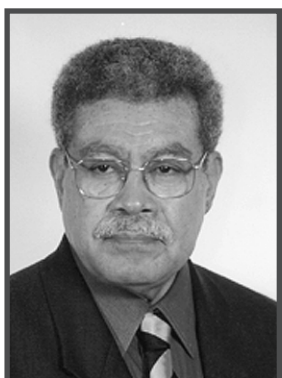




Rotuma Day

125 years in association with Fiji - 13th May 2006



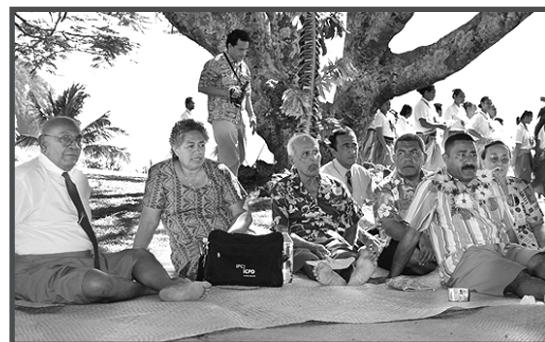
Message from the Prime Minister, Hon. Laisenia Qarase - 13th May 2006

May I personally, and on behalf of the Government and people of Fiji send warmest greetings to the people of Rotuma on this auspicious occasion. Rotuma has been politically affiliated with Fiji for more

than a century, first as a British colony and since 1970 as part of independent Fiji. I attach great importance to the celebration of Rotuma Day because I firmly believe in the preservation of our identity, tradition and culture. Too often, in the hustle and bustle of our daily existence, we tend to set aside our ethnic values as old fashioned in favour of foreign cultural practices that focus less on the communal values that are important to us. I say this as I believe it is important to celebrate our national identity. That is why you have Rotuma Day, to remind you of your ethnicity. Not many countries in the world today enjoy this privilege. Rotuma Day should remind you of your origins, of your forefathers and what they believed in. I imagine they believed in the continuity of your bloodline that has set Rotumans apart from others. You have your distinct characteristics and culture that is refreshingly practiced by Rotumans wherever they are, and more so, by those of you who live on the beautiful island of Rotuma. Although your society is basically intact and your culture preserved by your virtual isolation, you must however be ever vigilant that the traditions that have been passed on from one generation to another are ingrained and are constantly practiced and passed on to your children. It is the richness and diversity of your culture that appeals to others. While I strongly maintain the preservation of our culture and traditions they too must not detract us from the path of progress. For we must also accept new ways of doing things that are beneficial to our society. It could even mean dropping some of the things we now do because of their irrelevance to the norms of society. The Government and people have contributed millions of dollars on development projects, including capital works on the island. Government's input into the development of Rotuma is also reflected in its commitment to provide the essential services that have helped in maintaining law and order and in administering the orderly progress of your society. Almost all key Government ministries have established departments in Rotuma and continues to be the largest employer on the island. However wage-earning opportunities on Rotuma remain scarce. A limited number of Rotumans return to the island and use their advanced education and training to make a living, but most continue to be drawn away by job opportunities in Fiji. I believe that in this age of technological developments, economic advancement and social and business interaction with the rest of the world, no island is ever isolated in the global village that we are all part of. Nevertheless, it is your very isolation that has kept your traditions and culture intact and has preserved your pristine environment. At the same time, you have developed a notable



infrastructure that has provided a comfortable standard of living. Although land is limited in Rotuma, one of Government's objectives is to utilize modern methods of developing and harvesting your agricultural and marine resources in order to capitalize on their marketing potential. Despite the somewhat higher costs of services, Rotuma has modern communication facilities that equals other developing countries. Although Rotuma's population is not as great as other major population groups in Fiji, your skills and human resources far outweigh your lack of numbers. Your people have set a proud record. Many of your kainaga have excelled academically at school and in tertiary institutions. You occupy executive positions in Government, the private sector and in all spheres of professional



