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PRESS RELEASE

Suva, Fiji

07 May 2013

For immediate Release

Transparency International (TI) Fiji comments on “partly free” Fiji media

Fiji’s “partly free” media status is a concern to Transparency International (TI) Fiji as this detracts from the vision for a modern nation-state and democratic society.

The latest assessment by Freedom House on the situation of the Fijian media should be a useful signal as Fiji anticipates elections in a year’s time.

While other countries in the Pacific are turning to have a free media and have climbed up the ranking Fiji’s positions shows there’s work yet to done in this area.

TI Fiji’s response comes after Fiji’ ranking at 120 in a table of 197 countries in the Freedom of the Press 2013 survey released last week at Washington DC in the United States.

Fiji is listed as “partly free” in the Freedom of the Press Index which assesses the degree of print, broadcast and internet freedom in every country in the world, analyzing the events and developments of each calendar year.

TI Chairman Apisalome Tudreu said a free media is a platform for people to express their views and excess information freely and without fear.

“TI Fiji believes the press should be free so that ordinary Fijian can have excess to information freely and people are able to express their views and opinions freely without any fear”.

“The local media industry should be more responsible towards nation building in a wider sense and the media should use the talents and skills to promote Integrity, accountability and transparency in all Fijians” he added.

The related issue of access to information law and freedom of information law is addressed in TI Fiji’s submission on the draft constitution. Tudreu said that access to these laws should be treated as priority.

“The law is to include all sectors and systems holding important and sensitive information about individuals and organizations,” he said.

“Also, national budget information, from formulation through to implementation, should be made widely available and in a timely manner.”

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