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

**Prime Minister of Fiji and Minister for Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics, the Public Service, People’s Charter and Change and Progress, Information, iTaukei Affairs,, Sugar Industry and Lands and Mineral Resources**

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**SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE CENTRE, LABASA**

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**GSC Tues. 12th March, 2013
LABASA 1000 Hours**

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Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Bula vinaka and a very good morning to you all.

It’s great to be in Labasa again on my tour of the Northern Division.

As your Prime Minister, I regard the delivery of basic services to all Fijians as the Government’s main priority.

I want Government to keep its promises to the people to deliver, not just pay lip service to the idea, which is what we all know happened in the past.

Keeping promises is one thing. But Government also has to be present in our communities and actively engage with them.

It’s not good enough to make speeches in Suva. I have made it my mission to get out into the country and to travel around Fiji’s many islands, to meet ordinary people, understand their concerns and do what I can to address their needs.

That is why it gives me so much pleasure to be among you in Labasa to launch another milestone in Fiji’s development - Government for the people, with the people.

Today, we’re launching the first Government Service Centre in the Northern Division to address the needs and demands for locally-available Government services, after opening centres in Nausori and Lautoka late last year.

The one in Nausori is for residents of the Central Division, the one in Lautoka is for the Western Division, and now the one in Labasa is for the Northern Division.

In many ways, having a Centre here is the most important of all because of how isolated many Fijians in the North are from the main hub of Government in Suva. People living here can have access to a whole range of services that until now, might have required a trip to the capital. And we all know that for many, this just wasn’t possible.

No longer will this be the case. This Centre will provide a single point - a one-stop shop - for at least 20 separate Government agencies.

The Service Centre means what it says - service. We are serving the people, the taxpayers and their dependents, who deserve much higher standards of attention, efficiency, courtesy and respect.

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