



FIJI PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION

(Affiliated to PSI, PTTI, ITF)

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MEDIA RELEASE

FIJI SUN JUMPS TO DEFEND CEO, FRCS, INSTEAD OF REPORTING THE MAIN NEWS FROM FPSA'S MEDIA STATEMENT

Yesterday, on 8th November, 2018, FPSA's General Secretary issued a media statement calling for the resignation of CEO, FRCS, Visvanath Das together with the request to the Chairman of FRCS Mr. Ajith Kodagoda to terminate the contract of the CEO if he failed to do the honourable thing.

The Fiji Sun, instead of covering the main story i.e. the reason for the FPSA's call for the resignation of the CEO, Jyoti Pratibha in her idiosyncratic style and irresponsibly turns around the news item into the defence of the FRCS, CEO without giving any information as to why such a call was made by the Fiji Public Service Association (FPSA). A basic tenet of news reporting.

Let us, for the benefit of the readers give the reason in brief for FPSA's call for either CEO's resignation or termination, which are as follows:

- 35 members of FPSA wrote a petition against the Director, Revenue Management (DRM) and gave the mandate to the Association to deal with the matter where our members complained about the use of abusive language by DRM and consistently threatening staff that he would terminate their contracts. FPSA General Secretary met the CEO and agreed with a process to deal with the matter urgently. Two (2) months has now elapsed and the issue is hibernating in the system and our members tell us that DRM continues with his antics and outrageous behaviour.
- Another senior employee holding the post of Manager was suspended for four (4) months for serious transgression and misdemeanour but he is back at work at the behest of the CEO without any disciplinary action taken against him.
- The latest case that has shocked the entire staff of the FRCS and the Association was when the CEO allowed the Director, Intelligence, Compliance & Investigations to return to duties after FICAC charged him for abuse of office and dishonesty involving \$4million. He was bailed by the Magistrate Court on 25th October, 2018, in fact two (2) weeks ago.

The Association wrote a letter of protest to the CEO on 2nd November, 2018, on behalf of its members, seeking explanation as to why the employee has been

allowed to continue in his position when others in similar situation were not allowed to enter the FRCS premises. CEO has arrogantly not responded to the Association's letter till today. He appears to have no clue in dealing with the Administration of a large and important entity like FRCS.

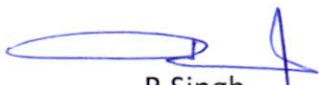
To make matters worse, the CEO has showed his imprudence and gall to tell the FRCS staff in his circular dated 6th November 2018 that he has called for disclosures and evidence from FICAC on the charges brought against the officer to decide in the matter further. The question is whether the CEO is a Magistrate or a Judge in this case and what is his authority to ask the prosecuting authority to give him disclosures and evidence. If he cared to check his authority in such matters, his in-house lawyers would have advised him that disclosures are only given to the accused or his lawyer and not to a third party. Moreover, there are set procedures and precedents in place for disciplinary matters and those employees who are charged for criminal offences are to be suspended and not allowed at the FRCS premises. We have several cases as precedents where employees were immediately suspended once charged for criminal offences. In one particular case a former employee's drawer was busted open and his possession were passed to him with instructions not to enter the FRCS premises. This is the first time that Director Intelligence, Compliance & Investigations who is also a Chief of Ethical Standards Unit is given a special privilege to return to work after being charged for a serious criminal offence. The question that begs the answer is why such a treatment to this officer and on whose instructions, if any.

Let me now turn to Jyoti Pratibha's tirade and broadside against the FPSA, General Secretary, which is found not only to be pathetic but sheer mischief making. We wonder how lowly and blinded a person can get, and that too a reporter, we hasten to add that in our books Jyoti Pratibha would not even fit a description of a cub reporter, noting what spin and distortions she gave the media release sent to Fiji Sun on 8/11/18.

It would be interesting for the readers to know that Jyoti Pratibha sent an email to the FPSA General Secretary at 6.21 pm yesterday evening questioning him as to why he sent a blind copy to FICAC regarding FRCS staff. It was petrifying to note her audacity and arrogance when she further posed a question as to who else was sent a blind copy of the media release. The only way to describe such behaviour from a newsroom Staffer as purely egotistic and a bluster. She appears to breathe an air of arrogance for whatever reason.

Jyoti Pratibha is definitely unaware that we copied our letter of 2nd November, 2018 to the Acting Commissioner, FICAC which is available for scrutiny to those who are interested to know the truth. Obviously, Jyoti Pratibha appears not to be a candidate to deal with truth. The letter to Mr Savumiramira was sent by a Secretariat staff on her own volition with a reason that, it be sent to the official who was handling the matter. We apologise to Mr Savumiramira for our lapse whom none of the FPSA staff ever met.

I hope the reading public will judge the Fiji Sun story of 9/11/18 against our media release of 8/11/18 together with this current release which, in our view, has put the matters into its proper perspective.



R Singh

GENERAL SECRETARY