

\$20.6m projects

Japan helps upgrade service

By FELIX CHAUDHARY

A TOTAL of \$20.6million is being spent by the Japanese Government through its various donor agencies on four of its many projects in the country.

Three of the projects are in the Western Division and one in Suva.

The projects are designed to assist in disaster risk reduction, fisheries support, flood mitigation and empowerment of women.

Yesterday, representatives from the Japanese Embassy, Fijian Government and media organisations inspected the projects to see how they were helping people in the various communities they were being implemented in.

Japanese ambassador Takuji Hanatani said the Japan Development Co-operation Tour was designed to broaden understanding of his country's assistance programs to Fiji.

He said apart from the sites visited by tour participants yesterday in Suva, Sigatoka, Nadi and Ba, the Japanese Government was interested in addressing other issues facing the country.

"In 2015, we started the five-year Project for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases because NCDs are a very crucial challenge facing Fiji," he said. "This project will help in the capacity development of

health personnel in Fiji."

Mr Hanatani said three Japanese medical experts would be brought in to help implement the project.

Apart from that, the Japanese Government embarked on a three-year initiative called REACH — Rights, Empowerment, and Cohesion for Rural and Urban Fijians.

Mr Hanatani said the project's main objective was to support Fiji's Ministry of Women and the Legal Aid Commission in pro-

moting peace-building and social cohesion through awareness programs.

"Through our recognition of Fiji's leading role in the region, in 2014 we began the South-South Co-operation Project with Fiji," he said.

"This project establishes itself on Fiji's ability to contribute to the region and aims to deliver capacity building and training of people from regional countries such as Kiribati, Tuvalu and Nauru in Fiji."

By FELIX CHAUDHARY

CONCERNED about people's access to information during natural disasters, the Japanese Government has given \$15million for the upgrade of a medium wave broadcasting system.

Through an agreement signed with the Fiji Government, the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation will establish a new medium wave radio broadcasting system at Naulu in Nakasi.

A study conducted by the Japanese Government established that most islands in the Fiji Group could not access the FM radio frequencies or television.

"All the islands, however, are able to access the AM radio frequency that was phased out years ago," said Peni Saurara from the Embassy of Japan.

"And many homes in the islands have radio sets that can access the AM radio frequency."

