice and guide businesses with regards to the policies and procedures that are required to be followed in Fiji," he said.

Ms Chan thanked everyone for their continued support throughout the year and their interest in Fiji.

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## Form clusters, farmers urged

FARMERS in the Central Division have been reminded of the importance of partnering Government and forming farming clusters to develop their individual farms further.

Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management and Meteorological Services Inia Seruiratu highlighted the importance of working collaboratively as a cluster to farmers during his tour of the Central Division last week.

"Farming, like any other development, is a partnership. Therefore we need to work together in partnership. Government can bring the expertise to the farms and the technology and all that is needed to further the sector, but if it is being given to the wrong people who have the wrong attitude, nothing is going to move. So we need to work together in partnership," he said.

Minister Seruiratu said Government would continue its various assistance programs to farmers.

"We will continue to assist individuals, particularly those who are at the commercial and semi-commercial levels, but those at the lower end. We prefer to bring them together in groups rather than individually because we can provide machinery and technical assistance to the group as a whole, which will surely be felt by the individual farmer.

"Of course, we need to share knowledge and experience as well among ourselves and this is why we need to build up and strengthen farming clusters," he added.

Minister Seruiratu met members of the Vulagi Farmers cluster of Vulagi Estate in Tailevu and Nacokaika South, Central and North Side cluster and Hookers Subdivision cluster in Naitasiri and encouraged them to continue their partnership.

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Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism the permanent secretary Shaheen Ali, fourth from left, at a meeting with the Hong Kong-Fiji Chamber of Commerce.

## Success at Shanghai, HK missions

Trade and investment flows from Hong Kong to Fiji is set to increase and accelerate.

To ensure this Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism permanent secretary Shaheen Ali met members of Fiji-HK Chamber of Commerce, on December 30, 2017.

"The meeting with the Hong Kong-Fiji Chamber of Commerce was to progress trade and investment through further efforts and initiatives by the ministry and the chamber. Building on earlier trade missions, niche products such as Fijian beer and water have been introduced in the Hong Kong market while a Hong Kong based investor opened a noni tea factory in Suva recently," Mr Ali said.

"There are more plans to promote Fijian made products in the Hong Kong, during the 2018 Hong Kong Sevens tournament. There will be a display of high-end niche Fijian made products that at the tournament, among other things."

"Having a recognised Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong provides leverage to marketing Fiji and Fijian made products in the region. The members of the Chamber outlined some of the projects that they see potential for in Fiji," he added.

During the five-day mission, Mr Ali,



Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism the permanent secretary Shaheen Ali during the trade and investment mission to Shanghai and Hong Kong.

the Trade Commissioner/Consul-General and officials met Chinese business owners interested in doing business in Fiji.

These included big names such as Alibaba Group, Power China, Sinohydro Bureau 12 Co. Ltd.

"Power China, is a construction compa-

ny that will be undertaking the construction of Wyndham Silkroad Ark Hotel in Coral Coast, which is an estimated \$500million project. Power China has shown interest in investing in Fiji," PS Ali said.

The Fijian delegation visited the Shanghai Tax Free Zone, which was the desig-





प्रधान मंत्री वॉरेनो बईनिमरामा का हालही तूवा नन्डोन्गा में राम लीला समारोह के दौरान भव्य स्वागत हुआ। इस दौरान उन्होंने कहा कि हमारा देश धन्य है कि यहाँ अलग-अलग संस्कृति और धर्म के लोग रहते हैं।

## रामलीला कहानी है परिवार, दोस्ती और नेतागिरी की: प्रधान मंत्री

रोनल देव

प्रधान मंत्री वॉरेनो बईनिमरामा ने हालही तूवा नन्डोन्गा में राम लीला समारोह में भाग लिया।

राम लीला भगवान राम के जीवन पर आधारित नाटक है जहाँ लोग अलग-अलग किरदार निभाते हैं।

प्रधान मंत्री बईनिमरामा ने कहा कि हमारा देश धन्य है कि यहाँ अलग-अलग संस्कृति और धर्म के लोग रहते हैं जो एक अनोखी बात है और हमें खुशी है कि हम अपनी परम्परा और समारोह में अन्य फीजीवासियों को शामिल करते हैं।

उन्होंने कहा कि श्री राम की

कथा में साथ मिलकर काम करना, एकता और भाईचारा के मूल्यों ने ऐसे फीजी का निर्माण किया है जिसे हम सब जानते हैं और प्रेम करते हैं। यह ऐसे मूल्य है जिसने हम सबको साथ बाँध रखा है ताकि हम एक राष्ट्र के रूप में साथ मिलकर आगे बढ़ें। “हम नए साल में प्रवेश कर गए

हैं और ज़रूरी है कि हम 2018 में नए फीजी के निर्माण में साथ मिलकर खड़े हों। इस साल बाद में देश में आमचुनाव होगा और कुछ लोगों का सामना फिर होगा जो हमारे बीच विभाजन पैदा करने और हमें पीछे ले जाने की कोशिश करेंगे जैसे हमने पहले भी देखा है। मैं फिर माँग करता हूँ कि

हमें ऐसी सोच नहीं रखनी चाहिए जो हमें पीछे की ओर ले जाए तथा हमें गंदी राजनीति के बदले देश की प्रगति के बारे में सोचना चाहिए। हमें एक बार फिर देश की भलाई के लिए फीजीवासी होने के नाते एक दूसरे के प्रति अपनी ज़िम्मेदारी को समझना है,” प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा।

## फीजीवासी और बेहतर सेवा के हक़दार: प्रधान मंत्री

रोनल देव

प्रधान मंत्री, वॉरेनो बईनिमरामा ने हालही नए पुलिस अफ़्सरों को बताया कि फीजीवासी उनसे और बेहतर सेवा के हक़दार हैं।

हालही 137 नए पुलिस अफ़्सर, फोर्स में भर्ती हुए हैं जिनसे बातें करते हुए प्रधान मंत्री बईनिमरामा ने कहा कि एक पुलिस अफ़्सर होने के नाते उनकी ज़िम्मेदारी है कि वे देश में अपराध के खिलाफ लड़ाई में शामिल हों।

