



FIJI TRADES UNION CONGRESS

32 DES VOUEX ROAD, P.O. BOX 1418, SUVA, FIJI

OUR REF: PUB/01

YOUR REF:

DATE: 3/09/14

PRESS RELEASE No. 69-09/14

A-G's Campaign Strategy

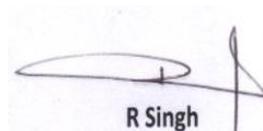
The FTUC is appalled at the A-G's criticism of trade unionists at a recent meeting with Ports Terminal Limited workers as reported in yesterday's edition of the *Fiji Sun* (2/09) under the heading, "don't be used as pawns" by Jyoti Pratibha in her inimitable style. This is another campaign strategy used by Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum to sway workers' votes as the comments come straight after Port workers received their bonuses. If he thinks that workers are dumb and do not know his motive than he is sadly mistaken. They know that bonus is being paid to them two (2) weeks before Elections. The trend is there for all to see that pay rises and bonuses are paid to employees in Tropik Woods, Fiji Sugar Corporation, Fiji Water Authority, Lautoka City Council and other public enterprises for political ends.

The claim by A-G that unionists further their own agendas and fill their pockets is not only ironical but someone living in a glass house throwing stones at others. In fact Mr. Sayed-Khaiyum is furthering his own agenda thus announcing bonus payments and pay rises including even distributing rubbish bins in desperation for his self-preservation. FTUC urges workers not to be influenced by the regime's tactics as their motive is to continue with the enjoyment of wealth and power. Furthermore, the regime is seen to be increasingly employing state power and instruments to demonise the trade union movement for votes so as to remain in office at any cost.

The FTUC has a long and proud history spanning decades representing workers' interests in Fiji. It has over the years fought to increase workers' wages, reinstate workers' rights and fight against the injustices of employers' treatment of its members. What has the regime achieved so far for workers for the past eight years apart from trampling on their very rights? It has forced the placement of thousands of workers under the ENI Decree and made every effort to add fear and intimidation to decimate trade unions. The ENI Decree which the regime introduced in 2011 completely stripped the rights of workers and now Sayed-Khaiyum talks about the collaborative approach between employers, employees and government to hoodwink the workers for votes in the forthcoming elections.

Workers are not fooled by this vote buying tactics of the regime. Yes, they will gladly accept bonuses and wage increases because this is the only way to meet the high cost of living as opposed to Sayed-Khaiyum's self interest to remain in power.

The FTUC will not bow to the new obstacles of buying loyalty by bonuses and pay rises by the regime. We will continue to fight for our members and for the workers of Fiji.



R Singh

Acting National Secretary

*All correspondence to be addressed to the National Secretary
Phone: (679) 3315377, 3315402/ Fax: (679) 3300306 / Email: ftuc1@connect.com.fj*