
Speech by Mr. TANAKA Kenichiro, Counsellor,
At the Handing Over Ceremony for Vehicles to Medical Services Pacific
on Wednesday, 15th February 2023, at 10:00 am at MSP HQ, Waimanu Road

Ms. Ashna Shaleen, Country Director for Medical Services Pacific

Media Partners,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning, Yadra Vinaka, Namaste, and Ohayo Gozaimasu.

I convey my heartfelt appreciation to the Country Director and the staff of Medical Services Pacific for hosting me and my staff on this occasion.

On behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I am honoured to hand over the two twin cab vehicles and its trailers, worth approximately One Hundred and Ninety Fijian Dollars (FJD 189,773 (US\$ 95,555)) to Medical Services Pacific (MSP). The project was made possible through Japan's Grassroots Grant Assistance Scheme (GGP). 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.

This project is considered to be significant in the following ways;

1. Firstly, to further strengthen the relationship between Japan and Fiji. Fiji is historically and geographically important of the Pacific countries to Japan. Fiji is also an influential state in this region. Therefore, in May of last year, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Fiji and met with the then Prime Minister Bainimarama to strengthen relations between the two countries. Although this project is grassroots, I am convinced that through this type of cooperation, the relationship between the two countries has become multi-layered and is becoming stronger and stronger.

2. Secondly, the project contributes to a few policies in Fiji's National Development Plan, ranging from Women in Development to the Health Sector. The Health Sector has been greatly assisted with institutions such as MSP in providing critical reproductive health, and maternal & child health services. Having access to quality and professional health services, as well as the right technical support services for those impacted by

domestic violence and sexual abuse is important for any society. Fiji is fortunate to have Medical Services Pacific be able to provide a range of these services for vulnerable communities in Fiji.

MSP has been plagued a lack of suitable vehicular access to rural and remote areas of Fiji and this has affected its ability to serve women and girls in these regions. I am very pleased to say that Japan's strong commitment towards improving health care in Fiji formed the basis for our decision to award this funding which will greatly benefit the women and children in the rural and remote communities, as these vehicles and trailers will support and help further the work that MSP is bringing to these communities.

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

Thank You, Vinaka Vakalevu, Dhanyavaadh and Arigato Gozaimasu.

END