उन्होंने जोर दिया कि उनका काम न केवल समाज में अपराध को खत्म करना है बल्कि फोर्स के अन्दर जो अपने फायदे के लिए अपने पद का गलत इस्तेमाल कर रहे हैं उनके जुर्म को भी जड़ से उखाड़ कर फेंकना है। प्रधान मंत्री ने अफ़्सरों को याद दिलाया कि वे शान के साथ सेवा प्रदान करें और लोगों के लिए अच्छे नमूना बनें।

“फीजी पुलिस फोर्स में आपका काम आसान नहीं रहेगा। फोर्स में जिन लोगों ने काफी समय बिताया है वो बता सकेंगे कि आपको देश की सेवा में कई दिन और लम्बी रातें गुज़ारनी पड़ेगी। आप खतरे का सामना करेंगे। कभी-कभी आप बेकसूर फीजीवासी और उनके खतरे के बीच अपने आप को पाएँगे। ऐसे वक्त में आपको अपनी चिन्ता छोड़कर ऐसे लोगों की रक्षा करनी चाहिए जो अपनी सुरक्षा नहीं कर सकते क्योंकि इसी वजह से आपको बुलाया गया है,” प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा।



प्रधान मंत्री वॉरेनो बईनिमरामा, पुलिस कोन्सटबल 5645 कृष्णन कृष्णील मूर्ती को Commandment Book Prize का पुरस्कार देते हुए। उन्होंने नए अफ़्सरों को बताया कि फीजी पुलिस फोर्स में उनका काम आसान नहीं रहेगा।

## पिछले साल छः हजार से ज़्यादा घरों तक पहुँची बिजली की सेवा

रोनल देव

इंडस्ट्री, ट्रेड और टूरिज़्म मंत्रालय के पेमनन्ट सक्टेरी, जनाब शहीन अली का कहना है कि फीजीयन सरकार चीन के साथ बातचीत करके नए-नए बाज़ार का विकास तथा नया व्यवसायिक संबंध स्थापित करने के लिए पूरी तरह प्रतिबद्ध है। अपने भाषण में उन्होंने कहा कि चीन सदा से फीजी का दोस्त है। हालही शैंगहाई चीन में आयोजित नए साल के समारोह में जनाब अली मुख्य मेहमान थे जिसमें चीन के जाने-माने 30 से ज़्यादा व्यापार शामिल हुए थे।

उन्होंने कहा कि शैंगहाई में स्थित फीजी ट्रेड कमिशन/कोनसुलईट जेनरल दोनों देशों के बीच द्वि-पक्षीय संबंध, पूँजी, तथा टूरिज़्म को बढ़ावा दे रहा है।

“इंडस्ट्री, ट्रेड और टूरिज़्म मंत्रालय, फीजी ट्रेड कमिशन/कोनसुलईट जेनरल के साथ मिल कर फीजी में बनाने वाले उत्पादनों तथा सेवाओं को चीन के बाज़ार तक पहुँचाने के लिए दुगुना प्रयास कर रहा है,” जनाब अली ने कहा।

उन्होंने वहाँ के ट्रेड कमिशनर को धन्यवाद दिया जिन्होंने फीजी में बने उत्पादनों को बढ़ावा दिया और प्रोत्साहित किया जिससे फीजी का बीयर, खूबसूरती वाले उत्पादन तथा बोतल वाला पानी चीन के बाज़ार में पहुँचा।





# वाईनिबूका के लोगों के लिए बिजली वाली योजना

रोनल देव

सउवा (Sauva) सेटलमन्ट बुईन्दूना नौसोरी के निवासियों को अब डीज़ल जेनैरेटर्स और कॅरोसीन वाली बत्तियों का सहारा नहीं लेना पड़ेगा क्योंकि अब उनके घरों में बिजली की व्यवस्था हो गई है।

प्रधान मंत्री वॉरेन्गे बर्डनिमरामा ने ग्रामीण इलाकों में बिजली वाली इस योजना का विमोचन करते हुए कहा कि इस योजना

के सफलता पूर्वक पूरी होने से वहाँ के निवासी 2018 का स्वागत आराम, सुरक्षित और सुविधापूर्वक से कर सकेंगे।

\$119,000 लागत इस योजना से सेटलमन्ट में सत्ताईस (27) परिवारों को फायदा होगा।

“पिछले दस सालों से हमने सफलता के लिए एक रणनीति का पालन किया है जैसे कि संसाधनों में ज़्यादा पैसे लगाना, आम फीजीवासियों तक सेवाओं को और

बढ़ाना ताकि उन्हें भी देश के नागरिक, एक विद्यार्थी या माता-पिता होने के अपनी पूरी क्षमता का अहसास हो,” प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा।

उनके अनुसार हमारी आर्थिक सम्भावनाएँ इस तरह है जैसे पहले कभी नहीं था लेकिन यह सभी फीजीवासियों पर है कि वे इस मौके को पहचानें। ताकत हाथ में रहना बहुत बड़ा लाभ है जिससे आपको और अच्छा काम करने का मौका मिलता

है जिससे दैनिक जीवन में आप ज़्यादा से ज़्यादा सफलता हासिल करते हैं। इस मौके को हाथ से न जाने दें,” प्रधान मंत्री बर्डनिमरामा ने कहा।

उन्होंने यह भी माँग की कि लोगों को देश के विकास के लिए लगातार अपना योगदान देना चाहिए और साथ मिल कर ही फीजी को और उज्ज्वल भविष्य की ओर ले जाया जा सकता है।



