

SS SyriaTime

EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH OF THE NZ ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER TO FIJI, HIS EXCELLENCY MR TODD CLEVER, AT THE PRIZE GIVING RECEPTION, AT THE NZ RESIDENCY

“Our two top winners presented short but moving portrayals of two very relevant aspects of the Syria tragedy. Ashwini chose to write her essay as a story putting herself in the shoes of a migrant labourer aboard the Syria, setting out from her homeland India for the distant and unknown land of Fiji...My own ancestors for example most of whom came to New Zealand from the UK couldn't wait to leave... the promise or at least the simple hope of a better life...Fiji then, as now, promises much.

Sekaia's story focuses on the contemporary aspects of race relations with an Auckland bench (donated by the Fiji Association two years ago commemorating the S S Syria) acting as a porthole through time and space back to the deck of the Syria.”



Dr Satendra Singh (left) with Mr Todd Clever in traditional Fijian sulu

EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH OF DR SATENDRA SINGH, ONZM, QSM, JP AT THE PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY

“You (students) have demonstrated in your essays and commented on the bonds that were forged in the trusting hands of those drowning Indians in 1884 as the Syria sank, with remarkable acumen. You have described the trusting hands of those who were drowning, with those trusting hands offered by those Fijians who came in small canoes to help. You have described the tears of strangers who shared a moment or two in the raging sea, who then went about the rest of their lives with just a memory. You have helped us remember Sir William McGregor, who was a catalyst in the endeavor that saw the rescue of so many, by so few.”



Happy smiles from Baulevu School winner, mother and teachers



Proud Mother and Winner Sekaia



Winners from DAV College Ashwini and Monish with teachers, and special guest Dr Singh

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