and vocational pursuits. Rotumans have contributed towards the development of Fiji and Rotuma through their contributions to the workforce. The Rotuman community has integrated with Fiji's multi-racial and multi-cultural society thus adding to the diverse and rich cultures of our multi-ethnic society. The ethnicity of Rotumans is acknowledged as one with indigenous Fijians. The phrase, Viti kei Rotuma acknowledges the political and close affiliation between our people and our lands. This is visibly acknowledged in the Government's plans for Affirmative Action for Fijians and Rotumans. Rotumans have equal opportunity along with other communities in Fiji to benefit from the special provisions of loans to continue tertiary education, including the upgrading of classrooms and boarding facilities in both government and non-government schools. In addition, it is the Government's Affirmative Action in the Blueprint that will have important ramifications on the lifestyle and standard of living of indigenous Fijians and Rotumans. The Blueprint, for example, provides assistance for indigenous Fijians and Rotumans in important social and economic activities in business, in industry, in education, in economic and self-help projects, to name a few. It is an integral part of our economic growth that Fijians and Rotumans are not left behind as our nation progresses. Government will continue, as always, to assist Rotumans in their economic and social development. The economic prosperity of Fiji and Rotuma lay in our peaceful co-existence with the other multi-ethnic groups in our society. We must, each and every one of us, set ourselves this goal for the future well-being of our nation. May you all have a blessed and happy Rotuma Day. God bless Fiji and Rotuma.





A taste of Rotuma

Rotuma lies in the South West Pacific about 480 kilometres (300 miles) Northwest of Fiji. It is situated close to the meeting point of the conventional boundaries assigned to the Polynesian, Melanesian and Micronesian peoples 12° 30' South of the equator and 176° 40' east of Greenwich). The island is about eight miles long, and at its widest, approximately three miles across. It comprises a land area of 17 square miles. Rotuma possesses an extremely rich soil, in which nearly all tropical plants flourish. From the sea the island casts a dark green hue, appearing almost black, so luxuriant is its vegetation. Because of its tropical location, the island experiences high temperatures (av.80 ° F) and heavy rainfall (av.140'). This encourages forest growth, and a variety of rootcrops.

Rotuma's location off the main trade routes makes it isolated and remote from its neighbouring island groups Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu and the Solomons. Rotuma is a group of volcanic island comprising one main island (Rotuma) and eight small uninhabited rocky islets surrounding it. The main island has a basaltic core covered with rich volcanic soil, and a total area of approximately 48 square kilometres (19 sq mls). Its many hills rise to an average height of 183 metres (600ft) above sea level. The island extends from east to west 12 kilometres long and about 4 kilometres wide. An isthmus measuring 182 metres (200 yds) almost divides the island into two. The entire island is covered with coconut trees, including the



slopes of the volcanic craters, and virtually all the interior lands are suitable for cultivation. Rotuma, which is home to 2,400 people, has 26 villages from seven districts. The districts are Noatau, Oinafa, Itutiu, Malha'a, Juju, Pepjei and Itumuta. Over 8,000 Rotumans stay in Fiji and almost 1,000 abroad. The Government Station that is based at Ahau has the District Administration Office, a Hospital, Public Works Department Depot and the Post Office. Legends, language and physical characteristics, all point to the Rotumans being

a mixture of different races - Polynesian, Melanesian, Micronesian and European. In spite of this, Rotumans are predominately Polynesian. The Rotumans live on the island in small villages called Ho'aga. Each village consists of a number of families with a Fa'es ho'aga as the leader. Four or five Ho'aga constitute an itu'u or district under a district chief Fa'esitu'u. In 1881 when Rotuma was ceded to Great Britain she became a part of the Crown Colony of Fiji, thus enabling a free flow of people between Fiji and Rotuma.

Early visitors to Rotuma

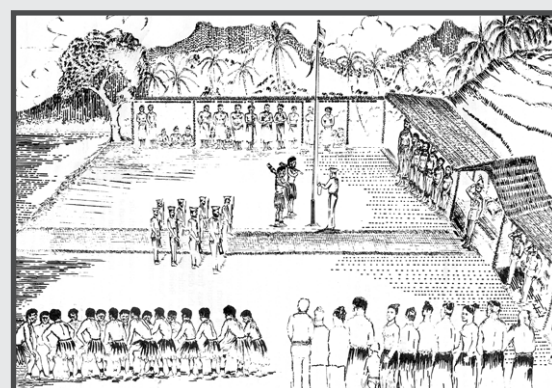
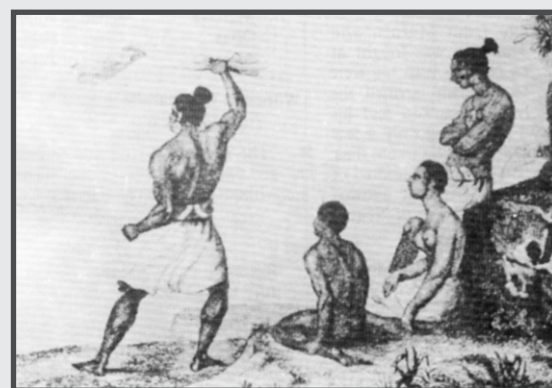
The first authenticated visit to Rotuma by Europeans was that of Captain Edwards in H.M.S "Pandora" in 1791. The island being a new discovery, he called it Grenville's island in honour of Lord Grenville, but the natives and Pacific islanders named it Rotuma. In 1797 the "Duff", under the command of Captain Wilson, arrived at the island but the natives were not friendly to the visitors and would not assist them with fresh provisions. However, the Rotumans were more friendly to Kau Moala, a Tonga, who visited the island in 1807 while he was traveling to Tonga via the Fiji Islands. The exploits of this Tongan chief can be found in Mariner's "Tonga Islands", (1827). Other Pacific islanders that arrived at Rotuma in 1815 and 1830 were two parties of Ellice islanders who remained on the island. Gardiner recorded that in 1820, two large canoes arrived from Tonga, and some one hundred Rotuman males, under Kona'u of Motusa, were recruited by the Tongans for Erromango. But Bishop Russel in "Polynesia and New Zealand" mentioned Boki, a Hawaiian chief, who called at Rotuma in 1829 and took with him on a recruitment basis 180 men to assist in establishing his colony, Erromango.