प्रधान मंत्री, वॉरेन्गे बर्डनिमरामा अभी हाल में नवूदा सेटलमन्ट ताईलेवू में बिजली वाली एक योजना का विमोचन करते हुए कहा कि वहाँ के निवासियों की ज़िन्दगी काफी सुधरेगी तथा उन्हें अब कॅरोसीन वाली बत्तियाँ और डीज़ल जेनैरेटर्स पर निर्भर नहीं होना पड़ेगा तथा रात में पढ़ाई करते वक्त बच्चों की आँखों पर बुरा असर नहीं पड़ेगा।

## वाईनिबूका में बिजली वाली योजना

रोनल देव

वाईनिबूका में पाँच करो और तीन सेटलमन्ट्स तक बिजली की सेवा पहुँचने से 289 परिवारों को ऐसी बिजली की सेवा पहुँच रही है जिस पर वे निर्भर रह सकते हैं। हालही इस योजना का विमोचन करते हुए प्रधान मंत्री, वॉरेन्गे बर्डनिमरामा ने कहा कि नसाउतोका, मलाम्बी, नवाईदोवातू, नम्बुवा, नैगिया कोरो और सेटलमन्ट्स के निवासियों के बच्चे अब सूरज डूबने के बाद

भी कई घण्टों तक पढ़ाई कर सकेंगे तथा कोरोवासी भी अपने चाहने वाले और परिवारों के साथ रात को और समय बीता सकेंगे। बत्तियाँ जलाने के लिए उन्हें डीज़ल जेनैरेटर्स और कॅरोसीन वाली बत्तियों का सहारा नहीं लेना पड़ेगा।

उन्होंने कहा कि इस योजना में \$1.7 मिलियन डोलर का खर्च हुआ है जिससे उन्हें अब चौबीसों घण्टें तथा सप्ताह के सातों दिन बिजली मिलेगी। उनके अनुसार सरकार द्वारा कोरोवउ से राकीराकी के बीच बिजली की

व्यवस्था करने वाले विकास का यह छोटा सा हिस्सा है।

पिछले साल सरकार ने देश भर में 6000 से ज़्यादा घरों में बिजली की व्यवस्था करने के लिए \$42.6 मिलियन अलग किया है।

प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा कि यह योजना उस दूरदर्शिता का हिस्सा है जहाँ सरकार ग्रामीण इलाकों तक ऐसी सेवाएँ पहुँचाना चाहती है ताकि वहाँ के आम फीजीवासी पानी, बिजली और देश में बाकी लोगों के संपर्क में रहने की चिन्ता छोड़ कर अपना जीवन बिताए।

## 2017 में 6,000 से ज़्यादा घरों तक बिजली की सेवा पहुँची

रोनल देव

प्रधान मंत्री, वॉरेन्गे बर्डनिमरामा का कहना है कि पिछले साल ग्रामीण इलाकों में छः हजार से ज़्यादा घरों तक बिजली की सेवा पहुँचाई गई जिसमें \$42.6 मिलियन का खर्च हुआ है।

प्रधान मंत्री ने उन फीजीवासियों को Fiji Electricity Authority के किसी भी दफ्तर जाकर अज़ी लगाने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया है जो rural electrification कार्यक्रम से फायदा उठाने के योग्य हैं।

“मेरी सरकार उन परिवारों की सहायता कर रही है जो एक साल में \$30,000 से कम कमाते हैं या एक महीने में 100 किलोवट्स या उससे कम बिजली इस्तेमाल करते हैं। इन परिवारों को बिजली के बिल पर पचास प्रतिशत की छूट मिल सकती है,” प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा।

उनके अनुसार हमे फीजी को प्रगति के रास्ते पर हमेशा रखने के साथ-साथ हर शहर, नगर और समाज के विकास पर नज़र रखनी चाहिए।

प्रधान मंत्री बर्डनिमरामा ने हालही बर्डनिम्बूका में पाँच करो और तीन सेटलमन्ट्स, सउवा सेटलमन्ट बुईन्दूना नौसोरी के सत्ताईस (27) परिवार के अलावा नान्दी के एक सेटलमन्ट वुनारेवा के उन्नीस (19) परिवार के लिए बिजली वाली योजनाओं का विमोचन किया।

पिछले साल सरकार ने देश भर में 6000 से ज़्यादा घरों में बिजली की व्यवस्था की।





# ग्रामीन इलाकों में वालेसी की सेवाएं

रोनल देव

पिछले कई सालों से ग्रामीन और बाहरी द्वीपों में रहने वालों को बाहरी दुनिया से संपर्क करने का मौका नहीं दिया गया था लेकिन हालही वालेसी डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म के विमोचन के बाद अब यह सम्भव हुआ है कि इन इलाकों के फीजीवासियों को भी उसी तरह की सेवा मिले जो शहर और आस-पास के निवासियों को मिलती है।

अटोनी जेनरल तथा कोमुनिकईशन्स मंत्री अईयाज़ सैयद खैयुम ने कहा कि सरकार ने फीजीवासियों और उनके बच्चों को समर्थ बनाया है कि वे देश

में चाहे कहीं भी नन्ड्रोन्गा या रोतुमा, कन्दावू, लोमाईविति या लाउ में रहते हो इस माध्यम से जानकारी हासिल कर सकते हैं।

वालेसी एक सेट-टोप बॉक्स है जिसके ज़रिय सभी समाज में फीजीवासी आठ (free-to-air) टेलिविज़न चैनल्स का मज़ा ले सकेंगे जिसके साउन्ड और पिक्चर की कोलिटी बहुत साफ है।

नाकोरोकूला नन्ड्रोन्गा के एक किसान राकेश कुमार का कहना है कि उनके बच्चों ने पाँच साल पहले आखरी बार टेलिविज़न देखा था लेकिन अब उनको टेलिविज़न के द्वारा अपना ज्ञान बढ़ाने का मौका मिला है। कुमार



कोमुनिकईशन्स मंत्री अईयाज़ सैयद खैयुम ने कहा कि सरकार ने फीजीवासियों और उनके बच्चों को समर्थ बनाया है कि वे देश में चाहे कहीं भी रहते हो वालेसी डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से जानकारी हासिल कर सकते हैं।

