



Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority

## PRESS RELEASE

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Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Chief Executive Officer, Jitoko Tikolevu today refuted a front page report in the Fiji Sun newspaper titled: **FIRCA official in tax scam saying it was without basis and clearly designed to defame and malign the FIRCA board member concerned.** Mr Tikolevu further said that FIRCA would be taking legal action against the Fiji Sun and Victor Lal.

**'Firstly, tax details of every taxpayer is governed by a secrecy clause and cannot be made available to anyone except without the express consent of the taxpayer so persons at FIRCA who have released this (mis) information will be firstly and severely dealt with for breaching the relevant legislation in regard to taxpayer records.**

**'Secondly, the said article by Mr. Lal and the corresponding headline was for the purposes of sensationalism and to injure the reputation of FIRCA as well as its Board.**

**'Thirdly, and in relation to the tax refund of a concerned Board member, the Fiji Sun and Mr Lal have not only distorted the facts but are guilty of gross misrepresentation, obviously with malicious intent. For the information of**

readers, all matters relating to the Board member concerned have been handled in a transparent manner and there have been no breach of any existing tax laws, said Mr. Tikolevu.

Mr. Tikolevu said one of the reasons for the leakage of incorrect information on the Board member concerned was because of the Board member and management's diligence and determination in weeding out corruption at FIRCA, which has seen a number of mid management as well as certain senior staff members being disciplined, with some being charged by the Police for tax frauds.

Mr. Tikolevu said for sometime now, the Fiji Sun has been running stories about FIRCA and certain unnamed tax payers with open intent to discredit FIRCA and its Board.

“It is very obvious by the slant given to these distorted and less than factual stories that Fiji Sun and Victor Lal are driven by a political agenda,” Said Mr Tikolevu.

He said FIRCA would instruct its lawyers tomorrow to commence legal action against the Fiji Sun and Victor Lal. “Breaches of the relevant tax laws and misrepresentation of facts by the newspaper and Mr. Lal were serious matters and would be pursued through legal channel,” said Mr. Tikolevu.

JITOKO TIKOLEVU  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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