A whaling ship, the "Rochester", called at the island in 1820 but when it sailed away, two officers and five crew members deserted the ship at night by rowing away in a small boat. On arrival at the island the men were roughly handled and taken to serve the chiefs. At the end of their probation the Europeans were allowed to take wives. Duperry's voyage in the "Coquille" in 1824 resulted in more detailed information on Rotuma being recorded by de Blesseri. When the ship left the island

William John, a deserter from the "Rochestere", went away in it but two crew members from the "Coquille" decided to stay on the island. Captain Peter Dillion arrived at Rotuma in the "Research" in 1827 and found the deserters from the "Rochester" and five other Europeans with large families. Perhaps more than two men had left the "Coquille" or some other ship had called between 1824 and 1827.

In May 1828 M.de Tremlin reached Rotuma and this visit by the French seemed to mark the end of such visits for many years. But Charles Howard, who arrived in 1836 and remained till his death sometime in the 1870's was the founder of a large family at Hagas, where his photograph is preserved by his descendants. From 1839 onwards many ships seemed to have visited the island including mission ships, men-of-wars of various nations, and whaling and trading ship, besides the blackbirding and recruiting vessels which sought crew members from there. Lucett, who called at Rotuma in 1841 while on his way to raise some sunken treasure, mentioned the arrival of a party of Maoris on the island. The "Star of Eve" arrived at Rotuma in 1863 while on a trading voyage from New Zealand, but the vessel was wrecked on the reef near Maftoa (Itumuta). John Thuyrston, who was one of the passengers on board the ship, remained in Rotuma until he was taken to Fiji in the "John Wesley" some months later.

Captain Moresby, in HMS "Basilick", arrived at Rotuma in 1874 to make investigations into the reported kidnapping of natives for work in Australia and other countries. However, Rev. Osborn, a Wesleyan missionary on the island, informed him that Rotumans had not suffered from the blackbirders. Dr Litton Forbes arrived at the island in 1874 from Fiji and his account of the place makes interesting reading although some of his observations and the information he received were superficial and inaccurate. This was proved by Commodore Goodenough when he visited the island in 1875.





Some Government Assistance to Rotuma

National Youth Day and Rotuma Day Celebration Programme

Day 1 - Friday, 12th May, 2006

- 8:00am

- All Guests inside the pavilion
 - Greeting from M.C
 - Garlanding
 - Singing of National Anthem (Band boys with G/Taimanav)
- 8:30am

- Devotion - Rev. Maciu Gauna (Anthem - ‘Ou hanisi Jisu’ Choir
 - Youths of Rotuma)
- 9:00am

- Welcome speech
 - Youth and Sports President (A. Kamilo)
- 9:10am

- Guest of Honour
 - Ministry of Youth Representative
- 9:40am

- Youth Speaker - “The Power of One”
- 10.00am

- Morning tea
 - Starting of women’s handicraft show & Youth Farmers Show
- 1:00pm

- Lunch
- 2:30pm

- Motusa Youth Club Hafa
- 3:45pm

- Rotuma Otou Hanuet
- 4:00pm

- End of day 1

Day 2 - Saturday, 13th May, 2006

- 8:00am

- All Guests inside the pavilion
 - Greeting from M.C
 - Garlanding
 - Singing of National Anthem (Motusa bay Boys G/Taimanav)
- 8:30am

- Devotion - Rev. Peniasi Ciri (Anthem - ‘Tafat ne palam’ Choir
 - Youths of Rotuma)
- 9:00am