का परिवार 2012 में लौतोका छोड़कर नन्ड्रोन्गा में ज़मीन लीस पर लेकर वहीं बस गया। उन्हें अहसास हुआ कि वहाँ टी.वी. का कोई भी चैनल नहीं पकड़ता था लेकिन अब वालेसी सेटअप बॉक्स के ज़रिए उनके बच्चे उसी तरह की सेवा से लाभ उठा रहे हैं जो नान्दी, सूवा, नउसोरी या देश में कहीं और बच्चे उठाते हैं। जनाब अईयाज़ सैयद खैयुम

का कहना कि टेलिविज़न पर दिखाई जाने वाले शिक्षा कार्य कम से बच्चों को बहुत फायदा होगा

“हम कुछ शिक्षा कार्यक्रमों को लौन्च करना चाहते हैं क्योंकि जैसा हमने पहले कहा था, देश में अंग्रेज़ी भाषा की हालत बहुत बिगड़ गई है, ” जनाब सैयद खैयुम ने कहा। उनके अनुसार जिन लोगों की सालाना आमदनी

30,000 डॉलर से कम है वो सेट अप बॉक्स मुफ्त में घर लेजा सकते हैं लेकिन इसके लिए पहले उन्हें अपने बिजली का बिल सेट अप बॉक्स बेचने वाली दुकान लेजाना होगा जहाँ उनसे उनकी सारी जानकारी ली जाएगी। हम इसे फीजी में सभी के उपलब्ध कराना चाहते हैं।

## छोटा और सूक्ष्म व्यापार के लिए 2017-2018 ग्रान्ट नए आवेदकों के लिए रूचि की अभिव्यक्ति

फीजीयन सरकार अपनी सबसे सफल सुविधा “छोटा और सूक्ष्म व्यापार के लिए ग्रान्ट” को जारी रखे हुई है।

जो सूक्ष्म और छोटे व्यापार इस ग्रान्ट के हकदार होंगे, उनको अपना वर्तमान व्यापार बढ़ाने या नया व्यापार शुरू करने के लिए एक हजार डॉलर तक ग्रान्ट मिल सकता है।

इसलिए इंडस्ट्री, ट्रेड और टूरिज़्म मंत्रालय, 2017-2018 सूक्ष्म और छोटे व्यापार वाले ग्रान्ट के लिए नए आवेदकों (applicants) से अर्ज़ी की मांग कर रहा है। यह ग्रान्ट छोटे स्तर की आर्थिक गतिविधियों को प्रोत्साहित करता है और उन लोगों को लक्षित करता है जिनके पास कोई खास हुनर है जिनमें हैंडिकाफ्ट, मुर्गी पालन व्यवसाय, छोटे स्तर के फल और शाक-सब्ज़ी बेचने वाले, मधु-मक्खी पालन व्यवसाय और पशु पालन व्यवसाय तथा अन्य प्रगतिशील क्षेत्र शामिल हैं।

इस ग्रान्ट के द्वारा सूक्ष्म और छोटे व्यापार अपनी आमदनी बढ़ाने के अलावा अपने उत्पादों और सेवाओं के स्तर को और ऊँचाईयों तक ले जा सकेंगे। यह वित्तीय संस्थानों से अधिक धन सुरक्षित करने के लिए एक ठोस मंच भी प्रदान करेगा और समान व्यवसायों के अवसरों और विकास को भी प्रोत्साहित करेगा।

इंडस्ट्री, ट्रेड और टूरिज़्म मंत्रालय फीजी डिवेलपमेंट बैंक के साथ मिल कर मंगलवार पाँच दिसम्बर 2017 से आवेदन पत्र (application form) और श्रेणी निम्न लिखित स्थानों पर प्रदान करेंगे:

1. इंडस्ट्री, ट्रेड और टूरिज़्म मंत्रालय (Ministry of Industry, Trade & Tourism), लेवल 3 (Level 3), सिविक टावर्स (Civic Towers), विक्टोरिया पैरेड (Victoria Parade), सूवा (Suva).
2. फीजी डिवेलपमेंट बैंक (Fiji Development Bank) की शाखाएँ: सूवा, वा, लम्बासा, लौतोका, नान्दी, नौसोरी, राकीराकी, सावूसावू, सिंगांगा, सिंगातोका, नम्बुउवालू और ताव्यूनी।
3. डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ कोर्पोरेटिव्स बिज़नेस: लामी टैनिंग सेंटर, सिंगातोका, लौतोका, लम्बासा और सावूसावू।
4. एन.सी.एस.एम.ई.डी (NCSMED) दफ्तर: 82 रोबर्टसन रोड सूवा, वाईलेका हाऊज़ राकीराकी और एन.डी.पी. के दफ्तर ग्राउन्ड फ्लोर मटुआता हाऊज़।
5. प्रोविंशल एडमिनिस्ट्रेटर के दफ्तर और डिस्ट्रिक्ट ऑफिस: वा, बूआ, दकाऊन्ड्रोवे, कन्दावू, लाऊ, लोमाईवीती, मटुआता, नड्रोंगा, नईतासीरी, नमोसी, रा, रेवा, सेरूआ और ताईलेवू।

6. आवेदन पत्र (Application Forms) को आप वेबसाइट [www.mitt.gov.fj](http://www.mitt.gov.fj) से डाऊनलोड कर सकते हैं।

ज़रूरी जानकारी के साथ भरे गए आवेदन पत्र को आप अपनी नज़दीकी एफ.डी.बी. की शाखा या लेवल 3, सिविक टावर, विक्टोरिया पैरेड, सूवा स्थित मंत्रालय के मुख्यालय या फिर नीचे लिखे गए पते पर सीधे मंत्रालय या एफ.डी.बी. के हेड ऑफिस पर डाक द्वारा भेज सकते हैं:

