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# Press Release

## World Tsunami Awareness 'Open Day'

"We need to be Tsunami ready and today marks a very important day as we are celebrating World Tsunami Awareness Day" These were the words of the Permanent Secretary for Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources Mr. Malakai Finau during the opening of the World Tsunami Awareness Day at the Mineral Resource Department today (5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018).

Mr. Finau highlighted that tsunami preparations have been held at various areas, so that all fellow Fijians are tsunami ready if and when it happens.

"So far, the Mineral Resources Department has conducted tsunami awareness programs covering a total of 333 centres since 2006 till to-date".

"Tsunami drills have been carried out around Suva City, including some schools and communities living along the coastal areas," Mr. Finau said.

There are two teams out in the field, one in Viti Levu who will be visiting communities such as Korotogo and Vatukarasa and a team is in Vanua Levu who will be conducting tsunami awareness in Naviqiri and Nasau in Bua.

"Based on our topographical and geospatial assessment, it has been identified that these villages do not have fringing reefs and they are open to swells," Finau added.

Some schools from the most vulnerable areas will also visit the Seismology Unit today marking the World Tsunami Awareness Day. These schools would include: Veiuto Primary School, Suva Grammar and Secret Heart School.

In 2015, the United Nations declared 5<sup>th</sup> of November 'the World Tsunami Awareness Day' due to the risk and the damages of this disaster.

"The Seismology Unit of the Mineral Resource Department, looks after earthquakes and tsunami's in Fiji as we are vulnerable and risk to tsunami," Finau mentioned.

"Fiji has a total record of 11 tsunamis which has occurred in Fiji, 3 of which was generated within the Fiji waters," he said.

“Recently, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September this year, after a 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck in Indonesia, in the city of Palu, approximately 2, 045 people lost their lives with up to 1.5 million people affected and over 80,000 left homeless,” Mr. Finau Highlighted.

Mr. Finau mentioned that tsunami is not a very common event but when it strikes on land it could be very devastating.

In addition, to keep Fiji prepared for such events the Mineral Resources Department opens its doors to welcome the general public and schools especially those located in the most vulnerable areas.

I would also like to acknowledge the joint involvement of Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development, National Management and Meteorological Services and UNESCO-IOC Program for Disaster Risk Reduction based at SPC.



*Mineral Resources Department staff explains the seismograph equipment to school students during the open day.*