
**Speech by, Mr. TANAKA Kenichiro, The Charge d’Affaires Embassy of Japan,
At the Handing Over Ceremony for Golden Age Home, Lautoka**

15 June 2022, at 2:00 pm at the Western Disability Centre

The Honorable Rosy Sofia Akbar, Minister for Women, Children and
Poverty Alleviation,

Ms. Jennifer Poole, The Permanent Secretary for Women

The General Manager, PA Lal Company Ltd

Board of Visitors Golden Age Home Lautoka,

Government Officials,

Media Partners,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning, Yadra Vinaka, Namaste and Ohayo Gozaimasu.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Honorable
Minister, her team and the Golden Age Home for hosting this very
important event and in conjunction World Elder Abuse Awareness Day,

as well as for the warm hospitality extended to my colleagues and me today.

On behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I am honored to hand over a new 35-seater wheelchair accessible bus worth Two Hundred Seventy Nine Thousand Fiji dollars (FJ\$279,000) to the Honorable Minister and the Board of Trustees of the Golden Age Home, Lautoka. This project is being implemented under the Government of Japan's Grassroots Grant Assistance Scheme. Since 1990, we have funded 415 Grassroots Grant projects for the sustainable development of Fiji, which are collectively worth more than 31 million US dollars.

In its request for assistance, the Golden Age Home, which has been under the jurisdiction of the Ministry since 2017, highlighted that it has been facing many difficulties in terms of transporting commuting its senior citizen residents for medical treatments, recreational activities and support services.

The new bus specialized for the special needs of the Golden Age Home residents will minimize boarding, disembarking and overall transportation difficulties. For the residents, ensuring timely medical treatment and providing sufficient recreational activities will help improve their physical and mental well-being, as well as enhance cognitive functioning.

Supporting this project is an integral part of our continued partnership with the Fijian Government to help achieve Sustainable Development Goal 3, *‘Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages’* and it is in line with Fiji’s Twenty Year Development Plan 2017-2036, under one of its key approaches namely, “Social Inclusion and Empowerment’

I am delighted to highlight that over the years, Japan has been assisting the Ministry through its Grassroots Grant Assistance projects for the Ba Women’s Forum Training Centre, Nalotawa Community Training

Centre, the Homes of Hope, as well as the 1997 renovation of this institution. Furthermore, Japan has also been a major contributor to the REACH initiative lead by the Ministry since 2015 to 2018 and 2021 through partnership with UNDP.

I conclude with confidence that this project is an added milestone in Japan's partnership with the Ministry and will brighten up the faces of the senior citizens in the Golden Age Home in Lautoka and in addition further strengthen friendship between the Governments and peoples of Japan and Fiji.

Thank You, Vinaka Vakalevu, and Arigato Gozaimasu.

END