द पर्मनेन्ट सेक्रेटरी (The Permanent Secretary)  
द चीफ एक्ज़िक्यूटिव ऑफ़िसर  
मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ इंडस्ट्री, ट्रेड और टूरिज़्म  
(The Chief Executive Officer)  
(Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism)  
फीजी डिवेलपमेंट बैंक  
पी.ओ.बोक्स 2118  
(Fiji Development Bank)  
गवर्नमेंट बिल्डिंग्स (Government Buildings)  
पी.ओ.बोक्स 104  
सूवा  
सूवा

अर्ज़ी को आप ऑनलाइन [www.yes.gov.fj](http://www.yes.gov.fj) पर भी भेज सकते हैं। अर्ज़ियाँ पहली जनवरी 2018 से ही स्वीकार की जाएंगी।

अर्ज़ी भेजने की आखरी तारीख है शुक्रवार 2 फरवरी, 2018. जिन लोगों को पहले इस ग्रान्ट से लाभ हो चुका है वे दोबारा इस ग्रान्ट के लिए अर्ज़ी न लगाएँ क्योंकि मंत्रालय केवल नई अर्ज़ियों पर ही गौर करेगा। देर से भेजी गई अर्ज़ियाँ स्वीकार नहीं की जाएंगी।

माननीय फईयाज़ एस. कोया  
इंडस्ट्री, ट्रेड, टूरिज़्म, लैंड्स और मिनरल रिसोर्सज़ मंत्री





वह सब कुछ जो फीजी में हो रहा है

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# ग्रामीन इलाकों में बढ़ी वालेसी की सेवाएं

कोमुनिकईशन्स मंत्री तथा अटोनी जेनरल जनाव अईयाज़ सैयद खैयुम ने खुलासा किया कि सरकार, टेलिविज़न चैनल्स पर कुछ शिक्षा कार्यक्रमों को लौन्च करना चाहती है क्योंकि जैसा वो कहते आए हैं, देश में अंग्रेज़ी भाषा की हालत बहुत बिगड़ गई है।



## प्रधानमंत्री ने ताईलेवू में किया उजाला

प्रधानमंत्री, वॉरेन्गे बर्डिनमरामा का कहना है कि नसाउतोका, मलाम्बी, नवाई दोवातू, नम्बउवा, नँगिया कोरो और सेटलमन्ट्स के निवासियों के बच्चों अब सूरज डूबने के बाद भी कई घण्टों तक पढ़ाई कर सकेंगे तथा कोरोवासी भी अपने चाहने वाले और परिवारों के साथ रात को और समय बीता सकेंगे। बत्तियाँ जलाने के लिए उन्हें डीज़ल जेनरेटर्स और केरोसीन वाली बत्तियों का सहारा नहीं लेना पड़ेगा।







## राष्ट्रपति का दौरा

राष्ट्रपति, चियोची कोनरोते ने हालही कुछ अनाथ और वृद्ध आश्रमों का दौरा किया तथा वहाँ रह रहे बच्चों और बुर्जुगों के साथ कीसमस मनाया। उन्होंने कहा कि हम फीजीवासी कितने खुशकीस्मत है कि हमारे पास इतने खूबसूरत बच्चे है तथा उन्होंने बुर्जुगों को भी देश में योगदान देने के लिए धन्यवाद दिया।



## राम लीला में स्वागत

हालही प्रधानमंत्री वॉरेनो बईनिमरामा का तूवा नन्ड्रोन्गा में राम लीला समारोह में भव्य स्वागत किया गया। श्री बईनिमरामा ने कहा कि देश धन्य है कि यहाँ अलग-अलग संस्कृति और धर्म के लोग रहते है तथा हमें खुशी है कि हम अपनी परम्परा और समारोह में अन्य फीजीवासियों को शामिल करते हैं।







# प्रधानमंत्री देश को भविष्य में लेजाने के लिए तैयार

रोनल देव

प्रधानमंत्री, वोरेंगो बर्डनिमरामा का कहना है कि बीते साल 2017 में फीजी ने कई बड़ी उम्मीदों पर सफलता हासिल की है जिससे देश के इतिहास में निशान छोड़कर गया है।

अपने नए साल के संदेश में उन्होंने कहा कि फीजी ने यह मुकाम हासिल किया क्यों कि हम अपनी चुनौतियों से पीछे नहीं हटे

तथा अपनी कीस्मत बड़े और विकसित देशों के हाथ नहीं सौंपा।

“हमने एक बार फिर दिखाया कि एक छोटा सा देश पूरी दुनिया को कदम उठाने के लिए अगुवाई कर सकता है। हम वो सारे कार्यक्रम और सुविधाएँ इस साल भी जारी रखेंगे जैसे कि मुफ्त शिक्षा, नए संसाधन, साफ पानी, बिजली की सेवा, वार्तालाप के साधन, सरकारी सुविधाएँ, खुद व्यापार करने वालों की सहायता, ज़रूरतमंद जैसे

कि महिलाएँ, युवकों, विकलांग तथा बाहरी और ग्रामीन इलाकों के लोगों की आर्थिक हालत सुधारना,” प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा।

उनके अनुसार पिछले साल उन्होंने देखा कि लोगों का देश के प्रति प्रेम तथा एक दुसरे का आदर सम्मान कितना था। प्रधानमंत्री ने लोगों से माँग की कि वे ज़रूरतमंदों की सहायता करने का हर सम्भव प्रयास करें।

## नान्दी, लौतोका की पानी सप्लाई में होंगी बाधाएँ

रोनल देव

नगाँदो ट्रीटमन्ट प्लान्ट में भारी सुधारकार्य करने की वजह से अगले महीने नान्दी के अधिकांश इलाके और लौतोका इलाकों की पानी सप्लाई में बाधाएँ पहुँचेंगी।

लौतोका शहर और बाहर वाले इलाके जहाँ म्बुआ-म्बुआ और सारू वोटा ट्रीटमन्ट प्लान्ट द्वारा पानी सप्लाई होता

है वहाँ पानी की सप्लाई में बाधाएँ नहीं पहुँचेंगी जबकि नान्दी और लौतोका के अन्य इलाकों पर शनिवार तीसरे फरवरी की सुबह एक बजे से लेकर छः फरवरी की शाम पाँच बजे तक असर पड़ेगा।

