

**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 TAVEUNI SOUTH SECONDARY SCHOOL**

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**Taveuni South Sec. School 11thMarch, 2013**

**TAVEUNI 1000 Hours**

The School Management;

The Principal – **Anil Shankaran;**

Invited Guests;

Staff and Students;

Members of the Community;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

**Ni sa Bula Vinaka!**

I am indeed pleased to be here today to celebrate with you the opening of the South Taveuni Secondary School.

I am thankful for your vision, your communal effort, your sacrifices in the construction and the establishment of South Taveuni Secondary School.

I do know that South Taveuni Secondary School has brought relief to the fifteen communities along the Vuna Road which includes Vatuwiri, Nalovo, Kanacea, Ura Estate, Navaca, Qarawalu, Waioboa and other communities I have not mentioned by name.

The four Primary Schools of Navakawau Catholic School, Vuna District, Salialevu Primary and South Taveuni will now breathe a sigh of relief as they will not have to travel far from home to attend secondary education. They are the feeder schools to South Taveuni Secondary School.

I am glad to say that what the fifteen communities have done in establishing the school is a live example of you not thinking about your own individual interest, but about the future. Indeed, it is time to think about our country. To think about our children. To think about development. To think about improving the lives of our own people. I applaud your collective effort in ensuring that your children are not left behind as we move towards a new, improved Fiji.

My Government and I have always been putting Education as a priority for the nation and I am pleased to see schools being built closer to communities and homes.

Education is being brought to your doorsteps so there will be **no excuse of not sending students to school because of distance or geographical isolation.**

We want **Fiji to be Knowledge – Based Society** so we need to start by having all our children to go to school to learn to read and write and become literate. We need to have them complete twelve years of education which means entering a secondary school after their primary years.

When we have a literate population, we can participate fully in the economy of the country. We should be able to use information for functional purposes as knowing how to open a bank account or how to use medication as prescribed to us by doctors.

I understand that part of form three students’ task is rural banking as facilitated by the Bank of the South Pacific so parents and guardians, your children will definitely need your support in this scheme.

I am pleased to inform you that my Government through the Ministry of Education had contributed to the construction of the school.

**Moreover, it will be responsible for the construction of the new Science Laboratory costing $198,000 which will be built this year.**

Therefore, your next level in 2014 which will be form five will have a new laboratory to conduct their experiments from.

I, therefore, urge you, the current 171 students of South Taveuni Secondary school to make good use of the buildings and facilities provided by your very own community. Sustain your school building, classroom and surroundings so that those who will come after you will also enjoy the privileges you are enjoying as pioneer students.

Come to school every day and learn everything you need to learn for the development of your community. I understand that you have forms two, three and four so work hard and do your school proud by allowing it to have seven level by 2016.

To the pioneer teachers of the school, I plead with you to take good care of the students under your charge and be interested in their well – being and their welfare. You are the best resource we can put into a school so aspire for excellence in all that you do.

You are the best role model students can learn from so do not disappoint them. Teach your students the real values of life so they will be able to survive whatever conditions they will meet later on in life. Continue to upgrade and up - skill yourselves with modern technology and be abreast of your students.

The School Management, parents, guardians and the South Taveuni community, I am overwhelmed with your achievement as this is exactly the kind of support that is needed from each one of us as citizens of Fiji. Our participation in nation – building must be real and not just words without fruits.

Once again, thank you for the effort and your contribution to education and to the nation as a whole.

May God’s Blessings be upon you and South Taveuni Secondary School.

**I have much pleasure in officially declaring South Taveuni Secondary School open**.

**Vinaka vakalevu.**

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