

**REAR ADMIRAL JOSAIA VOREQE BAINIMARAMA,CF(Mil),OStJ,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, Provincial Development, Sugar Industry, Lands and Mineral Resources**

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**SPEECH AT THE LAUNCHING OF THE LEADERSHIP MODEL**

Grand Pacific Hotel Wednesday, 21st May, 2014

SUVA 1500 Hours

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**Cabinet Ministers;**

**Chairman and Members of the Public Service Commission;**

**Members of the Diplomatic Corps;**

**Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Government Agencies;**

**Chairman and Chief Executive Officers of State Owned Enterprises and Statutory Bodies;**

**Executives of Non-Government Organisations;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Bula vinaka and very good afternoon to you all.

It’s a great pleasure to be here today to launch the new leadership model for the Public Service Commission.

As you know, as Prime Minister I have made it a priority to ensure that the Fijian Government delivers services to its citizens efficiently and equitably.

This is our mission as public servants. It’s our job to treat every Fijian with dignity and respect and to give them the quality of service that we would expect ourselves.

One of my most fundamental beliefs is that all Fijians deserve the same access to Government services no matter what their background is or where they live. This is one of the most basic rights of a citizen, but it has been denied to too many of our people in the past.

Government must be committed to delivering results to all Fijians. No one should receive preferential treatment because of who they are or who they know, just like no person should be denied access to the same Government services because they don’t live in one of Fiji’s urban centres.

We rely on the Civil Service not just to keep the country running, but also to help the national leadership anticipate needs and chart the future. Career public servants owe their loyalty to all Fijians.

That means they must work faithfully under the national leadership.

The leadership sets priorities and the ultimate direction of the country, but the people depend on the Civil Service to execute programs and implement policies.

You are the continuity in government, the institutional memory, and the technical experts.

The people need you, and they have a right to expect that you will dedicate yourselves to their welfare.

With your support, my Government has embarked on a massive campaign to build inroads into our rural and maritime communities, while at the same time ensuring that our overall standard of service is maintained and improved.

In the last few years alone, we have opened an impressive number of new facilities to improve access for ordinary Fijians across the country. These include 4 new Government Service Centres; 5 new legal aid offices, including the one I opened in Sigatoka this morning; 20 new health facilities; 3 new Births Deaths and Marriages Offices; 30 women’s resource centres; 3 local FRCA offices; 2 MINFO offices; 2 agricultural offices; 2 fisheries offices; a forestry office; a new weather office in Suva; and 23 Government Telecentres. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

We have also made it a point to travel beyond the walls of our offices. Never before have Government tours into remote and maritime communities, been more frequent.

For example, a recent campaign by the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registry has provided thousands of Fijians living in isolated areas with birth certificates for the first time in their lives, including instances of multiple generations from the same family.

I try to personally lead as many of these tours as possible so that I can hear from people directly about their issues and concerns. In fact, I consider travelling around Fiji and meeting with my fellow Fijians as one of the biggest privileges of being Prime Minister.

In short, together we are revolutionising the way ordinary Fijians interact with their Government. This is something that you should all be very proud about. Never before have Fijians had better access to the services we provide across a broad front. And never before have the various branches of government penetrated so deeply into the more remote areas of our country.

But the pursuit of excellence is never-ending and there is much work yet to be done. We must continue to find ways to improve, to innovate, to do more with less and to overcome challenges.

Talking about services and need to improve them, one of the critical areas I have great concern about and which my office has been assessing is medical services. Public medical service delivery does not only relate to the ratio of doctors to patients but the attitude of medical staff towards their clients who are both out and inpatients. It includes the level of compassion, empathy and sensitivity shown by our medical staff.

It also includes the execution of capital works and priority given to them and the level of coordination between the Ministry of Works, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health and the private sector wherever outsourced.

It includes creating medical facilitates that are clean, well maintained and salubrious to making patients feel good about and confident in the public health system.

Given the close monitoring by my office, we will in the next few months carry out some major reforms and basic upgrade to our medical facilities and services.

Today is another encouraging sign of progress as we gather to launch a leadership model for the Public Service Commission that places emphasis on honesty, integrity, professional ethics and service to communities.

This document will be a valuable resource for the PSC as Fiji returns parliamentary elections in September. I congratulate all those who have had a hand in its creation.

But I also ask you to remember that, by itself, this document is just words on a page. To have meaning, it is up to each of you to translate these words into action.

It is up to you to set high standards of integrity, transparency and dedication that others can follow. To lead by example.

Ultimately, I believe that it’s about taking pride in your job. That’s the bottom line.

It can be something as small as making sure that a citizen who calls with a question gets the information they need rather than simply being passed to another office.

It may mean staying late to make sure that a job is done right.

It may mean speaking up when you think something is wrong.

It may mean coming up with a better way to perform a task or project.

But it always means keeping sight of the human element in your jobs. Remember, kindness and compassion are some of your most important tools.

Often times, the best virtue you can possess is empathy: the ability to place yourself in someone else’s shoes and understand their feelings.

As you know, I have been critical of the Civil Service in the past. I think we all understand that in the Civil Service there are people who take little pride in their work, who seek to do as little as possible, and who occupy positions that could go to deserving people who will work with a positive attitude and loyalty.

The good news is that I believe their numbers are dwindling. Some have resigned, some have retired, and some may have changed.

I believe that together we are winning the effort to build a more professional Civil Service. You are the vanguard, and it is my hope that you will lift the non-performers by both example and by sound management.

Show them a higher standard. Expect and demand more from them. Show them the joy that comes from being fully committed to a mission and actually seeing the tangible results of their work.

For our part, we as Government have also been focused on improving the working terms and conditions of all civil servants.

This not only includes the significant pay rises in this year’s budget, but also additional benefits for those serving in the remote areas; training and up-skilling; and building tangible and specialised career paths.

Most importantly, we have overhauled the whole system of Government by reforming the roles of Permanent Secretaries – the top-level civil servants – to make them more accountable to the people they serve.

As provided for in the Constitution, the supreme law of the land, PSs are now empowered to run their ministries and departments like chief executives with greater control over finances and staffing.

It’s now up to them to develop innovative management techniques, design corporate plans, discover new ideas, search for creative solutions, motivate staff, and ensure efficient use of resources – all in the service of the Fijian people.

This system encourages PSs to be more dynamic, adaptable and creative in order to deliver results that ordinary people can recognise.

With their increased responsibility also come higher expectations. Under the Constitution, PSs and other senior civil servants are subject to the new Accountability and Transparency Commission. It also means that PSs must ensure that they have the right team around them – civil servants appointed on merit and competency, civil servants who can deliver, who are smart and innovative and have an innate love for their jobs. Poor performance must and will stand out.

Anyone including PSs who aren’t up to scratch must and will need to be replaced. PSs and senior executive management must be role models. They must set standards and be exemplary in their conduct. After all an organisation is as good as its leadership.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Under my Government Fiji finally has a slate that it deserves - we now finally have a clear path forward.

Now we need a continuity of strong leadership to ensure that as a nation we don’t go astray, again.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With those words, it’s now my pleasure to officially launch the new Leadership Model for the PSC.

Vinaka Vakalevu. Thank you.

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