सुधारकार्य में शामिल है, नगाँदो वोटा ट्रीटमन्ट प्लान्ट में बिगड़े हुए कोन्ट्रोल वाल्व को बदलना तथा प्लान्ट तक जाने वाले मुख्य ट्रान्समिशन पाईप पर मरम्मत करना। ऐसी उम्मीद है कि काम समाप्त होने के बाद धीरे-धीरे पानी की सप्लाई समान्य की जाएँगी। मरम्मत के बाद पानी सप्लाई पूरी तरह समान्य होने में तीन दिन तक लग सकते हैं तथा मंगलवार छः फरवरी तक सब कुछ समान्य होने की आशा है।

वोटा अथोरिटी ऑफ फीजी ने सलाह दी है कि लोगों को अपने दैनिक जीवन के इस्तेमाल जैसे कि पीने के लिए भोजन बनाने, नहाने, कपड़े-बर्तन वगैरह धोने के लिए पानी इकट्ठा करके रखना चाहिए। अगर पानी खत्म हो गए तो वोटा अथोरिटी कुछ इलाकों में 5,000 और 10,000 लीटर वोटा टेन्क्स बिठाएँगी जहाँ से लोग पानी भरके ले जा सकेंगे।

वोटा अथोरिटी अपने घरेलू ग्राहकों की माँग पर भी पानी बाँटेगी। अथोरिटी इसका ध्यान रखेगी कि मुख्य सेवाएँ जैसे कि अस्पताल, एर्यापोट, स्कूल तथा होटल्स पर पानी सप्लाई का गम्भीर असर न पड़े इसलिए 100 एक सौ से ज़्यादा टर्कों को पानी बाँटने के लिए रखा जाएगा।

इसलिए अथोरिटी, अपने ग्राहकों से माँग कर रही है कि वे काम शुरू होने से पहले पर्याप्त पानी भरकर रख ले और जब पानी की सप्लाई बन्द हो तो पानी बचाकर इस्तेमाल करें। वोटा अथोरिटी को ग्राहकों को होने वाले किसी भी असुविधा के लिए खेद है।



ग्रामीन इलाकों में लोगों की जिन्दगी सुधारने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री वोरेंगो बर्डनिमरामा ने बिजली वाली कुछ योजनाओं का विमोचन किया है।

## प्रधानमंत्री ने वुनारेवा बिजली वाली योजना का किया विमोचन

रोनल देव

नान्दी के एक सेटलमन्ट वुनारेवा के उन्नीस 19 परिवारों की खुशियों का ठिकाना न रहा जब प्रधानमंत्री वोरेंगो बर्डनिमरामा ने वहाँ बिजली वाली योजना का विमोचन किया।

बिजली की व्यवस्था होने से वहाँ के निवासियों को अब डीज़ल जेनरेटर्स और कंरोसीन वाली बत्तियों का साहारा नहीं लेना पड़ेगा। श्री बर्डनिमरामा ने कहा कि हालांकि यह योजना उतनी बड़ी नहीं है फिर भी इस तरह की योजनाओं से फीजीवासियों के

जीवन पर अच्छा असर पड़ेगा।

”जब हम बिजली वाली ऐसी छोटी योजनाओं में पुँजी लगाते हैं तो हम फीजीवासियों को अहसास दिलाते हैं कि एक राष्ट्र होने के नाते फीजी की काबिलियत क्या है। हालांकि हमारे पास बड़ी-बड़ी योजनाएँ जैसे कि रास्ते, पुल,

जेटी तथा नान्दी में नए एयरपोर्ट की योजना है लेकिन छोटी-छोटी योजनाओं से लोगों के जीवन पर अच्छा असर पड़ेगा।

ग्रामीन इलाकों में लोगों की जिन्दगी सुधारने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री ने इस तरह की कई योजनाओं का विमोचन किया है।

## एम्बुलन्स की माँगें बढ़ी

रोनल देव

लौकल गवमन्ट, संसाधन और यातायात मंत्री परवीन बाला देश में एम्बुलन्स की माँग बहुत ज़्यादा बढ़ गई है इसलिए उन्हें हालही तीन नए एम्बुलन्स खरीदने पड़े हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि एक साल में एम्बुलन्स के लिए नेशनल फाया अथोरिटी को 3,200 कोल्स मिलते हैं जो कि लगभग 266 कोल्स प्रति महीना है।

“एन.एफ.ए ने पिछले तीन सालों में एम्बुलन्स के लिए 9,611 कोल्स का जवाब दिया है। नेशनल फाया

अथोरिटी, आग और इमेजेन्सी सेवा प्रदान करने में मुख्य भूमिका निभाते हैं इसलिए सरकार ने तीन नए एम्बुलन्स खरीदने के लिए 269,400 डॉलर की पुँजी लगाई है,” मंत्री ने कहा।

मंत्री के अनुसार नेशनल फाया अथोरिटी के पास कुल नौ एम्बुलन्स हो गए हैं जो कि नउसोरी, सूवा, वालेलेवू, सिंगातोका, म्वा तथा लम्बासा के फाया स्टेशन में हैं। एन.एफ.ए. को मिले यह तीन नए एम्बुलन्स, कोरोलेवू सिंगातोका, कोरोवउ तथा सूवा के लिए हैं जिनके पास दो-दो एम्बुलन्स हो जाएँगे।



मंत्री श्री परवीन बाला नए एम्बुलन्स की सुविधाओं को जाँच रहे हैं।





# 2017 जनगणना परिणाम

रोनल देव

पिछले दस सालों में फीजी की आबादी 7.7 प्रतिशत से उपर होकर 884,887 हो गई है। फीजी के आँकड़ा विभाग द्वारा 2017 जनगणना पर विस्तार से निकाले गए परिणाम के अनुसार फीजी की आबादी 47,616 से बढ़ी है जो 2007 में 837,271 थी। अवसतम एक साल में देश की आबादी 0.6 प्रतिशत से बढ़ी क्यों कि कम मात्रा में बच्चे पैदा हुए तथा लोग

