

Speech by Mr. Tsuguyoshi Hada, Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan, at the Handing Over Ceremony for “The Project for Upgrading of Nadi Centre for Special Education” funded by the Government of Japan

Friday, 23 February 2018, 12.00 pm, at Nadi Centre for Special Education

Ms. Praveen Rina Devi, Head Teacher, Nadi Centre for Special Education,

The Management of Nadi Centre for Special Education,

Teachers, Parents and Students of Nadi Centre for Special Education,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Afternoon, Cola Vina, Namaste and Ohayō Gozaimasu.

I wish to thank you all for the warm welcome extended to me this afternoon. Today, it is my honour to hand over the newly upgraded facilities to Nadi Centre for Special Education.

I am pleased say that the Government of Japan provided One Hundred and Eighty Thousand Fijian Dollars (FJ\$180,000) for this project. The new facilities include construction of a new three (3)-classroom block with furniture and a four-pan toilet block. The

project was implemented through Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects Programme, or GGP in short.

The challenges faced by special schools in any country are far greater than those faced by mainstream schools. Like in any learning environment, the safety and security of students is always of paramount importance. Providing such safe and friendly learning environment is always at the forefront of any development in any school and Nadi Centre for Special Education is no different. This occasion also marks a very important milestone in the relationship between the Centre and the Government of Japan. Eighteen years ago, the Government of Japan provided the Nadi Centre for Special Education with a sum of Thirty-One Thousand US Dollars (US\$31,000) for the construction of a vocational centre and I am pleased to see that the Centre is still making full use of this building for the students' vocational classes. The Centre has come a long way since it was established in 1989 and the Government of Japan is proud to have renewed our relationship through this project.

The condition of the previous classroom block had deteriorated which was not conducive for teaching and learning. I wish to reassure students and teachers that these new facilities are user friendly for students with needs and cyclone resistant which will provide a safe environment for students to learn and develop new skills for their career pathways. The new toilet facilities will also help improve hygiene and sanitation.

In November 2017, the Honourable Prime Minister Bainimarama launched Fiji's 5-year and 20-year National Development Plan during COP 23 in Bonn, Germany. I am pleased to say that Japan's support to the Nadi Centre for Special Education is consistent with the Government of Fiji's national development objectives. Such harmonisation is key to Japan's development cooperation with Fiji.

At this juncture, I wish to highlight that the Government of Japan has been actively involved in supporting Fiji's recovery in the Education Sector through the Government of Fiji's "Adopt A School Programme". I am happy to update you all that the Government of Japan has supported nine (9) schools with the

total funding of Eight point Four Million Fijian Dollars (FJ\$8.4m) in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

Since 1990, Japan has been consistently supporting grassroots communities in Fiji and to-date, a total of 359 GGP Projects have been implemented, with the total value exceeding Twenty-Four Million US dollars (US\$24 million).

I conclude with confidence that this project will further strengthen the friendship between the people and governments of Japan and Fiji.

Thank You, Vinaka Vakalevu, Dhanyavaadh, and Arigato Gozaimasu.

The End.