



# MINISTRY OF WATERWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

## Press Release

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August 2020

Attention: Chief-of-Staff

For immediate Release

### Seawall to safeguard Nabukadra village.

Protecting coastal communities and building resilience from coastal erosion, damaging storms, hurricane winds and storm waves remains the government's priority to address disparity amongst the Rural and Urban communities.

Its protection is equally important for current and future generations as it provides a home for thousands of Fijians.

This was highlighted by the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy during the ground-breaking ceremony for the Nabukadra Seawall project in Rakiraki today.

Minister Reddy said the impact of climate change is evident and protecting communities along the coastal area is essential as most Fijians reside along these areas.

He said the project will provide relief to the village protecting their environment, and enhance economic benefits building resilience and security of the Nabukadra village.

Dr. Reddy reiterated while the world is facing an economic crisis, innovative thinking and doing is vital for delivering services to the communities.

“At the Ministry of Waterways and Environment, we have adopted the theory of change to do “More with less” amidst the COVID19 pandemic and hence have started the transition from “**grey to green**” – from traditional concrete masonry to nature based-boulder type seawalls for coastal protection,” he said.

Meanwhile for the 88 year old Mr Niumaia, the initiative by the Ministry is a time effort to safeguard their village as big land in the village has been sinking for over the years.

“I have been living here since I was born, and I have witnessed that this place has been sinking over the years especially after the cyclones as a result of coastal erosion,” said Mr. Niumaia

“So after the construction of this sea wall, it will bring relief for the villagers especially for the young ones as this Nature base solution will benefit them in the long run,” he said.

Mr. Niumaia acknowledged the Ministry for responding and acting swiftly on their request to protect the villagers within one month time.

“In the past many ministers and some governors have visited the village, and the request was made to them earlier but nothing had been done. But with Minister Dr. Reddy, he visited the village once and our request was heard by him, and within month of time the protection work has begun in the village,” he said.

Meanwhile a nature-based solution, hybrid sea wall will be built by the Ministry of Waterways and Environment to address coastal erosion in the Nabukadra village with bouldering work, land reclamation, mangrove and vetiver planting as a first and last line of defence.