

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

MR SURESH CHANDRA

CLOSE OF PRE-POLL FOR 2018 GENERAL ELECTION

FEO MEDIA CENTRE - 10/11/18 - 3.30PM

Bula Vinaka ladies and gentlemen and a very warm welcome to you all.

The Electoral Commission would like to announce that pre-polling for the 2018 General Election has now concluded.

The pre-polling for this year's General Election, was scheduled to take place in 587 Polling Stations and all of these Polling Stations have been successfully polled.

The Electoral Commission itself, took the initiative to travel to various Polling places out in the islands as well as on the mainland to witness polling as it took place in these remote locations.

The Electoral Commission noted, that those voters who came to vote, showed enthusiasm and energy in participating in the General Elections.

Various conversations with voters revealed that the process for voting for them was simple.

It allowed them to vote in secrecy and the Electoral Commission recognizes that the processes involved in pre-polling are sufficient to ensure that voters are able to vote with confidence.

And that the processes that have been built around the further transmission of ballot boxes and storage until counting on 14th November and will ensure that the ballot boxes and sensitive materials are safe under secured guard from the Fiji Police Force.

The Electoral Commission noted a few issues when it went out as well and these will be matters that the Electoral Commission will deal with post-election.

We wish to highlight that the Electoral Commission noted that the turnout was not as per expectations in various locations.

The other issue that the Electoral Commission noted was the willingness of the staff of the Fijian Election Office to assist a voter.

Be it a person with disability or a person who is unable to come to the polling place.

The Electoral Commission witnessed assistance being provided to voters in their homes to those that could not come out.

Whilst the pre-poll trends at the moment do not seem to indicate the turnout for Election Day, we are confident that the 550,000-plus voters that will be voting on Election Day will turn out in large numbers and vote so that their voices and their votes matter.

I will now hand over to the Supervisor of Elections to quickly take us through the statistics in terms of pre-polling for the 2018 General Election.

SOE...