

occasion as we have signed grant contracts and formalized Japan's assistance to 3 esteemed recipients and are going to formalize a Japan's assistance with Habitat for Humanity Fiji worth four hundred and forty six thousand US dollars (USD 446,000)., equivalent to nine hundred thousand Fiji dollars, (900,000 FJD).

Upon formalization of the respective projects, the Government of Japan has committed to provide;

- 1). One hundred ninety nine thousand US dollars (USD 199,200) for “The Project for Improvement of Water and Sanitation Environment” to Habitat for Humanity Fiji. Through its expertise, Habitat for Humanity Fiji will implement projects for improvement of water supply in ^{トキ} Toki Village in Ra, as well as construct toilet facilities at ^{ナブニセア} Navunisea District School in ^{タイレブ} Tailevu and ^{ナワイソモ} Nawaisomo Primary School in ^{ナイタシリ} Naitasiri. These recipient communities are facing a risk to their health and well-being as lack of reliable water supply and hygienic toilet facilities can lead to an individual's sickness as well as cause a communal outbreak of diseases. This project is expected to collectively benefit more than 500 people. The recipient

communities will be able enhance their daily lives, improve sanitation and hygiene standards as well as prevent diseases through the new water supply system and new toilet facilities. I acknowledge the partnership that the Embassy of Japan has developed with Habitat for Humanity Fiji over the past decade, which has resulted in the effective implementation of 7 projects for 19 rural communities in Fiji.

2). Moving on to the next recipient, Japan will provide Eighty nine thousand US dollars (US\$ 89,354) for the “Project for Provision of Emission Testing Equipment to the Land Transport Authority”. As the Fijian Government has committed to significantly reducing GHG (Greenhouse Gas) emissions, the procurement of the emission testing equipment will meaningfully support the Land Transport Authority in monitoring Motor Vehicle Emission Standards in the country. This funding is a crucial part of our support for the Fijian Government’s efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

I wish to thank Mr. Simpson, the CEO, for his leading role in ensuring that the Land Transport Authority continues to enhance road safety in Fiji

3). To ^{ナイライライ}Nairairai Development Cooperative, which is the third recipient today, Japan will provide twenty three thousand US dollars (US\$23,685) for the “Project for Construction of ^{ティラピア}Tilapia Ponds in ^{ナサウトカ}Nasautoka village in ^{ワイニンブカ}Wainibuka”. For many years, the people of Nasautoka village have faced challenges in improving their food security and their livelihoods. Such hardships have been further escalated by major job losses caused by COVID-19, which compelled the people of this community, living in urban areas, to return home..

I am very pleased to say that this project will not only establish the basis for Tilapia farming in Nasautoka Village but also provide a pathway for broader aquaculture in the future. This project is expected to benefit more than 300 people in the community through improving food security and their livelihoods by providing an opportunity to the community to earn income through sale of Tilapia to consumers which they can access.

I must congratulate the Nairairai Development Cooperative for their hard work in securing this funding for the project which will not only benefit the community itself but their future generations as well. We highly value the importance of ensuring food security and

improvement of livelihoods through the fisheries sector. , Since 2001, the Government of Japan has funded 4 fisheries projects worth more than five hundred thousand US dollars (USD 500,000), equivalent to 1 million Fijian Dollars.

4). To the final recipient today, namely, the Sai Prema Foundation Fiji, Japan will provide one hundred and thirty four thousand US dollars (US\$134,361) for “The Project for Provision of Medical Service vehicle for Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Centre” .

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The work of the Sai Prema Foundation has indeed opened doors for Fijian communities from all ethnic and religious backgrounds to access free medical treatment as well as specialist heart treatment. However, the Medical Centre crucially needs necessary transportation, mobile equipment and mobility aid to carry out its work in the rural and remote areas of Fiji. With our strong commitment towards improving health care in Fiji, we decided to provide this funding which will not only benefit rural communities but also approximately 2000 children a year, who will now be able to access heart scans and specialized heart disease diagnostics through this mobile outreach. This project will enable the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Center to conduct its health services

remotely, and also strengthen its ability to provide 24 hours emergency services as well.

It gives me great joy to say that the projects will tangibly address priority areas in Fiji's key sectors which are; improving water supply and sanitation standards, reducing greenhouse gases and protecting the environment, elevating livelihoods and food security as well as enhancing outreach of medical services together with specialized diagnostics for heart disease, especially for the benefit of the children of Fiji.

These projects will be implemented under Japan's Grassroots Grant Assistance scheme. I wish to take this opportunity to highlight that since 1990, Japan has implemented 403 projects through its Grassroots Grant Assistance scheme, to assist the people of Fiji (with the total value exceeding 29 million US dollars US\$29 million).

I began my term as the new Ambassador of Japan in January 2021. As such, I am very happy to see that in this short amount of time, by including today's four projects, we have formalized 10 Grassroots

Grant projects, worth more than 1.2 million US dollars (USD1, 217,138.00), for the betterment of all Fijians.

Key to Japan's development cooperation with Fiji, these projects are in harmony with the Fijian Government's 20 year and 5 year National Development Plans, which collectively are in line with achieving series of Sustainable Development Goals, namely, Sustainable Development Goal 2 - Zero Hunger, Sustainable Development Goal 3 - Good Health and Wellbeing, Sustainable Development Goal 6 - Clean water and Sanitation, Sustainable Development Goal 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, and Sustainable Development Goal 14 - Life Below water.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

At this juncture, I wish to state that the COVID-19 pandemic badly affected Japan too. The Japanese economy has recorded negative growth and the Japanese Government's financial conditions were very tight. Despite the formidable challenges, Japan has continued to support Fiji, even with the largest level of amount ever since last year to date.

This respective assistance is, Japan's Emergency Yen Loan to Fiji, worth 200 million Fijian dollars, which I formalized together with the

Honourable Prime Minister Bainimarama. The approximate value of this funding is equivalent to twelve percent (12%) of Fiji's total revenue for this fiscal year 2020 to 2021.

Such merit and unwavering commitment clearly show the great importance that Japan places on strengthening its relations with Fiji.

I extend my best wishes that the distinguished recipient representatives present here today to ensure the timely and successful completion of your respective projects.

I conclude with confidence that these projects will further strengthen friendship between the governments and peoples of Japan and Fiji.

ダンニャワード
Thank You, Vinaka Vakalevu, Dhanyavaadh.

The End.