



**FijiFIU**  
Fiji Financial Intelligence Unit



## ***PRESS RELEASE***

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### **RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS ADVISED TO COMPLY WITH THE FTR ACT**

The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) would like to advise officials of religious organisations who collect and receive funds on behalf of their organisations to comply with the relevant laws and regulations.

The Director of the FIU, Mr Razim Buksh said that a number of cases have been brought to the attention of the FIU involving diversion and abuse of funds by officials of religious organisations in Fiji. Most of the cases involved the collection of funds outside of Fiji, the manner in which the funds are brought into Fiji, and subsequently how the funds were deposited and used.

Some cases that were reported to the FIU involved funds collected locally for the religious organisations were deposited into the personal bank accounts of its members and officials instead of the bank account of the organisation.

In another case, an expatriate religious worker received international remittances for the organisation from other overseas donors into his personal bank account without the knowledge of the organisation. The religious worker withdrew the funds and remitted it to his family members in his home country.

In a recent case, a religious worker received numerous overseas remittance transactions. The religious worker paid off his loan on an expensive residential property, has a number of properties, traveled overseas frequently and has sent his child to an expensive private training school.

Mr Buksh said that as part of FIU's awareness and outreach program to combat financial crimes, members and officials of religious organisations are advised to exercise prudent and transparent financial transaction practices.

Mr Buksh also acknowledged that some religious organisations already have sound internal controls with adequate measures against financial fraud and abuse.

Members of religious and charitable organisations and the general public are also advised to report suspected fraudulent activities to the Fiji Police Force and to the FIU.

Please refer to attached public notice for more details.

**RESERVE BANK OF FIJI**