



**February 19, 2017**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NFP: Is there collusion between Government and Fijian Holdings CEO leading to interference in Fiji ONE TV News?**

### **FHL CEO INTERFERING WITH FIJI TV NEWSROOM**

Restrictions placed on a Fiji Television journalist from covering political stories and running Government news without balance from Opposition party figures falsely implicated by Government in its propaganda is a clear sign of collusion between Government and the Chief Executive of Fijian Holdings Limited, the majority shareholder of Fiji TV.

The National Federation Party's observations of news bulletins for the past two weeks and the fact that a journalist was reportedly told that he can no longer work in the Fiji One Newsroom because of his political stories despite them being balanced and factual, clearly point to interference into the newsroom by Fijian Holdings Limited (CEO) Nouzab Fareed.

The journalist in question Mr Shanal Sivan has not been seen or heard doing news reporting after prominently reporting on Government's policy failures and false promises from the beginning of this year. (We enclose links to those stories at the end of this statement).

Similarly, after balanced, ethical and accurate coverage of parliamentary proceedings of 6<sup>th</sup> February of both Government and Opposition responses during debate on various issues in Parliament, Fiji TV News coverage has degenerated into extremely one-sided pro-Government bulletins.

During the parliamentary sitting, apart from 6<sup>th</sup> February, hardly any response by the Opposition to numerous ministerial statements or contribution to debate was reported in the major bulletins.

---

All correspondence should be addressed to the general secretary

Even if it was, it was a small piece compared to long and three or four contributions from Government on the same issue.

And this week, the Attorney General's statement on issues raised in parliament by the Opposition during debate on the Electoral Amendment Act, particularly why his role as Elections Minister conflicts with his positions as Registered Officer/General Secretary of Fiji First, as well as the Supervisor of Elections being the Secretary to Electoral Commission, was covered three times, on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday this week.

Yet there was no chance given to the Leader of NFP and Opposition MP Mr Semesa Karavaki to respond to the AG despite them being named by the AG as making false statements. The NFP Leader had even issued a statement rebutting the AG's claims on Thursday but it received no coverage from Fiji TV (and not surprisingly from the taxpayer funded Fiji Broadcasting Corporation(which also ran the AG's comments) known for its totally pro Government stance for obvious reasons).

The exodus of prominent journalists and senior staff clearly point to interference in Fiji TV Operations and Newsroom. And this is seemingly caused by Mr Fareed's collusion with Government leading to his interference in Fiji TV Newsroom and other operations.

A clear example of this was his apology to the CEO of Fiji Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) over Fiji's reporting of *Waisea Basha* , saying both Fiji TV and FBC needed to cooperate with each other. His actions are undeniably leading to a demoralized work force.

We therefore ask the following: -

1. Is Mr Fareed in contact with or being contacted by Government whenever Fiji TV runs stories exposing Government policies and failures of Government Ministers?
2. Why is he interfering and undermining the ethics of accuracy, balance and fairness of Fiji TV Newsroom?

3. What did Mr Fareed tell Mr Shanal Sivan resulting in him not being seen or heard doing major news stories?
4. Did he tell Mr Shanal Sivan that Mr Sivan's news stories were hurting Government?
5. Did he tell Mr Sivan not to do political stories or keep away from mainstream Fiji One News?
6. Did he tell Fiji One Newsroom to re-run the AG's statement on questions raised in Parliament by the Opposition on his and the Supervisor's role, and not to run any response from the Opposition as clearly witnessed?
7. Why is the Fiji Media Association silent on the matter despite this receiving widespread publicity on the social media?
8. Will the Fijian Holdings Limited Board immediately investigate Mr Fareed's role in Fiji TV?

These are questions that Mr Fareed, the FHL and the Fiji Media Association must answer in the matter of public interest.



**Professor Biman Prasad**  
**NFP Leader**

**Encl: Links to Fiji TV Stories done by Shanal Sivan**

<https://www.facebook.com/fijionenews/videos/1405147512884120/>

<https://www.facebook.com/fijionenews/videos/1404001719665366/>

<https://www.facebook.com/fijionenews/videos/1399874140078124/>

<https://www.facebook.com/fijionenews/videos/1397836596948545/>

<https://www.facebook.com/fijionenews/videos/1393189770746561/>

<https://www.facebook.com/fijionenews/videos/1353771314688407/>