



**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FINANCE,**  
**STRATEGIC PLANNING, NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND**  
**STATISTICS**

**HONOURABLE PROFESSOR BIMAN PRASAD**

**CHIEF GUEST – DRASA SECONDARY SCHOOL PREFECTS**  
**INVESTITURE CEREMONY**

Wednesday 26th February 2025, 9:30am – 10:30am

School Hall

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**Respected members of the school management,**  
**Esteemed principal and dedicated teachers,**  
**Proud parents, and**  
**Our bright young students,**

- 1. Bula Vinaka and a very warm good morning to you all!**
2. It is truly an honor and a privilege to stand before you today on this important occasion—the Prefect Investiture Ceremony of Drasa

Secondary School. At the outset, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the students who have been selected as prefects. Your selection is a testament to your dedication, hard work, and the trust that your teachers and peers have placed in you.

3. Leadership is not about titles or privileges—it is about service, responsibility, and leading by example. Today, as you wear your badges with pride, remember that you have been chosen not for personal recognition, but because your school believes in your ability to inspire and guide your fellow students. The way you conduct yourselves, the values you uphold, and the decisions you make will shape the school environment and set a benchmark for others to follow.
4. As student leaders, you will face challenges. There will be moments when you must make difficult decisions, times when you must balance discipline with compassion, and instances when you will need to stand firm in your principles. True leadership is about integrity—doing the right thing even when no one is watching. It is about treating others with respect and dignity and fostering a spirit of unity and inclusivity in your school.
5. At this point, I want to address a serious issue affecting our schools and communities—the rise in drug-related cases in Fiji. Drugs destroy lives, break families, and have no place in our schools or society. I urge each and every one of you to stay away from drugs. If anyone ever approaches you with illegal substances, say no. If you become aware of any drug-related activities, report them immediately to your teachers,

who will take the necessary steps to inform the authorities. Keeping our schools safe is a collective responsibility, and together, we can ensure that our learning environment remains drug-free.

6. To those students who did not receive a prefect's badge today—do not be discouraged. Leadership is not defined by a title but by your actions, character, and the way you treat others. Continue to be a role model, work hard, and uphold the values of respect, discipline, and responsibility. There will always be future opportunities for leadership, and your contributions to the school community are no less valuable. The best leaders lead by example, with or without a title.
7. Our Coalition Government is deeply committed to investing in education because we believe that education is the key to a brighter future. In the 2024-2025 National Budget, we have allocated close to \$630 million for education. We are covering your school fees, providing free bus fares so you can travel to school, distributing free textbooks, and offering \$200 in back-to-school support to help you prepare for the academic year.
8. Beyond that, when we came into Government, we removed the Tertiary Education Loan Scheme (TELS) and replaced it with fully funded scholarships. This means that when you complete your secondary education and move on to tertiary studies, you will not have to worry about taking on student debt. Everything is taken care of—you simply need to focus on working hard and making the most of these opportunities.

9. This year marks 51 years since Drasa Secondary School was established—a remarkable milestone. Over the decades, this institution has produced outstanding students who have gone on to contribute to Fiji and beyond. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the school management, principal, teachers, and support staff for their dedication and commitment to maintaining the high standards of education and ensuring the proper upkeep of the school's facilities and infrastructure. Your hard work and passion are shaping the leaders of tomorrow, and for that, we are deeply grateful.
10. To the parents and teachers present here today, I commend you for your unwavering commitment to nurturing these young minds. Your guidance and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping these students into responsible individuals, ready to take on leadership roles.
11. As I stand here today, looking at the bright and determined faces before me, I see the future of our nation. You are the next generation of leaders, innovators, and changemakers who will drive Fiji forward. The choices you make today, the values you uphold, and the commitment you show to your education and community will determine the path our country takes in the years to come.
12. Finally, to all the prefects, I urge you to wear your badges with humility, knowing that leadership is not about power—it is about service. Your schoolmates look up to you, your teachers rely on you, and your families are proud of you. Let your leadership be defined by kindness, fairness, and a dedication to making your school a better place for all.

13. Once again, congratulations to you all. May you carry out your duties with honor and make Drasa Secondary School proud. I wish you all the best in your journey as student leaders.
14. **Vinaka vakalevu, dhanyavaad, and thank you!**