

**Commodore J. V. Bainimarama, CF(Mil), OSt.J, MSD, jssc, psc**

**Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics, Public Service, Peoples Charter for Change and Progress, Information, iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry and Lands and Mineral Resources**

**SPEECH AT THE RFMF 02/13 PASSOUT PARADE**

**Force Training Group Thurs. 7th Nov, 2013**

**NASINU 1000 Hours**

**The Commanding Officer of the Force Training Group;**

**Parade Commander and the Training Team;**

**Invited Guests;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Bula Vinaka and Good Morning to You All.

I am indeed privileged to be invited as Chief Guest to a very special and memorable occasion where we gather to witness the Passing Out Parade of 218 young men into the RFMF.

First of all, I would like to thank the men on parade this morning, for a fine display of marching and arms drill.

I must commend you for the effort in the preparation of this Passing Out parade.

Three months ago, you walked into the training school as young men unsure of what lay ahead, but today, you will march out as proud soldiers ready to serve Fiji, its people and its interest. I would like to congratulate you for having successfully completed the period of training, for which to most of you would have been a challenging and yet very rewarding lifetime experience.

Indeed, today is the culmination of your successful completion of a rigid thirteen weeks program of vigorous training in classroom lectures, skills training and jungle exercises. Without doubt, the training you have gone through has instilled in you discipline, good behaviour, and obedience which are important to be demonstrated at all times. This will make a huge impact in your career within the RFMF to ensure that you carry out your tasks with your utmost ability.

After today, most of you will be posted to the Territorial Force Brigade where you will be expected to assist the Regular Force soldiers in carrying out any RFMF tasking locally and abroad.

This call comes with an enormous responsibility where you are expected to prepare yourselves and be ready for any call of duty at any given time. You are expected to be aware of our Nation's affairs and development and must learn to relate to this.

As you are aware, the RFMF has intensified its roles to the Nation since 2006. The RFMF has provided the Vision and the Will to move reforms, eradicate corruption, rebuild and reshape our Nation.

Let me, therefore, remind you that greatness in the RFMF is not measured in your years of service or the rank you attain, but will be measured by the sacrifice one is willing to make for the good of our Nation. As members of the RFMF, it is your duty to keep the oath of allegiance which you have affirmed to uphold at all times.

I am proud to say that today's Parade is unique as you are the first recruits to pass out under the new Fijian Constitution that was assented by His Excellency the President in September this year.

The 2013 Fijian Constitution enshrines principles and values that gives voice to our collective aspirations and guarantees political and social rights for individuals. This Constitution was founded on the Vision and Values of the RFMF to chart our Nation into peace, prosperity, united under a common identity and equal citizenry and a Better Fiji for All.

As you are all aware, next year we will hold the first genuine democratic election in Fiji’s history of one person, one vote, one value based on this new Constitution. It is pleasing to see that more than half of our population have already registered electronically to vote.

Do not allow yourselves to be easily manipulated by external pressures and influences around you.

As Territorial Force soldiers, be just, be firm and steadfast. In trying times that we are facing in our country, the RFMF plays a vital role in maintaining law and order in internal security situation. There are many obstacles in our path, and your enlistment into the RFMF today, is of great assistance to our cause. We must sacrifice for our future and those of our children, as we all deserve a better Fiji.

The RFMF has just answered another call of the Global community to serve as UN Peacekeepers. You may have well been updated that the RFMF had already deployed more than 500 troops since July this year for Peacekeeping Duties to the Golan Heights. They are there as part of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) to maintain the ceasefire between the Israeli and Syrian forces and to supervise the implementation of the disengagement agreement.

Our soldiers are putting their lives on the line on the other side of the world. Not waging war but keeping the peace, ensuring the safety of others. I will not be surprised to see some of you here today being called up for peacekeeping duties in the not too distant future.

Remember you are now part of a Service renowned all over the world for its gallantry servicemen and women who have graced the battlefields of the past World Wars and Peacekeeping Operations in volatile areas of the world. Put your months of endurance and pain into practice and go forth to uphold the high ideals forged through the years by your predecessors. It is not so much an occupation, but rather a calling to serve your country with dignity, pride and at heart.

I once again congratulate the recipients of various awards presented today. To the hardworking staff of the RFMF Force Training Group, thank you for the efforts in training these fine young men into soldiers of the RFMF.

To family and friends, I would also like to acknowledge your assistance and endless support to make this day eventuate for your sons and loved ones. I ask for your continued support as they turn a new chapter today in their Military career.

Vinaka Vakalevu and God Bless you all.

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