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FNU to help NEC with key employment service

Fiji National University (FNU) and the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for aptitude assessment services to be provided to those registered under the National Employment Centre.

The service will be provided by FNU's National Training and Productivity Centre.

Speaking at the signing of the MoU, Minister for Labour, Industrial Relations & Employment, Jone Usamate said unemployment is one of the key things the government is focusing on. He said a strong, skilled labour force could be a source of attraction for investors.

Mr Usamate said the ministry is grateful to the FNU for this partnership arrangement.

"We always support the FNU as it's the national university designed to deal with the requirements of the country. Together, the FNU and NEC should work together for the betterment of the country," he said.

FNU Vice Chancellor Dr. Ganesh Chand reiterated the comments made by Mr Usamate. Dr. Chand said NEC and FNU are initiatives of the government thus both institutions should work to achieve government's objectives which include alleviating poverty through employment generation.

Director NTPC Kamlesh Prakash said the holistic idea behind the scheme was to promote productivity and reduce poverty in the country.

"The whole idea is to administer certain types of skills training and provide career guidance to unemployed youths so that they are in a better position to gain employment in the industries out there," Mr Prakash said.

He said many industry leaders have taken advantage of the NEC programme and were able to recruit people to do six months training, and these recruits eventually found their way into employment.

"Last year we had over 9000 students who were administered, a whole set of selection and aptitude tests were conducted to help them prepare for interviews and find the best fit in terms of career.

"The other stream of engagement involved up-skilling the youths in seven different trade skills areas in basic and intermediate trade so that they could work on their own or with any other employer in the country.

"Many of the NEC participants have been able to find jobs and this indicates the fact this scheme has worked out well for both the institutions and especially for the trainees, who are the main intent of the whole arrangement -which is to help prepare them gain employment."

“A lot of interest is forming in the building and plumbing areas, and electrical sectors. Skills training is also updated to help the unemployed fill in areas in need of skilled persons like plaster-men, joiners, plumbers, and welders who are highly sought after in Fiji and abroad.”

“So we are well geared towards capturing these demands and needs.”