



Message from the Honourable Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts, Dr. Mahendra Reddy

It is indeed an honour for me to once again share my message for the 57th Sanatan Annual Convention. The theme for the 2016 Convention, “**Sanatan-Promoting Unity in Diversity**” is particularly fitting given the advances this esteemed organisation has propelled to in terms of upholding its vision, values and mission.

At this juncture, let me pass my deepest condolences to the grieving families of the victims of Cyclone Winston. I pray for God’s choicest blessings to be also upon all those who are re-building and restoring their lives after the turmoil.

For close to 140 years, Shree Sanatan Dharm Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji has not only contributed to the nation’s education sector with its 117 educational institutions, but also to the expansion of the Fijian economy. Our past gives us our identity, the knowledge of our existence and our connections to our cultural and traditional links. Fiji boasts one of the world’s richest mix of cultural, traditional and heritage pasts and we all Fijians are extremely proud of this. It is organisations such as, the Sanatan Dharm who help to keep our cultural and traditional links intact and we are thankful to that.

The Sanatan Dharm Organisation has contributed vastly to the spiritual and social upbringing of more than 250 000 followers. With the diverse branches, bodies, functions and roles of the institution, the Sabha’s existence and progress over the years is certainly commendable. Additionally, the Sabha’s involvement and integration with other organisations and institutions in meeting national goals is noteworthy.

At this point, I would also like to acknowledge the Sabha for partnering with us in our establishment of the Technical College of Fiji, Nabua Campus. It is definitely evident that the Sanatan fraternity also has the education of Fiji’s children and the welfare of future generations at heart. Partnerships such as this pave the way for success and we are now reaping the fruits of that with the Nabua Technical College.

It is in view of this and noting the variety of and diverse functions of the Sabha, that I acknowledge the theme highly appropriate. The Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts has taken on the initiative to take education in Fiji to greater heights so that we are equally competent with the rest of the world. The ‘Dream Education’ that the government of the day pursues is

based on quality, fairness and accessibility for all. Our focus is on academic excellence with connections to cultural, traditional, spiritual, physical, and values development. We have rolled out key reforms in 2015 and this year and we are calling on all stakeholders including religious organisations to unite and support our efforts to give the best to our children.

It is then with great pleasure and delight, that I convey my well wishes to the Shree Sanatan Dharm Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji on their 57th Convention. Milestones such as this, is a time of celebration and triumph and marks new experiences in the lives of all taking part. It is a very proud moment for all the members of Sanatan Fiji and I congratulate all for that.