

# FRIEND adopts solar - Fiji Times Online

Monika Singh

Thursday, April 21, 2016

REDUCING carbon footprint has become the aim for most of the businesses in Fiji and FRIEND has joined the cause by commissioning its solar energy panels this week.

The organisation has 45 solar panels, each of 275w capacity mounted on the roof, generating 62kW/h of energy each day, catering to all the power requirements of its office.

FRIEND chief executive officer Sashi Kiran said they were having a struggle to put back the system in place after it was destroyed during Severe Tropical Cyclone Evan.

"While most of the panels had survived, the other components were damaged with the office building. Over the years we tried working with a local contractor to fix the equipment; however, this has now eventuated with the help of a highly-experienced solar engineer and environmental consultant from India, Mr Prasanna Krishna," said Ms Kiran in a statement.

With this system in place, FRIEND had gainfully employed renewable energy to address its power needs making it one of the first environment friendly organisations in Fiji.

According to Ms Kiran, the panels were initially put in place in 2011 with assistance from Australian Aid and the set of 48 panels were linked to the Fiji Electricity Authority grid in an effort to boost a consistent energy supply to the headquarters.

Mr Krishna, who is working with FRIEND, said the world was at a stage where it was a "make or break" situation.

"Our over-dependence and over-usage of fossil fuels is upsetting the delicate balance of nature. This cannot continue for long. Now is the time to act, or else it will be too late. We need to embrace the abundantly available renewable sources of energy like solar, wind, etc. and reduce our dependency on fossil fuels," said Mr Krishna.

"FRIEND has taken this very welcome step of using solar power to run its day-to-day to operations. I would like to congratulate FRIEND on leading the way on this environmental friendly initiative and hope that this will inspire many more organisations in this region to explore such environmental friendly measures."