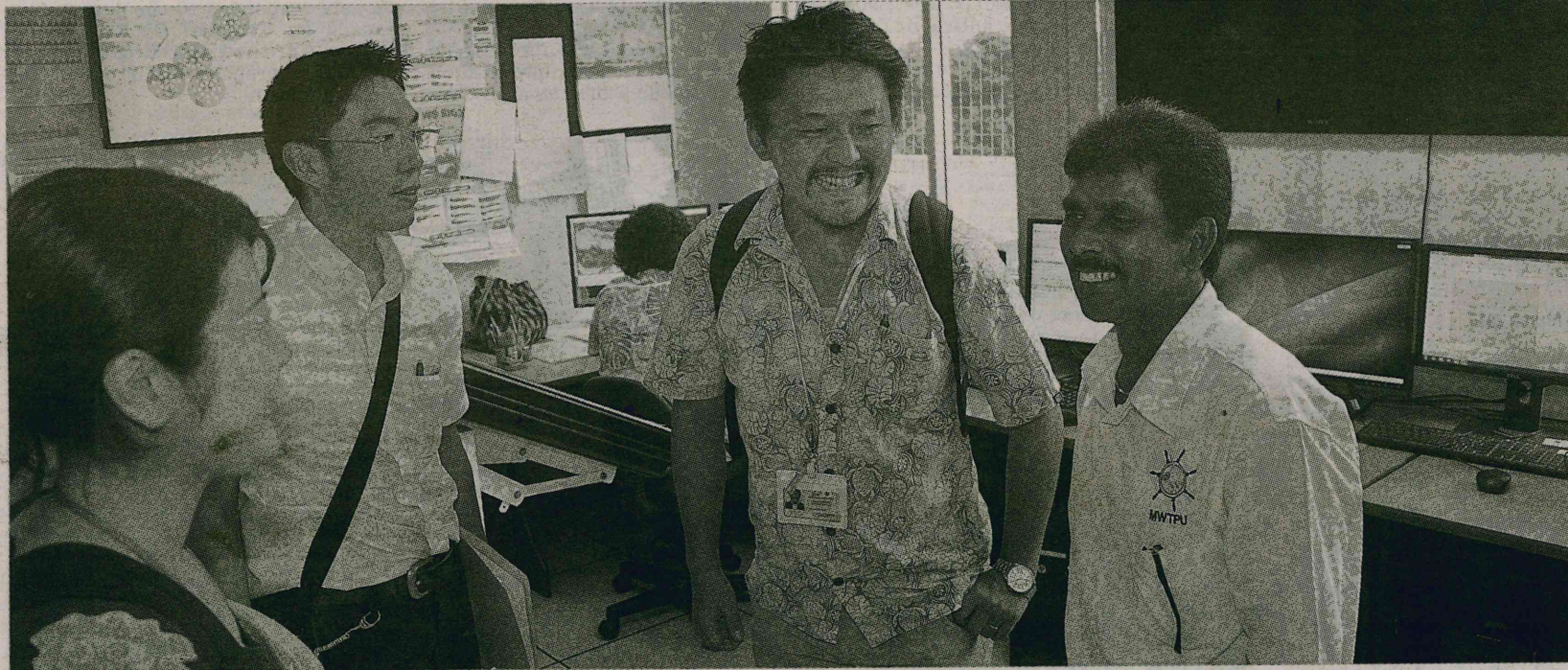
In August last year, the Japanese Government signed an agreement with Fiji for the works to be conducted at the FBC's Naulu transmitter.

Tenders for the project were called and Mr Saurara said the project was expected to be completed next year.

The Japanese Embassy says the previous transmitter had a number of issues because it contained parts that were installed in 1953.

Representatives from the Japanese Embassy, Fiji Government and media organisations are participating in a two-day tour of Japanese Government-funded projects across the Western Division.

The two-day tour ended with a visit to the Japanese Support for Gender Area at its Ba Training Centre yesterday afternoon.



Fiji Meteorological Service director Ravind Kumar with representatives from the Japanese Embassy.

Picture: BALJEET SINGH

\$16.6m aid helps weather office

By FELIX CHAUDHARY

FIJI has established itself as a recognised Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre because of the Japanese Government's \$16.6million aid and technical contribution, says Fiji Meteorological Service director Ravind Kumar.

"We are one of only six RSMCs in the world and it is all thanks to the Japanese Government and the funding and tech support they have

provided us through the Japan International Cooperation Agency or JICA," he said.

The other five RSMCs are situated in Miami and Honolulu in the US, Tokyo in Japan, New Delhi in India and La Reunion in the Indian Ocean.

Mr Kumar made the comments during a visit to the Nadi weather office by representatives from the Japanese Embassy, Fiji Government and media organisations.

"Because of Japan's aid assistance we have improved our tide observation system, communications systems, wind profiling, automatic weather stations, calibration of equipment and lightning detection systems among other things," he said.

The FMS director said through Japanese aid, the Nadi weather office now had direct access to high resolution data and images from outer space through the Japanese

Geo-Stationary Meteorological Satellite and the NOAA Polar Orbiting Satellite. Mr Kumar said the Nadi weather office building was constructed with assistance from the Japanese Government.

"This building has allowed FMS to become a hub for the Pacific in terms of weather forecasting training and so far we have trained 152 weather men and women from around the Pacific. Of this, 22 were locals," he said.

(圖) 日本大使館代表と斐濟氣象局局長ら、ナディの天気予報センターを視察中。