



April 7, 2017

MEDIA RELEASE

Village By-Laws Will Be Revoked by an NFP Government

National Federation Party Leader Hon Professor Biman Prasad says the revocation of the Village By-Laws will be a high priority of an NFP Government because it disenfranchises the rural *i Taukei* community.

Professor Prasad has described the Village By-Laws as an agenda of the Fiji First Government to control and coerce people into accepting their imposition.

“We expect the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission to investigate whether the by-law’s are discriminatory and will marginalise our rural *i Taukei* communities.”

“The Government’s sponsorship of the by-laws points to an attempt to unilaterally force an issue that addresses social issues that are prevalent all over the country, and is not solely limited to villages alone.”

“If the Government thinks that people do not see how they are using their appointees and proxies at the local level such as the Turaga Ni Koro’s to execute their designs, they are sorely mistaken.”

"Similarly, the Rotuma Bill has already been rejected by the people of Rotuma and their traditionally appointed spokespeople. While we appreciate that a Parliamentary Standing Committee is still looking at the Bill, we will await their findings and recommendations when it comes to the Parliament and respond accordingly with what we have been advised by the Rotuman community”.

“The tinkering of age old customs and traditions of our indigenous and Rotuman communities, as well as entrenching conversational and contemporary *i Taukei* and Fiji Hindi languages in the 2013 Constitution to be compulsorily taught in all primary schools, is further confirmation of this Government’s scant regard for social and moral values as well as invaluable lessons contained in the formal languages of both communities”.

All correspondence should be addressed to the general secretary

“Section 43 of the by-law that states that it is unlawful to enter a village without formal authorization of the Provincial Council for any other purpose than visitation, is clearly intended to limit access by political parties and is further confirmation of control of our people who should be free to make their own decisions without any State sponsored control.”

“This is symptomatic of a Government that has lost its way and is rudderless, only choosing to ride roughshod over all people and manipulate processes that they think will tilt the balance in their favour. The domino effect of the culmination of all their misplaced policies will be echoed to them loud and clear come elections in 2018.”



Professor Biman Prasad
NFP Leader