देश छोड़कर गए। देश में पचास प्रतिशत लोगों की उम्र 27.5 साल है जबकि फीजी में 69 प्रतिशत लोगों की उम्र 40 चालिस साल से कम है। फीजी में पुरुषों की संख्या थोड़ी ज़्यादा है जोकि 50.7 प्रतिशत है जबकि महिलाओं की संख्या 49.3 प्रतिशत है। हालांकि पुरुषों की संख्या ज़्यादा है लेकिन महिलाओं की उम्र लम्बी पाई गई है। ज़्यादा पुरुष 59 साल से कम उम्र के है जबकि 60 साल से उपर महिलाओं की संख्या ज़्यादा पाई गई है।

देश में 55.9 प्रतिशत लोग शहरी इलाकों में रहते है जिसमें 2007 के मिलान में 50.7 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई है। शहरी इलाकों में कुल 494,252 लोग रहते है जिसमें 2007 के मिलान में 69,406 की वृद्धि हुई है। 2007 के मिलान में ग्रामीन इलाकों में रहने वाले लोगों की संख्या 49.3 प्रतिशत से कम हुई है जबकि 44.1 प्रतिशत लोग ग्रामीन इलाकों में रहते है। ग्रामीन इलाकों में लोगों की संख्या 390,635 है जिसमें 2007 के मिलान में 5.3% प्रतिशत या 21,790 की गिरावट

हुई। बेरोज़गारी का दर बीस सालों में सबसे कम जो गिरकर 4.5 प्रतिशत हो गया है। 2015-2016 Employment and Unemployment Survey के थ.थ प्रतिशत अनुमान से भी कम है। देश में पंद्रह साल से ज़्यादा मज़दूरों की संख्या थ.थ प्रतिशत है जबकि इसी गर्व के 62.7 प्रतिशत मज़दूर जोकि 392,148 लोग है के पास बेन्क अकाउन्ट है। तीन साल से ज़्यादा उम्र के 13.7 प्रतिशत लोग किसी न किसी तरह से विकलांग है।

## आप का विचार स्कूली छुट्टियों के दौरान आपने बच्चों के साथ मिलकर समय का अच्छा प्रयोग कैसे किया?

आशिका विकाश, 36, नौसोरी

लोग जबकि कीसमस और नए साल के लिए खरीदबीन कर रहे थे तो ऐसे में मैंने अपने बच्चों के लिए स्कूली किताब और अन्य सामान खरीदा ताकि मैं भीड़भाड़ से बच सकूँ।



अतीश कुमार, 47, नसीनू

मैंने इस बात का ध्यान रखा कि मेरे बच्चे खेलकूद के साथ-साथ अगली कक्षा की पढ़ाई पर भी गौर करें ताकि स्कूल खुलने पर उन्हें पढ़ाई में कोई परेशानी न हो।



नलीनी देवी, 47, बुई न्दूना

मैंने कुछ सप्ताह पहले ही अपने बच्चों के लिए स्कूली युनिफॉर्म बनवा लिए ताकि अंतिम समय में हमें पछतावा न हो।



विनय चन्द, 25, लम्बासा

बच्चों को मैंने स्वीमिंग क्लासस के लिए भेजा ताकि आगे चलकर वे अपनी और दूसरी की रक्षा कर सकें।



सलेशनी नारायण, 37 नौसोरी

मेरे बच्चे अपने स्कूल के अन्य बच्चों के साथ कैम्पिंग पर गए थे जहाँ उन्होंने कई बातें सीखी जिससे वे मुश्किल समय का सामना कर सकते है।



स्मरण दिवस या रिमेम्ब्रन्स डे के दौरान सैनिकों द्वारा युद्ध के दौरान अपने जीवन का बलिदान करने वाले सैनिकों को श्रद्धांजली अर्पित करते हुए।

## भारतीय सरकार ने फीजी के चीनी व्यवसायन की मदद की

रोनल देव

देश में गन्ने के उत्पादन को बढ़ाने के लिए हालही भारतीय सरकार ने फीजी सरकार को 2.2 मिलियन डोलर का ग्रांट दिया है जिससे गन्ने की खेती वाली मशीने और उपकरण खरीदे जाएंगे। प्रधानमंत्री और चीनी मंत्री, वॉरेन्गे बर्डनिमरामा को भारतीय हाई कमिशनर श्री विश्वास सपकल ने 2 million,172 thousand 576 dollars 35 cents का चेक दिया। उनके अनुसार इस ग्रांट से दिखता है कि अंतराष्ट्रीय समाज को फीजीयन सरकार द्वारा चीनी व्यवसाय पर किए जा रहे बदलाव तथा उसे सही दिशा में लेजाने पर कितना भरोसा है। प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि भारतीय सरकार को लगता है कि चीनी व्यवसाय में पैसे लगाने से पैसे बरबाद नहीं होंगे। प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि यह ग्रांट पक्का सुबुत है कि फीजी के चीनी व्यवसाय का भविष्य कितना उज्ज्वल है। उन्होंने भारतीय सरकार तथा प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र

मोदी को फीजी को लगातार सहारा देने के लिए धन्यवाद दिया।

“इस ग्रांट के द्वारा फीजी जितनी मशीने खरीदेगा से हमारे गन्ने के किसान बदल रही अर्थ-व्यवस्था तथा मौसम में बदलाव से वाकिफ हो जाएंगे” प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा।

उधर, श्री सपकल ने कहा कि भारत, फीजी को विकास सहयोग देता रहेगा।

“फीजी और भारत के बीच खास रिश्ता है तथा करीबी संबंध है। दोनों देश विकास कार्यवाई में साझेदार है और अपने कृषि क्षेत्र को बहुत महत्व देते है। भारत से एक टल यहाँ रेल नेटवोक विकास के लिए चीनी व्यवसाय से जुड़े लोगों के साथ मिलकर काम कर रहा था” श्री सपकल ने कहा।

