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**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**

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**SPEECH AT THE FBCL 60TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

**Carnavon Street Sat. 2nd August, 2014**

**SUVA 1830 Hours**

Sixty year ago, for the first time, people across Fiji heard a national voice. It was a momentous occasion in our history because for first time Fijians in the remotest areas and on distant islands were able to hear a local voices and personalities originating from Suva. It was an important moment in the birth of a nation yet to come. The little radio station that signed on with the call letters ZJV soon changed its name to the FBC and became a national institution and the major source of information and entertainment for Fijians.

Times have changed and today we look at the global media around us and there are voices and programs from everywhere. The FBC now has six radio stations in three languages and free-to-air TV, and it is still pursuing that promise of binding Fiji together as one nation of unique cultures and languages.

The FBC has come a long way from the first small studio that was succeeded by Broadcasting house on Gladstone Rd. that served well until 4 years ago when Broadcasting house was renovated and refurbished into today’s advanced multi-media center using the latest in audio and video technology.

Despite the availability of commercial foreign programming, the FBC has pursued the goal of presenting locally-made programs about locally relevant subjects that relate to all of us, as well as the latest news and current events. They have developed a number of programs, from the funny and popular ‘Bati ni Tanoa, the Hollywood/Bollywood Movie Talk and its review of films, and the growingly popular interview program, For the Record to mention only a few. Several other new programs are currently in the development stages and will be on the airwaves soon.

They have also invested in talent, finding and developing persons with the basic skills to turn them into polished professionals. Some of those you hear on air or see on TV started at the bottom in other departments but soon showed their talent and desire to perform before the nation and were given the chance. The fbc doesn’t worry about who people are or how they were classified when they started work. It’s a ‘Can Do’ place, and those who want to try to improve themselves are strongly supported in climbing the ladder of success in their career.

So now, starting their 7th decade serving the people, the FBC can be heard on radio and TV and has a strong presence on the internet so that Fijians overseas can listen to radio from home, and watch the daily news via the internet. The first voice of the nations has become much stronger and plans to become even more of a benefit to all Fijians in the future.