



CLASS OF
1960

Late Dr Timoci Uluivuda Bavadra (1934-1989)

Central Medical School

Qualifications

- 1960 - Graduated from Central Medical School
- 1961 - 1976 - Field service medical officer in Serua, Lautoka, Vatukoula, Lakeba (Lau) and Rewa
- 1966 - 1968 Overseas medical services secondment in British Solomon Islands Protectorate
- 1969 - Diploma in Public Health, University of Otago, New Zealand
- 1972 - 1984 Author of numerous research papers on subjects including family planning and maternal mortality
- 1975 - 1985 Executive Member of the Fiji Medical Association
- 1976 - 1980 Family Health Officer, Ministry of Health Suva
- 1981 - 1985 Assistant Director of Primary and Preventive Health Services
- 1981 - 1985 Chairman, Fiji National Food and Nutrition Committee
- 1978 - 1985 President of the Fiji Public Servants Association (PFSA)
- 1985 Founded and was elected President of the newly formed Fiji Labour Party.
- 1986 Appointed Leader of the Labour Party and National Federation Party Coalition
- April 13, 1978 - Sworn in as Prime Minister of Fiji and Minister responsible for Public Service, Fijian Affairs
- May 14, 1987 - Deposed as Prime Minister by the Royal Fiji Military Forces.
- September 25, 1987 - A second military coup takes place and Dr Bavadra is again detained.
- March 23 1988 Bavadra is elected the founding President of the South Pacific Progressive Parties Association

“Like you, our love of the land is deep. Like you, our pride in the sacred traditions of our culture is immense. Like you, our desire for the economic advancement of our people is solid and enduring. And like you, we are committed to a better future for our children.” - Dr Timoci Bavadra.

A visionary leader, who always placed people before self, championed equality and above all was a God fearing person.

The late Doctor Timoci Bavadra who hailed from the chiefly village of Viseisei, Vuda, Lautoka was an optimist who had a will to serve people with passion and compassion.

A graduate of the Central Medical School in 1960, Dr Bavadra was always taught by his parents to love and respect everyone. Growing up along the sugarcane belts in the Western Division, Dr Bavadra had learnt at an early age that there was no substitute for hard work whether it was on the farm or in the classroom learning geometry.

A former student of Queen Victoria School, his first posting after graduation was as a Field Service Medical Officer for Serua, Lautoka, Vatukoula (Lau) and Rewa, which he served for a decade and a half.

Affectionately called Vuniwai¹ or Doc, Dr Bavadra published numerous papers on Family Planning and Maternal Mortality. While an executive member of the Fiji Medical Association in 1975, he also served as the Assistant Director of Primary and Preventative Health and as the Chairman of Fiji National Food and Nutrition.

Dr Bavadra's fight for equality and harmony saw him retire from public service and join the political arena

THE PEOPLE'S VUNIWAI

where he became the founder of Fiji Labour Party. In 1985, he was elected President of the Party and a year later appointed leader of the FLP and National Federation Party Coalition.

On April 13, 1987, following his historic victory in the general elections, Dr Bavadra was sworn in as Prime Minister of Fiji and Minister responsible for Public Service, Fijian Affairs.

He was Fiji's second Prime Minister and had a vision for a multi-racial, multi-cultural Fiji, a country where its people were treated as equal in all perspectives. Dr Bavadra was a popular personality who won peoples' affection and trust through his calm, gentle and earnest style.

Perhaps, that was the reason in his political career he attracted so many people, young and old, men and women, from a variety of political and cultural backgrounds.

He could only reign for a month when on May 14, 1987 he was deposed off his leadership by the Royal Fiji Military Forces and incarcerated along with members of his government for seven days.

Thereafter, Dr Bavadra committed his life and took immeasurable steps towards the restoration of a democratic government and nation. He reached an agreement to share governing powers with Alliance Party on September 23,

1987. However, only two days later, Dr Bavadra was arrested and detained again at Naboro Prisons following a second military coup.

In 1988, Dr Bavadra's struggles to retain democracy had only remounted as he was elected the founding President of the South Pacific Progressive Parties Association, a Pacific-wide body of progressive movements. However, the same year he underwent medical treatment and unfortunately diagnosed with cancer. But his medical condition failed to deter him from his mission and he fought till his last breath to uphold democratic principles and values.

Dr Bavadra continues to be bravoed for his struggles for his country. He was a person who symbolized national unity. He knew that peaceful methods require patience, persuasion, perseverance and above all a lack of bitterness. And he possessed these qualities in abundance². He was a firm believer of the philosophy that life is more satisfactory if it is dedicated to selfless service humanity³.

Dr Bavadra was married to late Adi Kuini Teimumu Vuikaba Speed with 11 children. He was a keen sportsman; he was a sprint champion at secondary and medical schools, a rugby trialist for an Australian tour in 1961, and an accomplished cricketer where he also served as a member of the Fiji Cricket Association Executive. He

also played competitive tennis and golf.

The eventful life of the late Dr Bavadra's is filled with many valuable lessons and while his legacy will be narrated for many generations to come, the onus will be on the FNU alumnus to continue on this journey and make new paths to greater success.

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Footnote:

¹Fijian word meaning healer

²Death of a Prime Minister: A Remembrance of Dr Timoci Bavadra by Satendra Nadan

³A man for all seasons-The late Dr Timoci Uluivuda Bavadra by Kamal Iyer