- Welcome speech
 - Chairman Council of Rotuma
- 9:15am

- Chief Guest - Hon. Marieta Rigamoto
- 9:45am

- Youth Speaker-“Ne’ne’it ne tae e teagesea”
- 10.00am

- Morning tea (to be served to the guests at the pavilion)
 - Hon. Minister & Guests to visit Rotuma Women’s Show
- 11.00am

- Itumuta Youth Club-Hafa
 - Ahau Youth Fijian Community Meke
- 1:00pm

- Lunch
- 2:00pm

- Hapmafau Youth Club - Hafa
 - Juju Youth Club
- 4:00pm

- Prize Giving
- 4.30pm

- Closing Address - Dr. Susana Pene
 - Cheering
 - General Clean up - Rotuma Youth
 - Home Sweet Home
- Live Band : Motusa Bay Boys (to fill in gaps) Start playing at 7.00am

Shipping

Franchise Scheme - 2001 - 2004 - \$8,500/month
- 2005 - 2006 - \$\$10,000/month

Upgrading of Rotuma Airport (Estimated Costs \$3.5 million)
2003 - 2006 Stage 1 - Surveying Work Completed
 Stage 2 - Planning & Drawing of Plans

Rotuma Port

- Declared an out port in 2002
- Extension of jetty completed in 2002

Review of Rotuma Land Act

- Cabinet approved request by Council of Rotuma in 2002
- Groundwork for the review of the Rotuma Land Act is well underway. Awareness programme completed in 2005.
- Preparation and appointment of Review Team - 2006

Social Justice Act 2001

- 29 Affirmative Action/Blueprint for Fijians and Rotumans

| Education - Fijian Affairs Scholarships | | | | |
|---|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
| Overseas Award | 4 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Local Award | 86 | 94 | 73 | 97 |
| Total | 90 | 101 | 80 | 104 |
| Amount | \$249,967 | \$401, 764 | \$483, 797 | \$606, 188 |

Office of The Prime Minister Village Improvement Scheme

| Year | Village | Govt. Contribution |
|------|----------------|--------------------|
| 2002 | Oinafa | \$16,636.31 |
| 2003 | Noatau | \$15,000.00 |
| 2004 | Losa | \$15,000.00 |
| 2005 | Upmeamea | \$20,000.00 |
| 2006 | Fapufa, Itutiu | \$25,000.00 |
| | | \$91,636.31 |

Department of Energy Rural Electrification

| Village | Date |
|----------------------|------|
| Rotuma High School | 2001 |
| Mafatoa | 2002 |
| Savalei | 2002 |
| Pala | 2002 |
| Lopta | 2002 |
| Kalvaka | 2003 |
| Losa Village | 2003 |
| Noatau District | 2003 |
| Sumi Catholic School | 2003 |
| Tuakoi Ext | 2003 |
| Haga | 2004 |
| Motusa | 2004 |

Provincial Development

| Programs | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | Total |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------|-----------|
| Self Help Programs | 32,489 | 90,000 | 25,408 | 29,804 | 177,701 |
| Non Cane Access Roads | 35,000 | 140,000 | 140,000 | 12,220 | 327,220 |
| Non Pwd Roads | 62,280 | 40,000 | | 7,332 | 109,612 |
| Ddc Projects | | 386,992 | 15,000 | | 401,992 |
| Rural Housing | 25,310 | 62,500 | 35,589 | 28,696 | 152,095 |
| | 155,079 | 719,492 | 215,997 | 78,052 | 1,168,620 |

Small and Micro Enterprises Program

| Year | Youth Group | Amount | Remarks |
|------|-------------------------------|-------------|--|
| 2004 | Sumi Youth | 1101.00 | Fencing materials for farm |
| 2004 | Hapmak Youth and Social Club | 783.00 | Manure, weedkiller apparatus, vegetable and fruit seedlings |
| 2004 | Takhoi Youth Club | 764.00 | Manure, weedkiller, apparatus and farming tools for dalo farm |
| 2004 | Malhaha Youth and Sports Club | 982.25 | Fencing and pig pen piggery project |
| 2005 | Motusa Youth Group | 673.00 | 1 knapsack prayer and seedlings for farming |
| 2005 | Noatau Youth Club | 641.00 | fishing gears: spear gun, fishing net, flippers & diving mask |
| 2005 | Juju Youth Club | 645.90 | farming tools: sprayer, digging forks, spade, knives & tomato seeds |
| 2005 | Itumuta Youth Club | 655.00 | farming tools: 2 digging fork, sprayer, gumboot, raincoats, goggles, |
| 2005 | Kiu Kafoa - Individual | 888.50 | Cattle farming |
| | | \$ 7,133.65 | |





Flash Back