शुगा मंत्रालय के पैमनन्ट सकेटरी, श्री योगेश करण ने कहा कि इस सहायता से काफी लम्बे समय के लिए गन्ने का उत्पादन बढ़ाया जाएगा। नई मशीने खरीदकर इन्हें पश्चिमी और उत्तरी विभाग में गन्ने के खेतों में इस्तेमाल किए जाएंगे।

## एफ.एस.सी ने की आखरी कई न पैमन्ट की घोषणा

रोनल देव

फीजी शुगा कौपेरेशन ने \$3.05 प्रति टन के हिसाब से आखरी कईन पैमन्ट की घोषणा की है जो किसानों को इसी शक्रवार को मिला। एफ.एस.सी का कहना है कि यह 2016 फसल का आखरी कईन पैमन्ट है।

इस आखरी \$3.05 प्रति टन के बाद कुल कई न पैमन्ट एयट पति टन हो जाएगा जबकि 2015 में यह \$76.66 प्रति टन था। एफ.एस.सी के अनुसार टज़घध का कईन टोप अप पैमन्ट, किसानों को और सहारा देता है जैसा कि प्रधानमंत्री और शुगा मंत्री, वॉरेन्गे बर्डनिमरामा ने आशवासन दिया था।

यह पैमन्ट उस घोषणा के आधार हुआ है जैसा कि पिछले साल अक्टुबर में घोषणा की गई थी कि नया स्कूल टर्म शुरू होने से पहले आखरी कईन पैमन्ट इसी महीने दिया जाएगा।

एफ.एस.सी का कहना है कि इस खास कईन पैमन्ट से कोई खर्च नहीं काटा जाएगा तथा ये पैसे सीधे किसानों को चेक द्वारा या उनके बेन्क अकाउन्ट में जमा किए जाएंगे।

# डयलाईट सैविंग आज खत्म हुई

रोनल देव

देशभर में डयलाईट सैविंग आज खत्म हुई है।

आपको याद से अपनी घड़ी एक घण्टा पीछे करनी है। डयलाईट सैविंग पिछले साल रविवार पाँच नवम्बर की सुबह

तीन बजे शुरू हुई थी। एम्प्लोएमन्ट मंत्री चोने उसामाते ने पहले कहा था कि डयलाईट सैविंग एक

ऐसी सुविधा है जिससे सभी फीजीवासियों को फायदा हो रहा है जिससे उन्हें मौका मिलता है कि वे शाम को ज़्यादा उजाला

वाले समय में कुछ कामकाज करें या किसी मनोरंजक कार्य कम में हिस्सा लें।



# फ़ीजी फ़ोकस

वाईनिबूका  
में बिजली  
वाली  
योजना पृष्ठ 18



एम्बुलन्स  
की मांगें  
बढ़ी पृष्ठ 22



चीनी सरकार की तीस 30 मिलियन डॉलर ग्रांट से स्टीन्सन और वातुवांगा पुल बनाए गए हैं जिनका उद्घाटन प्रधानमंत्री, वॉरेन्गे बर्डनिमरामा ने किया। इन पुलों के खुलने से ट्रैफिक कम होगा। उन्होंने कहा कि सूवा, नउसोरी तथा लामो में रास्तों को सुधारने, चौड़ा करने तथा राउन्डअवाउट्स पर काम करने के लिए 70 सत्तर मिलियन डॉलर निकाला गया है जहाँ देश की लगभग एक तिहाई आबादी रहती है।

## स्टीन्सन और वातुवांगा पुल खुले

रोनल देव

सूवा में दो मुख्य नए वातुवांगा और स्टीन्सन पुल औपचारिक रूप से खुल गए हैं तथा उम्मीद है कि इससे ट्रैफिक वाली समस्या काफी कम होगी। इन पुलों का औपचारिक उद्घाटन करते हुए प्रधानमंत्री, वॉरेन्गे बर्डनिमरामा ने कहा कि इन पुलों के खुलने से हजारों लोगों को राहत मिलेगी।

चीनी सरकार की तीस 30 मिलियन डॉलर ग्रांट से यह दोनों योजनाएँ पूरी

हुई हैं।

उनके अनुसार यह फीजी के लिए एक बहुत बड़ी जीत है क्योंकि हमारे देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था की हालत काफी अच्छी है तथा इसी आधार पर देश के लोगों के लिए बहुत कुछ किया जा सकता है। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार संसाधन इस तरह बनाने में पैसे लगा रही है जो सालों-साल तक चले। वे भविष्य के लिए सबकुछ बना रहे हैं और जल्दबाजी में कोई सुधार नहीं कर रहे हैं।

उनके अनुसार समुद्री आँधी विंस्टन के दौरान उन्होंने आसान रास्ता अपनाने का नतिजा देखा था जहाँ पहले स्कूल, घर और अन्य इमारतें बिना अच्छी योजना और उच्च-दर्ज की बनाई नहीं गई थी। प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि सरकार ने इन चुनौतियों पर काबू पा लिया है।

उनके अनुसार सूवा, नउसोरी तथा लामो में रास्तों को सुधारने, चौड़ा करने तथा राउन्डअवाउट्स पर काम करने के लिए 70 सत्तर मिलियन डॉलर निकाला गया

है जहाँ देश की लगभग एक तिहाई आबादी रहती है।

फुटपाथ बनाने के लिए 9.5 मिलियन डॉलर, वाईनिबोकासी, वूदी, नँदेरा, नन्दावा, दवुईलेवू तथा कालोकालो केसन्ट में स्ट्रीटलाइट लगाने के लिए 4.5 मिलियन डॉलर, जबकि देशभर में सोलह नाजुक पुलों को बदलने के लिए 31 मिलियन डॉलर दिया गया है जबकि बाकी 30 तीस पुलों को अगले पाँच सालों में बदला जाएगा।