
**Address by: His Excellency Mr. Rokuichiro MICHII, Ambassador of
Japan, at the Handover Ceremony for The Project for Kalabu Primary
School
at 9.00am on 19th November 2024**

Matanikutu na Turaga Na Qaranivalu
Mr. Sanaila Nauga, Director Primary for Ministry for Education,
Mr. Turagabeci, Head of School,
Government Officials,
Parents, Teachers, and Students,
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yadra/Bula Vinaka, Namaste and Konichiwa.

Firstly, I wish to convey my sincere appreciation to the “Matanikutu na Turaga na Qaranivalu” Vanua Kalabu and the Kalabu Primary School Community for the warm hospitality extended to us as well as for organizing this auspicious occasion.

I further express my gratitude to all of you for the traditional protocols and for making us feel at home with your friendliness since our arrival here. Occasions such as this provide us with the unique opportunity to experience the cultural richness of the iTaukei.

Ladies and Gentlemen, while I am handing over newly built toilet facilities to your school, I also wish to highlight that today is the “**UN World Toilet Day**”. It is being observed all over the world to create

awareness that for about 3.5 billion people globally there is no safely managed sanitation or toilet facilities which are under threat from conflict, climate change, disasters and neglect. Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs, are a set of 17 important goals set by all UN countries and **“Safe toilets for all by 2030”** is one of the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 6. I am very pleased to see that under the auspices of such commitments, we are accomplishing tangible results and delivering real benefits to Kalabu Primary School and its wider community.

The Grassroots Program is part of Japan’s larger assistance program called ‘Official Development Assistance’ (ODA), which aims to improve the lives of grassroots communities. Since 1990, the Grassroots Program has been widely implemented in Fiji’s key sectors such as public infrastructure, fisheries, health, education, water supply, youth and sports, disaster management as well as climate change and environment. To date, we have implemented a total of 423 Grassroots Program projects, which are collectively worth approximately USD \$32 million, equivalent to sixty-four million Fiji dollars.

I am very happy to be here with you all today to hand over this beautifully built and furnished kindergarten classroom and toilet block to Kalabu Primary School. These facilities have been built under Japan’s Grassroots Program which are worth **(\$183, 250.00 Fiji Dollars)** This

occasion marks a new milestone in our cooperation for developing young minds and helping create a love for learning amongst the young students of Fiji.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the teachers, staff, management and parents for your support, either directly or indirectly towards the success of this project. I am sure that the new facilities will contribute meaningfully towards an environment which promotes the delivery of quality education .

To our dear students, this classroom is your special place. It is where you will acquire knowledge and explore new ideas, make new friends, and discover the joy of learning. Remember, every question you ask and every challenge you face is an opportunity to learn something new. Embrace each day with renewed drive for learning and a desire to uncover more about the world around you while keeping in mind that we are all here to support you every step of the way.

I wish to urge the Kalabu Primary School community to take good care and exercise timely maintenance of the new amenities which will ensure that children from your community are able to benefit from such facilities in pursuing education for many years to come.

I conclude with confidence that this project serves to strengthen friendship between the Governments and peoples of Japan and Fiji, through our newly established bond with this school and the wider Kalabu community.

VINAKA VAKALEVU, ARIGATO GOZAIMAS and THANK YOU.

ENDS.